

Behold Your King

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[0 : 00] Well, this morning we continue in the book of John, and we will be reading starting in chapter 18 this morning. I would just remind us where we have been and where we're leading into.

So Christ has been arrested, and remember as Jonathan preached, he talked about over a thousand or perhaps a thousand soldiers went up to the Garden of Gethsemane to take him captive and to bring him down that he might be tried as a criminal.

And first he was delivered to Annas, and then he was delivered to Caiaphas, and now we see that he's been delivered to Pilate as we read this morning starting in verse 28 of chapter 18.

So I would ask if you're able, in honor of God's word, would you stand as his word is read this morning? Verse 28, then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters.

It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. So Pilate went outside to them and said, what accusation do you bring against this man?

[1 : 29] They answered him, if this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you. Pilate said to them, take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.

The Jews said to him, it is not lawful for us to put anyone to death. Pilate said to him, are you the king of the Jews?

Pilate answered, do you say this of your own accord or did others say it to you about me? Pilate answered, am I a Jew?

Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done? Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting that I might not be delivered over to the Jews.

But my kingdom is not from this world. Then Pilate said to him, so you're a king? Jesus answered, you say that I'm a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world to bear witness to the truth.

[2 : 50] Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice. Pilate said to him, what is truth? After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, I find no guilt in him.

But you have a custom that I should release one man to you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews? They cried out again, not this man, but Barabbas.

Now Barabbas was a robber. Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe.

They came up to him saying, hail, king of the Jews. And struck him with their hands. Pilate went out again and said to them, see, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him.

So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, behold the man. When the chief priest and the officers saw him, they cried out, crucify him, crucify him.

[3 : 56] Pilate said to them, take him yourselves and crucify him. For I find no guilt in him. The Jews answered him, we have a law. And according to the law, he ought to die because he made himself the son of God.

When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, where are you from? But Jesus gave him no answer.

So Pilate said to him, you will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you? Jesus answered him, you would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above.

Therefore, he who delivered me over to you has a greater sin. From then on, Pilate sought to release him. But the Jews cried out, if you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar. So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at the place called the Stone Pavement in an Aramaic Gabbatha.

[5 : 02] Now it was the day of preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, behold your king. They cried out, away with him, away with him, crucify him.

Pilate said to them, shall I crucify your king? The chief priest answered, we have no king but Caesar. So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

Let's pray again. Father, we ask this morning that your word would touch us deeply.

That you would show us the depth of the word here as we read about our Savior, our Lord, our Redeemer, Jesus. Lord, I pray that you would open our mind to understand these truths this morning.

And Father, you would reveal to us what it might mean to each of us. And I pray in your name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[6 : 05] You can have a seat. Thank you for standing so long. I want you to notice a couple of things, or at least I want to spend our time this morning on a couple of things.

One is the narrative itself. I want to share a little bit about the narrative and make some insight into the narrative. But also I want to look at these last words of Jesus. After this section in Scripture, he speaks very few words.

These are some of the last words he speaks. And we see an insight as he speaks to Pilate. He speaks truths that I want us to look at this morning. First, the narrative. So I'd ask you if you would, hopefully you've got your Bible and you could glance at it and look at it as we walk through the Scriptures here.

In verse 28, I want you to see this. As Jesus is led from Caiaphas to Pilate, it begs the question, why do they need to take him to Pilate?

Well, we understand that the Romans were really the rulers. They had given the Jews some freedoms. So the Jews in their religion had the freedom to have a police force.

[7 : 14] They had the freedom to, in some capacity, rule their people to keep them under control. Pilate and the Romans had given them a little freedom in that arena.

And so we see that they tried Jesus as Jewish leaders. That is before Annas and before Caiaphas. And yet they still took him to Pilate.

Why? Because they determined, and by the way, they predetermined that he should be killed. They did not have that freedom. That is, they could not kill a man even though they had some freedom in the Roman rule or under the Roman rule.

And so they take him to Pilate. I want you to see the irony of what we see here in verse 28. It says this, it says, Isn't it interesting that these men, these leaders, they did not want to defile themselves because they wanted to worship God throughout this Passover feast and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Isn't it ironic that they want to worship and yet God himself is standing before him and they demand that he be crucified? Do you see the irony in that?

[8 : 39] They claim that they desire to worship. They claim that they want to honor God and yet God's standing before them and they would prefer him to be crucified.

They don't see him for who he is. They don't recognize him as the Messiah. Isn't it interesting what they claim to Pilate?

So certainly when they take him to Pilate, they have to have a reason to deliver him to Pilate. And what reason do they give to deliver to Pilate? They say he's doing evil. And so isn't it interesting that they would use that term and Pilate said, Well, what Roman rule have they broken?

Why are you bringing him to me and you're saying he's done something evil? What has he done? If he's done something evil, that's a moral issue. That's not a legal issue.

You take him yourself and you try him. I see in the text, in this narrative, do you notice that three times he tries to sweep this away?

[9 : 48] He tries to not walk through the process of this trial. He tries to let Jesus go. Do you see it as we walk through this text? First he tells him, that's not my responsibility.

He didn't break a Roman law. You take him and judge him according to your law. He tries to hand it back to them. He doesn't want to try Jesus. We see again that at one point, even though it's not told here in the text, if we look in the other Gospels, we see that he actually sent him to Herod because he heard that he was a Galilean.

And he sent Jesus to Herod and said, Herod, he's yours. He's from your neck of the woods. You try him. And so Herod takes him and he's excited about it. He's heard a lot about Jesus, but he's never met him.

He's never seen him. He's always wanted to see and meet Jesus. He's wanted to see some of these miracles he's heard so much about. And so they send him to Herod. What does Herod do? He talks to him and he tries him. He says, I can't find anything that's worthy of death in him. And what do they do? They put a robe on him as if he really is a king. So this accusation that he's a king, that he is a detriment to the Roman Empire, he's a detriment to Caesar.

[11:02] When they met Jesus, when they tried Jesus, when they talked to Jesus, did they come away to the conclusion that he was a risk in the Roman Empire? Of course not. And we'll see that as we walk through the narrative a little bit.

And then finally, in the narrative, Pilate asked him, are you a king? Why would he ask that question? Where does that come from?

Well, we have to understand that Pilate would have had to approve the Roman soldiers who were dispatched the night before up to the Mount of Olives to arrest this guy who the Jews said is saying he's a king.

He's claiming kingship. Now let me ask this question. Did Jesus ever claim to be a king? You know, he did talk about his kingdom a lot, didn't he?

It's also interesting. Do you remember in Matthew chapter 2 when Jesus was born? You remember the wise men, as we call them from the east, who traveled for a long time and they went to Herod's house or to meet with Herod and they said to Herod, where is the king that has been born?

[12:28] He's like, what are you talking about? A king? I don't know of any king. He said, yes, we've seen his star and we've come to worship him as king.

And he says, well, he calls his wise men. Where is this king going to be born? Well, he's going to be born in Bethlehem. So he dispatches these wise men and they go to Bethlehem and they find this king.

And they give him what? Gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh that are worthy of a king. And so we, with our eyes as we read the scripture, do we see Jesus as a king?

Absolutely. Do you know what the Old Testament prophesied? It said in the Davidic covenant, it said, David, I promise you, God's saying, I promise you, there will always be from your line a king on the throne.

You know what that was pointing to? It was pointing to the king of kings, that is Jesus. You know, Jesus prophetically, it was always said the Messiah would come from the line of David.

[13:31] And sure enough, when he was born, he came from the line of David, the tribe of Judah, and he was established as a king. We think of a king, we think political, right?

But as we look at the words of Christ, we see that he shares with Pilate that he's got the wrong idea. The Jews are accusing him of being a political king.

He never said he was going to be a political king. The scriptures never indicated he would be a political king. Never indicated he would have a kingship on this earth in the same way that the Romans had.

So we look and see what Jesus said. He said this, in verse 38, he said, Jesus said, my kingdom is not of this world. Matter of fact, if my kingdom were of this world, if I had a political kingdom, guess what?

My servants would be fighting now. Because you've arrested me, they would be attacking right now that I might be freed. But my kingdom is not of this world. Well, it begs the question, what is your kingdom, Jesus?

[14:41] We will talk about that in a minute. And so we see him interacting with Pilate, and Pilate is confused. Number one, he's like, how is this guy standing before me with no fear?

Why is it that I ask him a question and he doesn't even answer? He's not afraid at all. He's baffled by this scenario. And what he sees is that Jesus is not guilty of what these Jews have claimed.

And he does many things to try to release him. Matter of fact, he uses one of the... I'm lacking the word on a second.

Every year at the feast, it was common for Pilate to grant freedom to one prisoner who was locked away. And that was something that the Jews expected every year.

And so Pilate, in his mind, was thinking, well, you know, the reason Jesus is here, because they're jealous of him, because he has a following of people. And the Jews are starting to look to Jesus more than they're looking to the Sanhedrin and the leaders of the people.

[15:52] So it's out of jealousy that they sent him to me. I will fix this. Now, I'm putting words in his mouth to understand. But he says, to the people, to the wider audience of people, who do you want me to release this year?

Do you want me to release Barabbas, by the way, the worst of the criminals that he had locked away? Or do you want me to release the king of the Jews? Behind the scenes, it's obvious that the Jews had selected, hand-selected people to be there and told them, when this opportunity comes up, you make sure you don't pick Barabbas.

You pick him to be crucified. You pick Barabbas to be freed. Isn't it interesting that only a few days before this, when Jesus came riding in on a donkey, you remember what was said?

On what we call Palm Sunday? Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the king of Israel.

The king of Israel. They, the common people, were claiming that he was the Messiah, that he was the king. And yet here we are now, this group of people, this gathering of people.

[17:10] And I want you to understand, it's not all the people. This is a small courtyard in Pilate's personal residence. It's not all the people.

It's a small number of people that had gathered before, are gathered early before any court should ever be in session.

They hand-selected this people in order they might demand that he be crucified. You know what's interesting to me? Another irony here. So Pilate is interrogating Jesus.

And ultimately, Pilate is going to send him to be crucified. Isn't it ironic that there's coming a day on the judgment day when Pilate himself will be interrogated?

And you know what? Pilate is going to be condemned. It's interesting how Jesus was willing to walk the road the Father had given him to walk.

[18:12] I want you to see too that Pilate knew that he shouldn't crucify this guy. But how odd is it that the Jews, I don't understand necessarily how the Jews had power over Pilate to make him do what he did not want to do?

How is that? How did the Jews have so much power over this man who should be leading this part of the Roman kingdom?

What is it that he was afraid of? You know, we get a little insight into the passions of these people. We can even look at Asia Minor and just the Arabic people or passionate people.

Even in Ephesus, you remember when Paul was there and they were crying for the space of two hours, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. Great is the Diana of the Ephesians. And what was said by the proconsul in that area, it said, y'all need to be quiet.

We're going to be called into question for this riot today. And it might be that we will have to face the judgment of the Roman Empire. You know, the same is true for Pilate.

[19:27] He, as if he was said, as if he was given this charge by the emperor himself, you go and you rule there and you control those people.

You've got all the power you need. You've got the army at your disposal. You keep those people under control. Well, what were the Jews doing?

Their influence over the people was great. And there was starting to be this surge of energy, the surge of emotion, the surge of yelling, crucify him, crucify him.

And out of fear, likely, of the possibility of a riot and uproar and what that would mean to him and his rule, likely that is what drove him to say, enough.

It's done. Send it. Do it. Do it. Now, I want us to look at the words of Christ, the words he says.

[20:25] And I see here, this morning, I see four main truths that Jesus shares with Pilate that I want to spend some time with. Those four truths are this. He shares about his kingdom.

He shares about his purpose. He shares about his people. And he shares about his father. Again, his kingdom, his purpose, his people, and his father.

First, I want to talk about his kingdom. And this is where we will spend the bulk of our time this morning. So let me ask this question. What is his kingdom? Where is his kingdom? When will his kingdom start? Isn't it interesting that he talks a lot about this kingdom, but it's hard for us to define what it is? And so I'd ask you, if you had to define what Jesus means by his kingdom, what does he mean?

What is he talking about? You know, as I've grown in my faith and wondered about this very thing when the kingdom is mentioned, I always thought it was this heavenly kingdom that's in the future. [21 : 35] I thought he was talking about heaven, that he was going to be the king of heaven and when all of time was done, then his kingdom would start at that point. But you know, that's not what the scriptures indicate.

So I want us to take a look at this. And I want to remind us of this verse in Matthew 6.10. It is him and the Sermon on the Mount that is Jesus. He's sharing the Sermon on the Mount and he says when you pray, pray this or pray like this, doesn't he? Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name and then what does he say?

Thy kingdom come. What is he saying? You know, look at the words right following it. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it also is in heaven or on earth as it is in heaven.

Thy kingdom come. What is he saying? What does he mean? You know, Paul talks about this kingdom to the Colossian church and in Colossians Paul says this and I feel like my microphone is getting stuck here.

[22 : 56] Where is that thing? Sorry, it's falling off my head. You know, bear with me. See, there can be a lot of distractions, right? So if you can't hear me, I'll take it off and then I'll just keep talking.

So in Colossians it says this, He, God, has delivered us from the dominion or the domain of darkness or it might be said here the kingdom of darkness and has transferred us or translated us into the kingdom of his beloved son.

Let me read that again. God has delivered us, Christians, from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his dear son. Christian, you've been transferred already into the kingdom of his dear son.

So you see in this passage there's two kingdoms. There's a kingdom over which the dark kingdom reigns and there's a kingdom over which God reigns. One is called the kingdom of darkness. One is called the kingdom of light and you realize that neither one of these are political. Both of these are spiritual. And so when he talks to Pylee, he said, my kingdom is not of this world.

[24 : 08] What does he mean? He means his kingdom is spiritual in nature. His kingdom is spiritual. Those who've been born again have been transferred from one kingdom into this other kingdom, the kingdom of light by the power of God.

In the book of Mark, again, what I want to ask is what is it, when is it, and where is it? What is the kingdom, when is the kingdom, and where is the kingdom?

I want to start with this. When is the kingdom? When does this kingdom start? When will the kingdom of Christ, or when Christ will take his reign or seat and reign over his kingdom, when will it start?

What would you say now if I ask you that question? When will it start? Is it going to start in the future when time is no more or does it start now? Did it start back then? When did it start?

Let's see what the scriptures say. In Mark 1, verse 14, it says this, Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God and saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand.

[25 : 26] Repent and believe in the gospel. The kingdom of God is at hand. And so what we can say about the kingdom of God is when Jesus was in ministry, he makes this statement that the kingdom of God is at hand.

The spiritual kingdom is now according to Jesus as he's ministering. John 9, excuse me, Mark 9 says this, and he said to them, that is Jesus speaking to his disciples, Truly I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.

There are some that will not die before they see the kingdom of God come with power. Hmm. So the kingdom of God is not this thing that's out in the distance.

It's not this heavenly kingdom that won't start until eternity begins. It's now. It started in the time of Christ. The men that were living at that time would see the kingdom of God come in power.

In Luke chapter 9 and 10, you might remember at one point during his ministry, he sent the twelve out to proclaim the gospel and to heal and to cast out demons as they went.

[26 : 58] He sent them on a mission to prepare their hearts for the Messiah. He did that also in another setting with 72. He sent them out in pairs to all the cities to which he was going to travel and preach.

and it says this. The word of God says, go, he's saying this to the disciples in the 72, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.

Go and proclaim the kingdom of God. You know, if he said that to you and me, what would we be proclaiming? What is this kingdom that we would proclaim? Then later on down in chapter 10, it says this.

He says to the 72, heal the sick in each of these towns that you visit and in it say to them, the kingdom of God has come near to you. But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into the streets and say, even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off against you.

Nevertheless, know this, that the kingdom of God has come near to you. The kingdom of God. When is the kingdom of God?

[28 : 17] That's the question we're trying to answer. When? Do you notice that it was during the time of Christ? It was during the ministry of Christ when Christ is saying, the kingdom is beginning now.

And we'll talk about the significance of this this morning. You remember when Christ said, as this ministry was happening, he said, the hour is not yet.

It's not quite time. The hour is not yet. And then finally he said, the hour has come. What hour? The hour when he would suffer this last week of his life. And he said, he says this.

He said, Father, glorify your name. The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. And then it goes on to say, Jesus said, now is the judgment of this world.

Now will the ruler of this world be cast out. Now. What does he mean now? What the scripture is talking about is that when Jesus is glorified, something is going to happen in the spiritual realm that is very significant.

[29 : 23] It has all to do with the kingdom of God. Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out. Who is the ruler of this world?

Of course, it's Satan. And he says he's going to be cast out. Well, he's going to be cast out from where? He's going to be cast out from heaven. Before the sacrifice of Christ, before the offering of his body for the sins of man, what could Satan do?

He could stand before God and he could say, guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty to all of us sinners. Was he justified in saying that?

Of course he was. He had access to the throne of God to accuse you and me of sin and he was right in saying it because we all are that, sinners.

But something is happening through the death of Jesus that changes the scope of the kingdom. He said he is setting up a kingdom that is based on his sacrifice.

[30 : 37] Let's look at Revelation right quick. Y'all know I love going back there. For those of y'all who were in that class, I can't, I don't have time to establish the whole text here but I'm reading out of chapter 12 of Revelation.

You remember the story where there was a woman and a child and a dragon and the dragon tried to kill the child and the child was taken up to heaven. that is a symbolic picture of Jesus' resurrection.

And so in reference to Jesus' resurrection, we read this in Revelation chapter 12. It says, as now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the, excuse me, fighting against the dragon and the dragon and his angels fought back.

But he was defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. and the great dragon was thrown down or cast out. That ancient serpent who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, he was thrown down to earth and his angels were thrown down with him.

And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, now, now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ, remember what happened when Christ was resurrected?

[31 : 58] And remember what he said to you and me, specifically to those who were disciples in that day, all authority has been given to me, therefore go and make disciples of all nations.

All authority is given to me. Here it says, the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down. Do you see the association of this dark kingdom and this kingdom of light? Before the death of Jesus, before he shed his blood, the enemy had access to accuse. But you know what happened with the death of Christ? All of his children are covered by the blood of Jesus. The enemy no longer has access. He is thrown out. And when the enemy tries to accuse me now, to the Father, what does the Father say? Blood of Jesus. Blood of Jesus. He's mine. He's mine. [33 : 00] She's mine. She's mine. And what's the devil do? He can't do a thing. Because we've been bought with the blood of Jesus. That is when his kingdom started.

It's the kingdom of God that's not a political kingdom. And I want us to see that the win is the resurrection of Jesus.

Defeated sin. It defeated death. It defeated Satan. The resurrection of Jesus. And now I ask the question, where? Where is the kingdom?

This kingdom he talks about. Is it in a place? Far away? This heavenly kingdom? Is this kingdom here on this globe? This earth? Is it going to move from one place to another?

Where is the kingdom? You know, it's important for us to understand this. It changes our walk. It changes our walk. And I want you to see the depth of what he's saying.

[34 : 04] So here it is. This is in the book of Luke chapter 17. And this is Christ being. It says, the kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed.

Isn't it interesting? You know, an earthly kingdom, you can see guys riding on horses. You can see the defense of a city. You can see the king with his regalia on.

He has his robe on. He has his crown on. He sits on his chair. You can see it. But here, this kingdom is not coming in ways that can be observed. there's something about this kingdom that is not physical.

The kingdom he's talking about is spiritual. And notice what he says. The kingdom of God is coming in ways, not coming in ways that can be observed. Nor will they say, look, here it is.

Or, there it is. For behold, the kingdom of God is within you. When is it when Jesus died?

[35 : 07] He purchased for himself a people. Where is it? It's in our hearts. Do you know the kingdom of God is within? And then I ask the question, what is it then?

What is this kingdom of God? I mean, how can a kingdom be within? Well, when we understand what it is, then we understand how it can be within.

So, what is this kingdom? I turn to Romans chapter 14 and I read this. This is Paul speaking to the church at Rome and he says this, the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking.

What does that say? It's not physical. The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

You know what the kingdom of God is? You know what Christ purchased for you and me? He purchased this kingdom. He is the king of a kingdom that is within.

[36 : 15] And what did he purchase? He purchased righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Do you know the gift that we've been given? Do you know what it means to be a part of this kingdom?

Is that we're born again and we're indwelt with the Holy Spirit and as a result of being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, you know what he's doing? He's doing this thing called righteousness. He imputed in our lives righteousness.

Though I was sinful, you know what's happened? Because of the blood of Christ, I've been cleansed, I've been purified, I've been made right, I've been purchased, I've been redeemed. I'm a part of the kingdom.

It's what he's done within me. And what is the result of that? I'm going to experience peace, I'm going to experience joy. Have we heard that in scriptures before? You know what he says about abiding?

He says, apart from me you can do nothing. I ask you to abide. I command you to abide. Why? Why does he want us to abide? You know, if you look at verse 11 of John 15, you know what it says?

[37 : 16] I've told you these things in order that you might have joy and have it to the full. You know where true, lasting, genuine joy comes from?

It's not from winning the ball game. It's not from your team winning last night ACC championship. That's not where joy comes. It's not from killing the big deer with the big rack, brother.

That's not where joy truly comes from. All that is temporary. You know where joy comes from? Abiding. You know where joy comes from? It's the movement of the Holy Spirit in our life. He's gifted us this gift that we would be part of his kingdom.

And what is his kingdom? It's him within. It's the effect of the Holy Spirit in our lives. That's the kingdom. That's what he's saying to Pilate.

This is what he's purchased. You know what's interesting? In light of what I've shared, the when is when he died, the where is in our heart, the what is the effect in our life?

[38 : 24] What is it? It's the rule of Christ. You know we sang a song this morning that used the word reign. Y'all know what it is for a king to reign? That means his subjects honor him.

His subjects do what he said they're going to do. He reigns over the kingdom. What does it mean for Christ to reign over the kingdom in your life? What does that mean?

Does he reign in your life? We read it earlier. You know what it means? It means like the prayer, your will be done on earth that is in my life as it is in heaven.

Do you think God's will is done in heaven? Do you think it's done perfectly? You know what the call is for us and his kingdom that we would honor his will? That we would live for him?

Y'all remember Matthew 6.33? If you've heard me preach you've heard this verse come out of my mouth many times. You know what it says? It says seek first what? What is he saying?

[39 : 29] Seek first the kingdom of God. You know what he's saying? When he's saying seek the kingdom of God he's not saying something in the future. When he says seek the kingdom of God he says seek this that he would reign in your life today and tomorrow and the next day and the next day.

Seek first his reign. You know what that looks like? Obedience. You know what it says? If you love me how will you live? According to the book of John if you love me you will obey my commands. The picture of love of God is obedience. And where does the ability to be obedient come from? The indwelling Holy Spirit.

You know what he's done? He's gifted us a life of fellowship with the Father. And what is the vehicle by which we have intimate fellowship that we would allow him to reign in our life?

So I would define the kingdom of God in this way. Here it is. It's the reign and I stole this by the way from a preacher I really really respect down in Atlanta. He says this it's the reign of Christ the king in the hearts of his kingdom people that grows extensively and intensively.

[40 : 45] Let me say that again. It's the reign of Christ the king in the hearts of his kingdom people Christians that grows extensively how does it grow extensively?

Do you know that there's people being added every day to the kingdom of God? Do you know that somewhere in the world there's people that are coming to Christ even here that are coming to Christ?

It's growing and growing and growing. What can stop the growth of the church? Can Satan? You know what God said about his church?

I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail. You know what's happening to his kingdom? It's growing. You know what else is happening inside of us? It's growing extensively and he's just touching a lot of people it's growing intensively.

Do you find in your life more of a desire to honor God than you did when you were first a believer? Do you find in your life that you serve him more than you obey him more than you do than you did when you were first a believer?

[41 : 48] Has his reign in your life increased? Brothers and sisters that is where peace and joy is found. Why would we not walk in that way?

Why would we not desire his reign in our life? Why do we chase after these idols and these fake things that don't satisfy and don't give joy? Why? He says to Pilate my kingdom is not of this world. So you are a king. You know doesn't it imply that he's a king? He says three times my kingdom my kingdom my kingdom well if you've got a kingdom then you must be a king.

Stands to reason doesn't it? And what did he say? He said it is as you say. You say that I am a king it is as you say.

For this purpose what purpose Jesus? You all with me in verse 37? Verse 37 says this second point is purpose. We've talked about his kingdom. Now I want to at least briefly touch on what is his

purpose.

[42 : 52] For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world. What purpose Jesus? He's referring right back to what was said. To be a king I was born and to be a king I have come into this world.

To bear witness of the truth. Pilate's like what in the world are you talking about? What is truth? What are you talking about? I'm so confused right now. What are you trying to say? Your kingdom's not in this world. You're wanting to share truth. I don't even know what truth is. He's confused but we want to look and see what he's saying. Let me say it this way. His kingdom is to be established by the witness of eternal truth. Let me say it again. His kingdom is to be established by the witness of eternal truth.

Which he had known with the father which he alone could declare to man. Do you know that Jesus says I am the way, the truth, and the life? It is this truth that people need to hear, right?

[43 : 57] How is the kingdom established? It's always established by the hearing of truth. Do you believe it? Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. How will we ever get to the place where we believe that he is who he says he is? Faith. That Jesus died for you and me. How do we embrace that? By faith. Where does faith come from? Him. It comes from the word. Jesus comes and he shares the truth. He reveals the holiness of God and you know what he reveals to?

He reveals our sinfulness. What is the truth? The truth is all of us are sinful. Every one of us are sinful. And then the question is how many sins does it take for us to be considered sinful? Ask Adam. How many did it take for him? He was kicked out of the garden. Any sin is in opposition to the holiness of God. So truth says this that every one of us are a sinner.

[45 : 00] Every one of us because of our sins are separated from a holy God and are in trouble of eternal separation from God. But God provided a savior. His name was Jesus. And for all who trust in Jesus for forgiveness of their sins based on his death on my behalf and your behalf, God grants us salvation.

He allows us to be part of his kingdom. He draws us in as ones who have been saved for this purpose I was born that is to be a king I was born.

Do we believe that? Remember what we said early when we read in early Matthew in the wise men come and they said where is the king? His star is in the sky.

We've been following him. We know he's here somewhere. Where is he? You know all the prophets he said there's going to be a king born. He's going to be in the line of David. It's going to be the king. And that king is bringing righteousness.

That king will care for his people. Do you think Jesus cares for his people? You know he cares for you and I in a spiritual way deeper than probably we understand.

[46 : 10] He has gifted to us righteousness. We weren't righteous but he died that we might be made righteous. And then third his people. Who were his people? Look here it says he came to bear witness to the truth.

Everyone who is of the truth listens. Where have you heard that before? Everyone who is of the truth listens. What did we read in John 10 it said his sheep hear his voice.

Right? They listen to him. It's like they're drawn to him. There is a people the people of God those are a part of his kingdom that hear the truth.

In what way is this true for you and I? Let me just say that apart from understanding our sin and our separation and our need for a savior we would never be in the kingdom.

Briefly let me just share with you what Paul shared with the Romans. He said this he said my heart is breaking because the Jews are confused they're passionate they chase hard after God they make their lives very moral on the outside and yet he says this he says my heart desire and prayer to God for them the Jews that they might be saved for I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God they're very religious but not according to knowledge for being ignorant of the righteousness and the holiness of God they're seeking to establish their own righteousness do you know there's no way to earn a spot in his kingdom you can't be good enough you can't be righteous enough because like Isaiah said or like the Old Testament said our righteousness is as filthy rags

[48 : 06] I mean our righteousness our self righteousness is not based on his glory we're accomplishing something that we call righteous but God says there's no one good not one that

when I look at goodness I see righteousness righteousness means it's absolutely purely for him and him alone not for us there's no one righteous not one and these Jews are seeking to establish their own righteousness how I tithe I go to church I pray every day I give alms to the poor I feed the hungry I do all these things God I'm good right Paul Paul is grieving that they're trying to become Christians by what they do to get into God's kingdom by their own effort it isn't done that way the word of God says this listen if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead do you believe that I'm speaking to all of us now do you believe that you need to confess sin do you see sin in your own life you know some of us are born again believers and maybe some of us here are not

Christians yet you know at one point none of us were Christians there's a process of understanding that we have to walk a road we have to walk to realize what it really means to be a Christian what does it mean here you recognize your sin you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord that he has been exalted that he did die and was resurrected up to heaven and you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved for with the heart one believes not with the head not cognitive assent it's with the heart there's something stirring that says I know this is true I know this is true with the heart one believes and is justified and with the mouth one confesses and say everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved you know how many everyone everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved let me ask is there anyone in here this morning that you're still seeking you're still trying to understand what this all means and you would in the honesty of your heart say

I don't think that I know yet I don't think that I'm a Christian yet I don't understand what it all means there's something drawing me but I don't really understand it you know what he says I just want you to hear this and if it doesn't stick today you just put it in and you listen to what the word of God says everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved everyone who confesses I'm a sinner and I believe that Jesus was the Messiah I believe he died on a cross and God accepted his sacrifice on my behalf God I'm asking you to cover my sins based on what Jesus did for me God would you change my life would you be you know here's the tie back to the truth it says so faith comes from hearing and hearing comes from what faith comes from hearing or hearing from the heart faith comes from hearing or understanding what the truth you know

I just shared with you the gospel that is the truth it were sinners separated from God in need of a savior and he's willing to forgive all who ask him to forgive isn't it interesting that he says to Pilate he says you don't even know my father you think that you have authority over me you don't have any authority over me except what my father has given you there's something going on here that's so much bigger than you can possibly imagine Pilate you think you're ruling no you're not ruling you're just placed there for a purpose the one who's ruling is above he's the one that gave you your authority he's the one that's put this plan in motion and this plan is for me to die and I'm walking right in it I'm walking in it let's pray father we're humbled that though we're sinners and lord I seem to learn more and more and more the depth of my sin is far greater than I ever thought father in our sin you were gracious to us that you were willing to send your son to die in order that we might receive the forgiveness that you offer through your son Jesus lord for those here this morning that aren't yet believers would you soften their heart to understand and would you help them understand these truths and their need of a savior for those of us who are born again and in the kingdom god would you stir within us a desire for obedience a desire for you to reign in our life that lord you would so change our life that we wouldn't desire the idols and the temptations of this world that god we would desire for you to reign that you might be glorified like you deserve in our lives I pray in Christ's name amen