

# The King And His Kingdom

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[ 0 : 00 ] Some of the most prominent themes in all of the Bible are the concepts of king and kingdom. We talked about this a couple of weeks ago in our fellowship group.

We were working through the Lord's prayer and we were dealing with that phrase, thy kingdom come. What does that actually mean? What is Jesus instructing us on when he asks us to pray that?

And we came back to this very thought. And that is, if not the most primary theme in the Bible, certainly one of the most prominent themes in the Scripture is this idea of king and kingdom. And I want you to think of it for just a moment in the broader scope of your Bible that you have in your hand. If you've ever read the Bible all the way through, if you're just familiar with how it's structured, you'll understand this.

The Bible begins with a picture of kingdom with a king, right? We go to Genesis. We see God creates the world.

[ 0 : 56 ] He creates this kingdom, the kingdom of this world. It is a kingdom that is completely untouched by sin. And what does he put in the midst of this kingdom, of this garden?

He puts a certain creature, Adam. And what is Adam to act as there in God's kingdom? As God's king. He's God's representative to the world that God has created.

He is there to image God. To guard the garden. To speak truth. To lead faithfully. That's what Adam is meant to do.

That's what God creates him to do. And he plants him in the garden, untouched by sin, for that purpose. Now, let's pause from that. And we're going to go to the whole other end of the Bible. You're going to skip all the stuff in the middle. We're going to go to the very end. And you get to the book of Revelation. What is it that we find there? Well, this is the revealing of a new kingdom.

[ 1 : 56 ] The new heavens. The new earth. God restoring a kingdom. Not that it is untouched by sin in the same way. But it is totally redeemed from sin.

And what does God use in this kingdom to lead it? A new king. The true and better Adam. Jesus reigns in perfect righteousness in his eternal kingdom there.

And so we can see right there from just the big picture. If we're thinking biblical theology for a moment. The Bible starts with kingdom and king. It ends with kingdom and king. And everything in the middle is this incredible story of man's rebellion.

Man's redemption. Man's restoration. Through the saving work of God's king. Now, these are the themes that are at the heart of the Advent season.

Which, according to the traditional Christian liturgical calendar, actually begins today. I don't know if you realize that or not. Maybe some of you did. And maybe you're planning to start either this morning or tonight.

[ 3 : 07 ] You've got your Advent devotional set aside that you're going to work through leading all the way up to December 24th. But today is the first Sunday of Advent. And these themes of king and kingdom is right at the very heart of it, isn't it?

From the first time that man sinned in the garden, Adam and Eve, continuing all through the scriptures thereafter, God promised and reissued and continued these promises to send a savior king, a messiah, a Christ, who would save his people from sin.

As the kids are learning in their kids' class on Sunday mornings, who will crush the head of the serpent, right? Who will restore the kingdom. Advent itself, it means arrival.

Advent is about the arrival of this promised king. In the liturgical season, which will run through December 24th, it's meant to be a time of preparation, a time of anticipation that unfolds into, if you're following strictly the liturgical calendar, it will fold into the 12 days of Christmas, which some

of you kids may not realize is more than just a song, right?

And what is the 12 days of Christmas? It's a time of celebration. Celebration of what? The fact that the king has come. So we look to this promise in Advent.

[ 4 : 37 ] We look to God's promises of a messiah. And in Christmas season, we rejoice that the messiah has actually come. Now, why am I saying all of this? Because today we're going to find our place here in Luke's gospel.

And when you come to your Bible and you begin to read, particularly in the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, you need to understand what their goal is as they write. These are not just basic biographies.

That's not what these books are. Certainly they have biographical information, but the authors, Luke, is not writing just to tell us some interesting stories about the life of Jesus of Nazareth. That's not what he's doing. That's why we call them gospels and not biographies. Gospel meaning good news. These are declarations. They are proclamations. They are arguments in that sense. And what Luke and Matthew and Mark and John are doing is they are trying to convince you, persuade you as the reader, the listener of this book, that Jesus of Nazareth is that promised king and that in his coming, his advent, his arrival, what he has brought with it is the inbreaking of this kingdom that he will one day complete at his return.

[ 5 : 56 ] Now, I want you to think about Luke's gospel for a moment. He even begins his gospel by doing what? Detailing the events of the literal arrival of the king in Bethlehem.

And everything that follows in this book is Luke's account. It serves the purpose of declaring this good news that Jesus Christ is the king and how through his life and death and resurrection, he made a way for you to be a citizen of his kingdom.

Totally redeemed from sin. So on this first Sunday of Advent, we're not going to do an Advent series. We'll be back in 1 Peter next week. But at least on this first Sunday of Advent, I want to take you through a story in Luke that I think beautifully portrays Jesus as king and reveals how you can enter his kingdom.

Let's read it together. Luke 17, verses 11 to 19. On the way to Jerusalem, he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee.

And as he entered a village, he was met by 10 lepers who stood at a distance, lifted up their voices saying, Jesus, master, have mercy on us.

[ 7 : 24 ] When he saw them, he said to them, go and show yourselves to the priest. And as they went, they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice, and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks.

Now he was a Samaritan. And then Jesus answered, were not 10 cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?

And he said to him, rise and go your way. Your faith has made you well. Now perhaps you're familiar with this story.

Only Luke records it. And it's usually presented as a powerful lesson on gratitude and on thanksgiving. Of course, highlighting the one former leper who after being cleansed, out of all the others, goes back to Jesus and offers his thanksgiving.

And there can be no doubt that thanksgiving is certainly a big part of this text. I want to suggest to you, though, that thanksgiving and gratitude is not actually the point of this text.

[ 8 : 47 ] What is this text actually meant to be doing here? Why did Luke care to write it when Matthew and Mark and John didn't? And why did he place it where he placed it?

And I want to suggest that actually the main point of this story and why Luke includes it for us is actually to give us a picture of the gospel. It's to glorify Jesus as king, which I've already said is kind of the whole point of the book, right?

It's to show that Jesus is this king and that he has brought the kingdom and that you might enter it if you trust him and believe him. I think that's what Luke's actually doing in this little story.

Yes, we want to be thankful. We don't want to miss that here. But I don't think it's actually about that. It's about something much more profound than that. Sometimes we look at the arrangement of material in the gospels and we think that maybe they're just kind of this random assortment of events.

And I think that would be a mistake for you to approach the gospels that way. That would, one, be a pretty low view of these four authors that wrote this. Certainly they were more intelligent and more

intentional than just to collect a bunch of random things and with no particular order.

[10:04] I actually think Luke's doing something very different than that. He is carefully ordering his material. He's organizing this book so that we might understand his argument.

So we need to determine why Luke chose to place this story here. And the only way to do that is to look at what else he put around it. So let's just zoom out for just a moment and consider the chapter.

In verses one to four, we find Jesus is teaching his disciples a lesson on obedience and repentance and the forgiveness that comes after that repentance.

And he's doing that in the context of how they are to interact with one another. And of course, as they're interacting with one another, they are imaging God and God's call to repentance and God's willingness to forgive again and again and again and again.

So we have that teaching there in the first four verses. And we get to verses five and six and we see Jesus is teaching another lesson to his disciples on faith. It's a common one that we see him teaching in the Gospels.

[11:07] Little faith, like a mustard seed that can do impossible things, right? And of course, what's the point of that lesson? It's not to say that if you just believe hard enough, you can do anything.

No, that's a worldly message. That's not a biblical message. No, what does Jesus mean to teach us there? He means to say that faith, God responds to faith by doing the impossible in your life.

Faith is at the heart of it and it only takes a little bit of it. And God responds with magnificent things in our lives. And then we get to the next section. We get to verses seven to 10 and we find this maybe strange story that Jesus is telling about a master and his servants.

It's a story about servant-hearted humility and submission to God. We might say it this way, it's a story about lordship and humble service to the king.

All right, and then comes this story that we just read. But we got to look at what comes after it.

That'll help us get the proper context. We see right in verses 20 all the way to 37, we see Jesus is now in a conversation with a group of Pharisees.

[12:20] And the whole conversation is about the coming kingdom. In verses 22 to 37, it's all focused on the kingdom that is to come at the end, the eschaton, right?

At the end when Jesus returns, the day of judgment that will come and what will that be like and what will the signs be like when the kingdom does finally come in its fullness. That's verses 22 to 37.

But Jesus does this thing that would have surprised the Pharisees, certainly they wouldn't have bought into it, and that's in verses 20 to 21. Before he says, yes, the kingdom is indeed coming, he says it's actually already here in some measure.

Just look at it in verse 20. Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom would come, he answered the kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed. They were looking for, in that moment, for these big signs, political arrangements and military arrangements and a particular king that's gonna sit on a throne and do all these things, things you can see.

Jesus says the kingdom isn't coming that way right now. You won't be able to see it the way that you think you'll be able to see it. Nor will they say, look, here it is, they're there. Why?

[13:31] Because the kingdom is in the midst of you, he says. It's in the midst of you. So there's this already, not yet view of the kingdom. Yes, it will come in its fullness, but it's already here in some measure.

Now, we take all of that into account and we realize, when we put this story in its context, what is it exactly that Luke's doing by telling us about these lepers?

We find that he's using it as a living illustration of all of these truths that Jesus was teaching in this chapter that he's arranged for us. He's got repentance, he's got faith, he's got lordship, he's got kingdom, he's got king, he's got all of it there right in the middle of it.

He says, now let me tell you this story about something that happened with Jesus and these lepers that perfectly shows all of these things and how they are lived out in practice.

Jesus' interaction with this man in particular, it reveals how the kingdom is already in our midst and its citizens are marked by repentance and faith and submission to Jesus as king.

[14:36] And the placement of it here, it emphasizes a sign that the kingdom has come in Jesus and that citizenship in that kingdom depends entirely on faith in him.

And that's the two parts that I want to point out to you here. First, I want you to see this. I want you to see the sign of the king, the sign of the king. Look again at verses 11 to 14. Let's just read this part of the story again.

On the way to Jerusalem, he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers who stood at a distance, lifted up their voices, saying, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

When he saw them, he said to them, go and show yourselves to the priest. And as they went, they were cleansed. Now, let's think about this first phrase.

He's on his way to Jerusalem, which is really how Luke is structuring his narrative. Beginning all the way back at chapter 9, he structures it around this final journey that Jesus is taking from Galilee to Jerusalem.

[ 15 : 45 ] And you know what he is moving to Jerusalem to do? To die on a cross. And that's how Luke is tracking these stories and these lessons along in his particular gospels.

Those who had a messianic thought of Jesus believed that he was going to get there and he was going to assume a throne, deliver Israel from Rome. If you think back, even if you've ever studied what we call the triumphal entry, what was that all about?

That's at the end of this journey that Luke's referring to. Jesus finally does get to Jerusalem and he rides on that donkey and what is it that the people do? They welcome him as a king.

They throw down their garments and the palm branches and they shout, Hosanna! Salvation is here! The Lord saves! And they're expecting Jesus is going to mount this donkey and he's going to ride it all the way to the throne.

Except that's not where he rides. He rides to the temple, doesn't he? He didn't come to sit on a throne, not at least in this instance. He came to die on a cross.

[ 16 : 50 ] God's king, he wasn't going to deliver his people by defeating Rome. He had come to deliver his people by defeating sin and making an atonement for their sin.

And we find Jesus is early in this journey at this point in Luke's gospel. And he's journeying north from Galilee, south to Jerusalem.

And he's going towards Samaria at this point. And of course, he and his disciples are met by a group of lepers as they entered the village. Now that the encounter took place at the entrance of the village makes a lot of sense, doesn't it?

Because lepers were excluded from society on account of their condition. This form of leprosy that we see notated in the gospels was a terrible terminal disease.

It involved skin lesions that would spread through the body and cause it to decay. It also affected the nervous system in a unique way.

[ 17 : 55 ] It created this numbing effect so that their brain wouldn't always register whenever they were sensing pain or when something was wrong. So you can imagine the longer that these people lived, it was a slow disease the way that it took over.

But the longer they would live, not only would their body be deteriorating, but they might would roll an ankle and not realize exactly what's happening. and it creates these other injuries that are unrelated to the skin lesions.

It's just a terrible way to have to live your life. Leprosy wasn't just a diagnosis. It was a death sentence.

A leper didn't just lose their health. They lost everything. They lost their family. They lost their home, their job, their community.

They weren't allowed to worship any longer in synagogue or temple either one. They're outcasts living on the fringes of society and barring a miracle in their lives, this kind of leprosy had a 100% death rate.

[ 19 : 03 ] Lepers were required to cover themselves, cover their faces whenever they would get within a certain distance from other people who were healthy. They would have to yell out, they'd cover their face and they'd have to yell out, unclean!

Unclean! It was the law. They were highly contagious. And here Jesus and his disciples are nearing a village in Samaria, bordering Samaria and Galilee.

And here's this group of lepers, this commune outside, 10 lepers, who cover their faces but it's not unclean that they yell out. Somehow they recognize who this is that's coming.

Perhaps there's a crowd that's following Jesus along. At this point, he's three years into this ministry. His fame was spread even beyond Israel at this point. They recognized who he was and they cry out, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

Such is the cry from many of the suffering people who encounter Jesus in the Gospels. Mercy from God through his Messiah was their only hope for life.

[ 20 : 18 ] And these poor souls did what any of us would have done. You've heard the stories of this great healer? And here he comes. Maybe before they had contracted the disease, maybe they had witnessed him do it or heard him teach.

They recognize him and they do what we would have done. Have mercy! Lord, have mercy. They begged for the great healer to show mercy and help him and what we find Jesus doing is what we find Jesus always doing.

He hears their cry and he answers and he heals them. And what's amazing about this particular miracle is that Jesus does it in the most undramatic way ever.

It's very quick. He doesn't converse with them at least in the way that Luke tells the story. He doesn't converse with them in any way. He doesn't touch them like we see him doing with other lepers.

There's very little interaction here. This is very undramatic, isn't it? What does he do? He just simply says, go show yourself to the priest. Now this was important. This was part of the law. In order to be able to reenter society again, to get their life back, they would have to go to the temple.

[ 21 : 28 ] They'd have to present themselves to the priest. Then eight days they would have to live and be monitored and observed before they would actually be allowed back into society. The people who went to present themselves before the priest were the people who believed themselves to have been healed of their disease or cleansed from their leprosy.

Jesus tells these men, if they were all men, he tells these ten lepers to go and present themselves to the priest except they're not clean. They're not healed. They're still leprous.

They're still leprous. Meaning that before anything's going to happen for them in this moment, some measure of faith and obedience has to come into play. Surely there was a discussion, right?

Who knows how long they've been out there together, dying. They've heard the stories, maybe they've heard about Jesus actually touching others and he's telling us to go to the priest. How can we do that?

They're not even going to let us in the city. Eventually they decide to do it and what happens? As they are on their way, they're cleansed suddenly.

[ 22 : 35 ] And this cleansing, it wouldn't have been minor. They had everything to gain, nothing to lose.

They set out for the temple and suddenly their skin becomes perfectly healthy. They're healthy. The broken bones that maybe they had suffered along the way are strong, set in place, missing fingers are suddenly present and functioning, whatever was the case.

Jesus never heals halfway. The cleansing he brings, it's total, it's complete and these lepers would have experienced new life and health to the fullest as a result of Jesus' kindness toward them.

It's not hard to see the symbolism here, is it? It's a symbol of the spiritual cleansing that Jesus came to bring all who will trust and obey him.

And that cleansing, just like the cleansing of these lepers, is total. It's complete. He doesn't do anything halfway. He doesn't come part of the way and expect you to come the rest of the way to complete the process.

[ 23 : 49 ] No, he does it all from start to finish. to the fullest. It lacks nothing at all. It comes entirely of Jesus' own kindness and compassion toward sinners.

Just like those lepers, spiritually speaking, each of us have a death sentence on our lives. 100% death rate. The only hope we have is a miracle from God that he will intervene, that he will show mercy to us, kindness and compassion to us.

Mercy from God through his king is your only hope. And if you will come through his king, your healing, your cleansing will be complete, paid in full.

Now the prophets foretold that a sign of the Messiah would be his power to heal. Jesus demonstrated that power on a remarkably massive scale.

John MacArthur used to talk about how Jesus essentially eradicated disease from Israel throughout his ministry. I mean, we're talking thousands and thousands and thousands of people who are

coming to him sometimes on a daily basis.

[ 25 : 13 ] They're being healed in tangible ways. It's not something that you could just quickly dismiss to say there's no way that happened. If there was maybe just a handful of people that Jesus had claimed to have healed, maybe so.

This is healing on a massive scale. Thousands of people. And what he did for these lepers doesn't even begin to scratch the surface of the power that he demonstrated throughout his three years of ministry.

And what was this all about? Why does Luke record all of these instances? Matthew and Mark and John the same. Why did they even add this in there? Well, it's not just to amaze us. It's to show us something about Jesus.

It's to say Jesus is that king that Isaiah said when he comes the blind will see and the lame will leap and the dumb will speak. It's marked in his existence and what he has done.

Just look at Jesus. He is the king. The savior king. God sends his people. That's the point. The first part of this story, I think.

[ 26 : 19 ] Yeah, there's compassion. There's this microcosm of a gospel story right here in these first few verses and all of it's pointing to the fact that Jesus is king.

The king has come. Well, then we get to the second part of the story and we see we move from a sign of the king to now we're seeing a citizen of the kingdom. Citizen of the kingdom.

Look at 15 to 19. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back. He was praising God with a loud voice and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet giving him thanks.

Now he's a Samaritan and Jesus answered, Were not ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?

And he said to him, that is he said to this former leper who has returned, Rise and go your way. Your faith has made you well. Now all of those lepers experienced an incredible life-changing miracle.

[ 27 : 32 ] This one experienced something that he could have never imagined here. Luke here, he moves from the many to the one. He's making a distinction in the work that Jesus is doing.

There is this big work that he's doing in the ten. There's a different work that he's doing in the one. It's significant. They were all cleansed of body.

This one, I believe, was cleansed of soul. And we find that in Jesus' final statement in verse 19. Literally it reads, Your faith has saved you.

An expression that he often communicated to those who he healed. It's a reference to spiritual salvation as distinct from physical healing.

healing. There's really no question as we understand the gospels that Jesus had more in mind here with this statement than healing from a disease. As God's king, Jesus affirmed this former leper as a new citizen of his kingdom.

[ 28 : 37 ] But why? And this is where Jesus' teaching throughout the chapter begins to show itself in this story. It's in the life of this one man. Just three things I think are helpful to note here.

First I want you to notice his return. His return. Look at verse 15 again. One of them, when he saw he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice.

Jesus says it again in verse 18. Was no one found to return and give praise but this one. Now remember at the beginning of the chapter Jesus taught this lesson on repentance that's to result in forgiveness.

It's not a coincidence that Luke is using language of repentance to describe how this man turned back, praising God with a loud voice.

Paul told the Romans in Romans chapter 2 and verse 4 that God's kindness and patience are meant to lead us to repentance. And here in the 10 lepers, we see an example of God's kindness and of his patience.

[ 29 : 50 ] A miracle that was meant to show them Jesus. A miracle that was meant to bring them to something deeper than physical healing. That was meant to bring them to repentance and now with the one, Luke is using this language of repentance, he turned back.

Jesus says he returns. Literally that word for repentance, a turning away and turning to God in these moments. All 10 lepers received God's grace and their healing but only this man turned even from the benefits of that healing to offer praise and thanksgiving to Jesus.

Now we need to think about what he was turning away from. going to the priest would have resulted in this man getting his life back.

And I would imagine after this encounter with Jesus he did indeed go to the priest and get his life back. But even that becomes a lesser priority than coming back to Jesus in this moment to offer his thanks and to give praise to God through the king.

Is that not a picture of real spiritual repentance? What he's turning away from in this moment is not some gross sin not some pagan heresy.

[ 31 : 24 ] He's turning away from life and health and everything good. But even the best things in true repentance become lesser things when it means that we're coming to Jesus in the process.

Isn't that what he's doing? There is no salvation without repentance and what this man did beautifully pictures what repentance unto salvation actually looks like.

So we see his return. Next I want you to see his faith. His faith. I look again at the second half of verse 15. He turned back and he was praising God with a loud voice just as a nice side note.

You can ask your kids this when they get home. They can get a piece of dessert if they get this right. The Greek language here literally means megaphone. Phones megalase.

Megaphone. He's coming and as he's on his way back to Jesus this is not subtle. You know he's not in the service singing the song and he's got his head down and he's hoping that nobody hears him because he might be a little embarrassed if they hear his voice.

[ 32 : 34 ] No, this man doesn't care. This is like a megaphone. He's praising God as he's on his way back to find Jesus in this moment. Now are we to assume that the other nine former lepers did not praise God as they journey to see the priest?

That's often how this story is presented isn't it? That well there were ten of them and they all received this healing but only one of them actually had any gratitude. But you know the text doesn't actually say that. What it does say is that one of them returned to Jesus.

It doesn't say that the other nine refused to have gratitude or that they didn't praise God. I would imagine on their way to the temple there's a pretty nice party going on. They're excited they're going to get their life back.

If they're Jews they would have understood this is coming because of God's mercy on my life.

Probably I would imagine a lot of praising going on. I don't think that the emphasis of this text is to say that they didn't praise God.

Jesus' emphasis is not just on the man's praise. It's on the fact that he returned to Jesus to offer that praise to God. At the very least he seems to have grasped that Jesus was God's representative and even Jesus' response suggests that the man understood him to be more than just a prophetic representative like the woman at the well.

[ 34 : 00 ] His eyes were opened to Jesus' messianic significance. This was God's promised king. It's not only that he's offering praise to God it's that he's offering praise to God through Jesus.

He falls at Jesus' feet and he offers his praise to God through thanksgiving to Jesus as a mediator of God's blessing on his life. And it's this faith in the heart of this man this faith in the person of Christ that Jesus responds to in verse 19 when he says your faith has saved you.

The others may very well have offered praise to God I imagine that they very likely did but they missed Jesus in the process of it and because they failed to recognize and return to Jesus they missed the greatest miracle of all in the story the cleansing of their souls.

You see without faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ there is no salvation. salvation your life may contain all kinds of praises to God whether that's just a general idea of God in your mind or maybe it's even in the context of Christian religion you may have all kinds of praise to offer but if you miss Jesus in the process of it you've missed everything.

If all you get out of this story is offering thanksgiving to God and you miss Jesus you've missed it all and if you go through this life affiliating with Christianity and showing up to church on Sunday and singing with everybody else when we go through the songs and sitting around the table at Thanksgiving saying God it's just been so good to me look at all that I have or whatever it is and you miss Jesus and all the process of it you've missed it all you've received some great benefits of his kindness but that doesn't make you a citizen of his kingdom his faith here is significant the picture of lordship as he cast himself at Jesus feet all part of this chapter isn't it and we find this third thing here we see his citizenship look again at verse 16 now he was a Samaritan verse 18 is no one found to return and give praise to

[ 36 : 28 ] God except this foreigner now this seems weird doesn't it why would Luke make an issue of this why would he bring out the fact that this man was a Samaritan well Luke's primary audience is not a Jewish audience can you imagine you're a Gentile you've been told your whole life as far as it goes with the Jewish God you're excluded and now Luke's writing this and he's telling about God's king and he's saying the guy that he responded to wasn't a Jew he was a Samaritan it's a pretty big deal isn't it Jesus is making a big point here by calling him a foreigner he's not degrading him that's not what Jesus is doing he's not he's making a point about the kingdom part of the of his kingdom and of his true people citizens of

Christ's kingdom are not marked by ethnicity they're not marked by political alignment they are marked solely by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ thus Jesus tells the Pharisees in verse 21 that the kingdom of God is already in the midst of them first it's in their midst because Jesus is there he's the king the representative of the kingdom but from there it's present in people from every nation who trust and love and follow him that's how the kingdom breaks through even now it's not a Jewish kingdom it's not an Israeli kingdom it's God's kingdom and it's universal it's global international and it's breaking through even now just like a summer day when an afternoon rain storm comes through and you've got all the dark clouds but as the storm begins to break you start to see these flashes of light from the sun it may still be raining!

It may still be blowing hard but you see maybe in the distance these lights of the sun poking through the clouds just like that even now we're going to see the sun in its fullness one day but even now there's these rays of the kingdom that they're shining through and they're shining through entirely based on those who come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that's how the kingdom comes Kevin de young says the kingdom comes when and where the king is known when Jesus is loved and worshipped and believed upon there the kingdom of God is in the midst of you citizenship!

in the kingdom eternal salvation in other words it's not about ethnicity political alignment or even religious affiliation in and of itself salvation is all about where you stand with the king Jesus the eternal king and entrance into his kingdom comes exclusively through faith in him exclusively there is no other way and all who come to him in faith are welcomed into his kingdom all everyone it doesn't matter what you've done up to this point in your life it doesn't matter how unclean you actually are in my eyes or anybody else's eyes you are welcomed by your king if you will come to him the way he said to come to him which is in repentance and faith there's really two miracles that's happening in this story the cleansing!

cleansing of the ten lepers gets all the attention right but it's the cleansing of the one that really the story is about all of Jesus' miracles there were they're meant to be these signs that he is indeed God's son and Messiah they aren't ends in and of themselves in the text they are means by which these authors are revealing the true nature of Jesus because once we see who he is only then will we begin to understand the significance of his arrival and why he came and ultimately he didn't come to heal our diseases he came to forgive our sins and the only way that those sins will be forgiven is if he himself pays for them in our place remember the first line of the section where is he going he is on his way to

[ 41 : 46 ] Jerusalem what is going to do when he gets there he is going to lay down his life for this leper that came back and fell at his feet and worshipped him he is going to lay down his life for you and for me that's how the kingdom comes the king gives himself for his people in his death and resurrection those who trust in him receive forgiveness of sins they receive entrance into the kingdom and if like the man in this story you will turn to him today you too will be saved Advent is a season of preparation that unfolds into celebration puts us in the shoes of Israel in the Old Testament as they're waiting for the fulfillment of the promise and of course December 25th rolls around and it breaks into celebration that the promise has actually been fulfilled but of course looking from this side of the cross the

Advent season is a little bit different for us isn't it it actually starts with celebration now doesn't it because the king has already come it's rooted in celebration as we prepare and anticipate another Advent another arrival and though his kingdom is already in our midst we await its fullness at his return and with glad and joyful hearts we celebrate as we prepare for that great and glorious day and perhaps this story will be a help to you as you meditate on the real reason that we celebrate over these next 24 or 25 days let's pray do