



JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, KING, AND SAVIOR

Part 80 of Luke's Gospel: Investigating the Man Who Is God

Pastor Mark Driscoll | Luke 19:45–20:8 | July 03, 2011

LUKE 19:28–44

²⁸ And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹ When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰ saying, “Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹ If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ you shall say this: ‘The Lord has need of it.’” ³² So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. ³³ And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, “Why are you untying the colt?” ³⁴ And they said, “The Lord has need of it.” ³⁵ And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. ³⁶ And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. ³⁷ As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, ³⁸ saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” ³⁹ And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.” ⁴⁰ He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.”

⁴¹ And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, ⁴² saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side ⁴⁴ and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

INTRODUCTION

We love kingdoms and weddings. It’s amazing. Almost all the great children’s stories, fairy tales, and kids movies are built around these big ideas of kingdoms and weddings, either separately or collectively. And it starts when you’re little. Having kids, I see it all the time. My boys love to dress up, the ones when they were little or the one that still is little, like a prince or a king, put a crown on, get a sword, slay bad guys, ensure peace and prosperity. My daughters, especially my youngest, Alexie, it’s all about being a princess. You had a girl? It’s all about being a princess: getting all dressed up, the shoes, the crown, tiara, all of it.

And kids love it. At a young age, there’s just something in their heart about being a prince or a princess or a king or a queen and having a kingdom and ruling and dominion and domain. And as we get older, some of our thoughts turn more toward weddings, on getting married, and a lot of gals are thinking about who they’ll marry and what they’ll wear on their wedding day and how that can be the perfect day and everything could be put together.

THE WEDDING PROCESSIONAL

If you’ve been to a wedding, you know the real big transitional moment. Everybody’s just sort of hanging out and everything’s calm. And then all of a sudden, who comes in first? The groom. And there’s the processional. He’s got his guys with him, and in they walk. And you know, oh, it’s about time. It’s about time.

And for the bride, the big moment for her is when they open the doors—remember that moment, ladies? Those of you who have been married? What’s she hoping to see? Who’s she hoping to see? “I hope there’s a groom on the other side of this door.” Otherwise it’ll be like one of those really bad movies. So for her she’s got this anxiety. She’s all dressed up in white. The doors open or the center aisle of the church is made visible. She looks, oh, there’s her groom. She takes a deep breath, “It’s gonna be okay. He’s there for me.”

KINGDOMS AND WEDDINGS

And every once in a while, these themes come together: kingdoms and weddings. And when they do, the whole world erupts, pauses, and stops to see it. We’re gonna investigate just such an occasion today in Luke 19:28–44 where we see that Jesus Christ is Lord, King, and Savior. And the moment you’re gonna see is emotionally a bit like a moment that we recently saw. Who’s that? Who’s that? Well, there’s a prince who is positioned to become king, taking for himself a bride.

So the themes of kingdom and bride come together, and the whole world stops. I was in London shortly after the royal wedding, and that’s all they were talking about. It was a big deal. And even Americans, we’re not so big on kings. We sort of had a little squabble over this issue awhile back. We still,

however, stopped. I mean, it's amazing.

I looked at it: 1,600 people were at their wedding—that's a lot of toasters. And before their wedding, there was what? There was the processional in, probably from Buckingham Palace to Westminster, I would guess. We traveled that route when I was in town there. It's beautiful, it's amazing, historic. Half a million people lined the streets for the processional. Right, he's coming. Here comes the prince who one day will be king. He's coming to where? Ultimately the palace. From the palace he will take his bride. Additionally, 1.1 million people packed into London, the great city of London for that event. Some 18 million people tuned in on the Internet—most of them at work, sinning against their boss, alright, on company time, watching the royal wedding. Forty million people watched on television.

It seemed like much of the world stopped because there's something in us, deep down, as the image bearers of God, that the themes of kingdom and marriage. They awaken hope in us in a way that nothing else does. And the reason for that is this: that's the story of the Bible. The story of the Bible is that Jesus Christ: he is the Prince of Peace who has come into human history to take for himself a bride called the church.

And what we have been investigating and examining in the story of Luke is that up until this point, Jesus has lived in obscurity and humility and poverty. That God chose a simple lifestyle for the first, roughly, years of his life. And from chapter 9:51 we heard, in Luke's Gospel, that Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem and he began his journey toward Jerusalem. Think of it like a wedding processional. Think of it like a prince coming to take his bride. Think of it as a prince going to his palace.

BEFORE THE WEDDING THERE NEEDS TO BE A FUNERAL

So Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is journeying toward Jerusalem, ultimately to the temple, his palace, his home, as God on the earth, and he is going to take for himself a bride called the church. This is the language of the Bible. Before there could be a wedding, there first needed to be a funeral, that Jesus would ultimately die in our place for our sins to conquer our enemies of Satan, sin, death, hell, to take us as his possession so that our sins could be forgiven, so that we too can wear white, showing that we're cleansed, made clean and pure in Jesus.

And today, we're going to read about the way in which Jesus had his princely processional to his kingdom city, to his holy palace, to claim for himself his people. And he's on the way, ultimately, to the cross, where he is going to die. He is going to then rise and then ascend into heaven where he would be seated on a throne and a crown will be placed upon his head and he would be adored and rejoiced in as the King of kings. So as you saw, even during the royal wedding—and I'm sure you saw it—when they kissed and the whole world erupted in applause, that day is still forthcoming where Jesus will return for his bride, the church, and there will be this great celebration around that final wedding, the last wedding in all of human history.

JESUS'S HUMBLE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

And so I want you to see this as Jesus is journeying into Jerusalem. Here comes the prince going to take his bride. And after the funeral there will be a wedding. And so we pick up the story, and the first thing that we read is that Jesus Christ is Lord. Luke 19:28–34, "And when he had said these things," Jesus had just got done talking about investing our time, talent, and treasure for the kingdom of God, "he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem." So he's making his way into the great city of Jerusalem to the temple, his palace. "When he drew near Bethphage and Bethany," two small towns, "at the mount that is called Olivet," so the Mount of Olives, "he sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" you shall say this: "The Lord has need of it."'" "The Lord has need of it." "So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. And as they were untying the colt, its owner said to them, 'Why are you untying the colt?' And they said, 'The Lord has need of it.'"

Now, the situation is this, historically, and I've explained this to you. This is the season of Passover. Many years prior, during the days of Moses, God's people were in slavery and bondage and they wanted God to deliver them so they could be free and live new lives for themselves and their children and their children's children. And so God judged their enemies and he delivered his people in an act of Passover. And that is where a sacrificial lamb was chosen by the people of God, and they would confess their sins that they had sinned against God, and that animal would be functioning in a substitutionary way. And the animal was then killed, died in their place for their sins. And then that blood was to cover them so that God wouldn't need to judge them or kill them, that rather they trusted that ultimately a greater Lamb was coming who would make a greater sacrifice and be a more perfect substitute.

All of this was typified with a lamb without spot or blemish, showing that ultimately Jesus would come as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Christ, our Passover Lamb has been slain, the Bible says, that he would die in our place, that he would shed his blood though he was perfect without spot or blemish or any imperfection or sin. He would die for us so that the wrath of God, that the penalty for sin, that eternal condemnation would literally pass over us. It would literally pass over us.

And so they celebrated Passover every year from that year forward until it was finally culminating at the cross of Jesus. And so the season here is the season of Passover. And all that they had been eagerly anticipating is about to be fulfilled at the murder of Jesus. And so Jesus is making his way with the crowds for this big holiday celebration in Jerusalem. And as he approaches the Mount of Olives—and we got to show that to you before the sermon and I wanna thank the elders for letting me take a camera crew to Jerusalem so you could see the topography. The Mount of Olives is basically across—I believe it is the Kidron Valley—from where the temple was.

And so as Jesus was passing along the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem, the city up on a hill, made out of rock, would have been in sight. The temple was in sight and Jesus knew it was time to begin the processional. Again, think of it like a prince riding into town so that he might take his bride. And so how will Jesus be transported? On a donkey. On a colt. This was a very humble way to travel. This was an exceedingly humble way to travel. I mean, think

about it.

Let's say today there was a different wedding that happened in London. Let's say that this prince and princess, the ride for them to or from their wedding, was in a Kia. Not a horse-drawn carriage, a Kia. Not even a new Kia, like a used Kia. Imagine that. "The BBC here live, bringing you the royal wedding. And the prince and princess are now stepping into their Kia." You're like, "Really? That's not what we were expecting."

Jesus rides into town on a Kia. The King of kings, the Prince of Peace, God the Creator of the heavens and the earth. He chooses his own vehicle for transportation for this great moment, for his processional. "Go get me a colt. Get me a young donkey that's never been ridden." That's it.

How about you? If you were a prince or a princess or a king or a queen, let's say you were going to be married one day. How would you live before that? Would you live in wealth or poverty? Honestly, wealth right? Would you live in a public way so that everyone knew you? Or would you live in a humble, private way? Would you work a blue-collar job? Would you work any job?

Jesus comes as this humble prince. He comes in a way that no one was expecting. He lived in a small town, not a big city. He was poor, not rich. He was homeless, he didn't have a huge home. The first thirty years of his life he was a carpenter working with his dad. And here this humble, simple, homeless prince begins his journey to his city, to his palace, to die and secure marriage with his bride, the church. That's amazing. No one thought it would happen like this.

But there is something really interesting here, is that he tells his disciples, his leaders, his men, "Go get me that donkey," and they do. So they go to the guy, apparently Jesus knew this through the power of the Holy Spirit or whatever, I don't know. Goes to the guy, "Hey, we need this colt. We need this donkey." "Why?" And they say, "The Lord has need of it."

JESUS IS LORD

Who is Jesus? Lord. This is important. There are many titles for Jesus in the Bible. He's rabbi, good teacher, he's Lord, he's King, he's Prince, he's friend. There's all this language. He's shepherd. All these images and titles for Jesus. And some of us can pick one we like and solely see Jesus that way and sort of omit others we don't like.

So for some of you, yeah, Jesus is friend to the poor and teacher, but he's not Lord, he's not God. Yes he is, he's all of that. And so the shortest declaration of what we believe as Christians is simply Jesus Christ is Lord. He is above everyone and everything, there is no one equal to him, there is no created person, thing alongside of him or above him.

The Jews would have heard this as blasphemous. The Romans would have heard this as treasonous, because only God is Lord. And Jesus here is saying, "Yes, I am that Sovereign Lord." And for the Romans they would have said, "Caesar is lord." And Jesus is saying, "No, I'm Lord." So Jesus here is establishing himself in authority over everyone and everything that has ever lived upon the earth or will ever live upon the earth. Massive statement.

So they say, "The Lord has need of it." And you and I need to be this way with all of our possessions. "Lord Jesus, it's yours. You need my car? I'll give it away. You need me to help fund the cause of the kingdom? Glad to. You need me to feed the poor? It's your fridge. Lord Jesus, you want my home to be opened up for Community Group? Feel free to have it." The owner has this open-handed attitude. He says, "Well, if the Lord needs it, he can have it." And this was a valued possession. And so what they do then is they bring this animal to Jesus.

RIDING TO JERUSALEM ON A COLT WAS FULFILLING PROPHECY

And the full meaning can be lost on us because we think, "Well, that's just a humble way to go." But Jesus here was making a very important public statement by action. And some people will wrongly say, "Jesus never presenting himself as God." He did. And he did it in a multitude of ways. Sometimes he would just say it, and others he would just show it.

This is an occasion where he says it, "I'm the Lord," and he shows it, "Go get me the donkey." Now, most of us wouldn't recognize that. We think donkey, we go right to "Shrek." What does that have to do with anything? Right? But for those who were waiting—So, think of the people of God like a bride. We shouldn't think of ourselves as a bride individually, but collectively and corporately like a bride.

There had been a prophecy given hundreds of years prior through the work of a man named Zechariah. And God had promised through him, "You'll know that your prince has come. You'll know that your King-to-be is among you. Your Lord is at hand when you see something." And so they were waiting.

And here's exactly what Zechariah 9:9 said. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, this prophecy was given, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!" So you'll know the Lord is among you when he comes to Jerusalem. Where's Jesus going? Jerusalem. "Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

So the prophecy was given hundreds of years prior, "Your King is coming. He's humble, he's righteous, he's coming to save you. And you'll know it's him when he rides into Jerusalem on a young donkey." And they'd been waiting for hundreds of years.

Think of a woman who God has told her, "You're going to be married. Just wait for your husband." Days, weeks, months, years. She wonders, "Is he ever coming?" But God had revealed to her some specific details. "He'll come like this. You'll know this is he." And then one day—she wasn't expecting it, she'd sort of lost hope—and there he is. And he starts approaching her. And in that moment she realizes, "This is the day where the

promise of God comes true.”

That was the feeling on the road to Jerusalem that day. “There he—” “Who’s that?” “Jesus.” “What’s he riding?” “A donkey.” “Oh, it’s that day. It’s that day. The King is here. He’s coming for his bride.”

Do you feel it? See, this is why we love weddings; they’re just echoes of the gospel. This is why we love processions; they’re echoes of the gospel. It’s why little girls, little boys, like to get dressed up like a prince or a princess or a king or a queen; it echoes of the gospel. Jesus Christ is Lord.

JESUS CHRIST IS KING

Second thing we learn is that Jesus Christ is King. Luke 19:35–40, “And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, ‘Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!’ And some of the Pharisees—” the religious types. Here they go again, Mars Hill. We’ll give them an A for consistency, right? They get it wrong every time. “—in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, rebuke your disciples.’ He answered, ‘I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.’”

At this point Jesus had ministered in some thirty-five-plus locations, most of them rural, and he is now approaching the great city of Jerusalem and he tells his disciples, “Go get me that donkey.” He knows he is presenting himself as the fulfillment of prophecy, as God among us, as the King of kings and Lord of lords.

WE WANT TO BE GENEROUS SO WE CAN HELP EXALT JESUS

And so they go and retrieve for him that donkey. But of course, there is no saddle. Jesus is so humble and homeless and poor that he doesn’t have a saddle. And so what do his disciples do? They take their cloaks. Now, in that day, your cloak was exceedingly important. You probably had one coat, most people did. And it was a big coat, and it was to protect you from the elements and keep you warm and as you’re traveling. It’s not like our day. Oftentimes you would find yourself sleeping outside or crashing at someone’s home or in their barn, and your cloak for the night became your blanket. You needed it. You only had one most of the time. And they took their cloaks, tied them together around the animal, to create for Jesus a makeshift saddle. This is exceeding generosity.

This is like you all who are generous, saying, “I know it’s a big deal, but it’s for the Lord, so I’m going to be generous because I want him to be exalted,” and that’s what they were doing. In their generosity they were exalting Jesus. “Let’s get him up where everybody can see him. Let’s get him up where everybody can know him. Let’s get him up where everybody can praise him.”

We want to be generous so that we can help exalt Jesus. And he climbs upon that colt and he begins his ride into Jerusalem. And it’s amazing because a few who began with generosity are then joined by others.

And friends, this is how it works. Everybody isn’t going to be generous, so somebody needs to be generous, and eventually everybody joins in. Everybody isn’t going to worship Jesus, but if somebody worships Jesus, eventually everybody joins in. And so the disciples go first, “We’re gonna exalt Jesus, we’re gonna be generous to Jesus, we’re gonna serve Jesus.” And then Jesus begins his ride into town and lots of other people join in and they take their cloaks and they lay them on the ground before Jesus.

JESUS, THE GREATER KING DAVID

What do you prize? What do you treasure? Which possession is most important to you? Would you throw it on the ground? No. What if it was for Jesus? Would you give it away? The answer should always be yes. And they throw their cloaks on the ground. That’s saying, “Jesus, you’re worth anything and everything.”

And so the proverbial red-carpet treatment for Jesus is the cloaks or coats, many of which belonged to those who were poor. And he rides in like a regal prince, heading to his palace, the temple. And he is doing so humbly. And as he’s riding this donkey, they would have harkened back to the days of King David. The king that they loved so much so many years prior was the great King David. And David was a foreshadowing and a type that ultimately led to Jesus, who was a greater King than David.

And in David’s day, as king, he often road around on a donkey, symbolizing that he was a humble king and he didn’t want to lord it over his people, but he wanted to love and lead his people. And after the reign of David, history records, often outside of the Bible, that it is then that many of the kings stopped riding donkeys because those are not fit animals for a king. And instead they began riding horses mounted up higher. And so for hundreds of years, maybe a thousand, kings have been riding horses.

Here comes Jesus, back on a donkey. We’re back to a humble King who’s even greater than David, and he is a descendant of David and he fulfills the promises that, through David, would come an even greater King with an even greater kingdom. And here he is, Jesus Christ.

TWO RESPONSES

And there are two responses to this. Some people rejoice and they worship and they’re glad and they celebrate! Right? You can read it. “They began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying,” and they quote here from Psalm 118:26, “‘Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace and heaven and glory in the highest!’”

People are celebrating and shouting. Again, kind of like that day of the royal wedding, where the prince is entering in to take his princess, so that one day he might inherit the throne. And people line the street and they cheer and they sing and they're filled with emotion and passion. There's hope for us as a people. We have someone who will be a good king. And this is even greater and bigger and grander. And all of those lesser longings are ultimately disappointing because whether we have a prince and a princess, or a president and a first lady, they're still sinners. And even if they're the best among us, they're still mortal, and their reign comes to an end and it's imperfect along the way.

Here, there's heart cry from the people of God. They're worshipping and rejoicing and loudly celebrating. And this quote of Psalm 118:26 was fitting. That was a particular Psalm that would be sung when a king, when their king, when he would go out to battle against their foes and enemies, when their life was in danger. The king would ride out. And if he was victorious, and if he defeated their enemies, he would then ride back. And the people would meet him along the way and they'd want to get the report of the war and they'd sing and celebrate and be glad and they'd follow him all the way up to the temple. And then the priest would then give Psalm 118:26 and would say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" Peace and heaven and glory in the highest.

And a declaration would be made by the spiritual leader in the presence of the political leader, "God has anointed you. God has appointed you. God has blessed you. God has delivered us. God has saved us. God has preserved us." And it would be a national day of feasting and rejoicing and celebrating, as big as it could possibly be.

And they see Jesus and they sing that line. And they add to it, "King," because he is the King of kings. And see, Jesus at this point, he is riding into Jerusalem to conquer Satan, demons, sin, death, hell. He's going to conquer all of our enemies. He's going to wage war against all that is against us, that he might defeat our enemies, and that he might deliver his people. And they're rejoicing.

Mars Hill, they're doing so loudly and gladly. There's something we need to learn here as a people. We're growing in it, but there's still more to learn. And the reason they're celebrating is because of this line: "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest." No one has glorified God, reflected the goodness, the perfection, the love, the justice, the mercy of God, like Jesus Christ. He is the image of the invisible God. He says, "If you see me, you see the Father." He says, "I and the Father are one."

So here God the Son is rightly being worshiped because no life glorifies God the Father like the life of God the Son, Jesus Christ. He perfectly mirrors, reveals exactly who the Father is and what his affection and character is like. And they're rejoicing because they understand there is peace in heaven.

THERE ARE TWO KINGDOMS AND THEY ARE AT WAR

And let me say this, friends: We are each conceived and born by nature and choice, sinners, enemies of God. Sinners, enemies of God. We do not live as we ought to live. We do not speak as we ought to speak. We are sinners by natures and choice. Now, the world is filled with ways to try to deal with our sin, and Jesus alone is the Savior of sinners. And when we sin, we do sin against others, but we ultimately sin against God. And because God is a King and rules over a perfect, holy, righteous, just kingdom, he is displeased with sin and folly and rebellion. Satan and demons and sinners have conspired together in the kingdom of darkness to declare a war against the kingdom of light.

Those of you who do not know Jesus, those of you who do not love and serve and follow and worship Jesus, you have a king, his name is Satan. You have a destiny, it is death. You have an eternity, it is hell. Let me, out of love and affection for you, be exceedingly clear: there are two kings, two kingdoms, two destinies, and they are in conflict and war. It is not yin, yang, good, evil, all is one, Monism, One-ism, Pantheism, Panentheism, general spirituality, all religions lead to the same place. It is darkness and light. It is the kingdom of God and the enemies of God.

If you do not belong to Jesus, you are foe, not friend. Jesus is a King. Jesus has a kingdom. And Jesus will deliver his people and he will deal justly with his enemies. And you and I, by nature and choice, we are sinners, rebels, law breakers, enemies. And there is not peace between God and us. But in this man, Jesus Christ, read the line: "Peace in heaven." Jesus has come to die in our place for our sins, to rise victorious in our place as our Savior. As a result, through this man Jesus Christ, through faith in him and forgiveness from him, there is peace in heaven.

If you are a child of God, hear me in this. God is not angry with you, he loves you. God is not sick of you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. God will not abandon you, he has adopted you. Yes, God might be disappointed in some of the things you were doing, but he's disappointed in you because you were his child and he loves you and he has much more intended for you. There is peace between you and God. He is not against you, he is for you.

And friends, even when you suffer—hear me in this— God is not punishing you. He's already punished Jesus in your place, and it would be unjust to punish both Jesus and you. There is peace between you and God. Sometimes our suffering is the consequence of our sin, we reap what we sow. Sometimes God does allow us to go through a hard season, just like a parent who loves a child will give them a bit of correction to instruct and mature them.

But there is peace between you and God, if you belong to Jesus Christ. And if you do not, there is not peace between you and God. And there will be eternal consequence for that lack of reconciliation in this life. And they see Jesus and this is like a bride who's been waiting for a groom for thousands of years, waking up every day, the people of God, is today the day? Is our King coming? Is our Lord coming? Will our sin be forgiven? Will there be peace in heaven? And this was the day that Jesus was seen and worshiped and rejoiced in as King, coming to take a bride through his own death. A funeral, and then a wedding.

THE PEOPLE REJOICE

And they rejoiced how? Loudly. This is the part we could grow in, okay? See, all of us are worshipers, so we'll go to a stadium or an arena or a field and someone will do something amazing. And we cheer and we jump out of our seats and we get really excited and we clap and we sing their praises. We'll put their face on our t-shirt, or at least the name on the back. Woo! Yay! All excited. Unless you live in Seattle, then you don't have a lot to cheer about. But other people, they get to do this when their teams win.

Or, let's say you're a musician, right? You're an arty type. You go to a concert, favorite performer, or musician. What do you do? Well, you give a lot of your money, gather together with a bunch of people. You kind of become like a church for a little bit. And then you praise, "Yay!" You sing along, you raise your hands, you light your lighter. Whatever your thing is, you do that.

And yet we hear about Jesus and it's not so great. Or some of you want to be expressive, but you're wondering what everybody else is going to think. Or some of you have even been shut down, like what's happening here. They're rejoicing, and then the religious people come to Jesus, "Uh, this is getting very loud. This is feeling a little too excited. I think we need to tone it down." All the guys in hats and suits are feeling very uncomfortable all of a sudden.

And Jesus says, "Well, I could tell them to stop, but if I do, then the rocks will cry out. I don't know if you'll feel any better." Because all of creation was made by Jesus. All of creation exists to glorify Jesus. And if people won't praise God, then apparently it gets to a point where like some really crazy musical, the trees and rocks jump in. It's like the craziest kid's movie ever, right? And you get an echo of this in Romans 8 where it says that creation has been frustrated by human sin, and that it longs for liberation and deliverance in the coming of Jesus so that it might be free to glorify the Creator God of the Bible.

And Jesus here is saying, "I am to be worshiped and the people are not wrong. And even if you silence them, the rocks will cry out." Again, some of you say, "Jesus never considered himself God or presented himself as God." Oh, yes he did. And that's why they killed him.

So how about you? Are you a person who likes to sing, celebrate, rejoice, raise your hands? You know, some of us, we're a little more free. Some of us, not so much. I still remember as a brand-new Christian I'd never been in a really excited celebratory church service ever, and I remember I went to a good Bible-teaching church as a brand-new Christian, and then there was a joint service with something called a charismatic church. I did not know what that meant. We met in a different place, sort of a neutral place, the churches came together to worship, and I went and I thought, "We are in the wrong place. This is an aerobics class and I must have gone to the wrong address, because everyone here is like stretching out before we start church. Man, this is gonna be very interesting." You see people like, "Okay, what are we doing here?"

The next thing you know, the band kicks in; they start singing like they mean it. And then I saw hands go in the air, I thought, "Uh oh, somebody's got a gun. You know, I'm gonna put my hands on my wallet. Something's going bad up here in the front." And then people would shout and they would rejoice and they were exuberant and it's like they thought Jesus was alive. And at first I thought, "This is very awkward." And then I started thinking, well, if I was at a concert of a band I liked, it might go like this. I know if I was at a sporting event, a big game, and there was a big moment, I'd pretty much be like this. Jesus is alive. I guess I should be a little happier.

CHRISTIANITY IS ABOUT A WEDDING AND A FUNERAL

And see, sometimes it's that conflux of emotions that Christianity is really about a wedding and a funeral, a wedding and a funeral, a wedding and a funeral. You killed God. And he's alive and he loves you. It is kind of an emotional roller coaster, right? And some of you are more funeral Christians, and some of you are more wedding Christians. And the trajectory of this story is really a funeral and a wedding. And when you understand the wedding piece, that Jesus is like a groom and the church is like a bride, and we get to wear white 'cause we're forgiven and cleansed, and he's a King with a kingdom that'll never end and he's coming again for us, you can rejoice.

We even put our services together this way. My hope and goal, whether it's myself or others who would be preaching here, is to open the Bible every week and say, "Hey, here's Jesus. You see him? Get to know him. Isn't he amazing? Lord, King, Savior, isn't this fantastic?" And then we do much of our singing after the sermon. Just like they. They weren't a group. They weren't rejoicing much. It wasn't an enormous occasion. It was, for some, but they weren't all gathered together as a people with a common voice until what? Until Jesus was in the center, until Jesus was unveiled, until Jesus was exalted. Then all of a sudden it becomes a crowd.

That's how you get a church, friends. Mars Hill is nothing more than a bunch of people looking at Jesus. That's all it is. You want to boil it down to its basic essence? "Why are you all here?" "Jesus. We're all around him." And the job of the preaching and teaching is to open the Bible and say, "Here he is." And then to invite you all to gather around him and then what? Rejoice and respond, to be generous and celebrate and have hope. And so the course of our services tend to be, open the Bible, here's Jesus, then we take Communion, you're a sinner, Jesus died for you, funeral. And then singing, Jesus is alive, he forgives you, loves you. He's a King. He's got a kingdom. He loves you like a groom loves a bride. Wedding.

And some of us get stuck in funeral and we don't make it to wedding. You got to move from funeral to wedding. That's the movement of the gospel. And so here there's rejoicing, rejoicing, rejoicing. And when we go to our singing time, raise your hands, clap, cheer, sing, have a good time. And here then, he's gonna turn it and it goes to funeral for a moment.

JESUS CHRIST IS SAVIOR

And we read that Jesus Christ is Savior. Luke 19:41-44, "And when he drew near and saw the city—" so apparently Jesus is coming around the Mount of Olives where his vision is obscured. He's riding in. And simultaneously there's rejoicing and weeping. So much of the Christian life is like this.

Jesus sees the city of Jerusalem. "He wept over it, saying, 'Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.'" You've closed your eyes. There's Jesus, and people close their eyes. "For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

God has visited them. Here is God, and some people have closed their eyes, spiritually speaking, and said, "We do not see him." And Jesus looks at Jerusalem and he weeps over Jerusalem as Nehemiah wept over Jerusalem, as Jeremiah wept over Jerusalem, as Paul wept over those who were of the line of Abraham that closed their eyes to Jesus as Messiah.

JESUS WEEPS OVER JERUSALEM

And friends, Jesus doesn't cry a lot. There are only two occasions that I can remember in the Bible where Jesus wept. John 11:35, where his friend Lazarus died, and the Bible has the shortest sentence. It simply says, "Jesus wept." And then here, Jesus weeps over Jerusalem.

Some of you men have been taught, "Real men don't cry." Real men don't cry for the wrong reasons. But when God's heart is broken, and God weeps, if we have the Holy Spirit in us, we should have the heart of God and we should weep for what breaks the heart of God. And what breaks the heart of God is a city that closes its eyes to Jesus. And it is Jerusalem, in this occurrence, that has closed its eyes to Jesus. And Jesus weeps.

Everyone is rejoicing, "It's a wedding!" And Jesus is weeping, "Not for all." And he prophesies here that that city would be judged because they had been visited by God and that they would be besieged by an enemy and that the city would be destroyed. And that came true around 70 AD when the city was sacked, the temple was destroyed, and all that Jesus promised came true.

There is a window of opportunity that God gives each of us and each of our cities, to take the hand of friendship extended to us through the person and work of Jesus, and to respond in kind, to say, "I will be a Christian and I will walk with Jesus. I will not close my eyes to this Lord, King, and Savior. I'll receive forgiveness of sin and eternal life. And I will turn from sin and I will trust in him."

And some of you, probably just because you're at Mars Hill, you know the parts of the Bible where it says that God saves people and God elects people and God chooses people and God predestines people and God does all the work of salvation. The Bible teaches all of that. But friends, it should never lead to a hard heart. Jesus weeps for people who reject him. This is the heart of God. I believe when God looks at Seattle, when God looks at Bellevue, when God looks at Shoreline, when God looks at Federal Way, when God looks at Olympia, when God looks at Portland, when God looks at Orange County, when God looks at Albuquerque, I believe there is a grief in his heart. I believe that there is sadness in the heart of God. That to this day great cities, great cities would close their eyes to Jesus.

And that's the heart of God. And that should be our heart, as well, as the Holy Spirit breaks our heart for the cities in which we live. It should be this continual conflux of emotions. "Tell me about Jesus." "Oh, I rejoice in him, I love him, he's my Lord, he's my King, he's my Savior!" "Tell me about your city." "Oh, I'm devastated. So many people don't know Jesus and so many lives are ruined because they don't know Jesus." And not only that, like Jesus says, it affects their children, it affects their grandchildren, it has legacy for generations. That rejection of Jesus, it echoes from one generation to the next.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO REJOICE

And so friends, if you're here, here is the good news. The good news is this, that it's not too late for you. It's not too late for you. For those of you who are not Christian, it's not too late. You're still alive. There could be rejoicing today. We're gonna rejoice in a minute, please rejoice with us. Please love, serve, trust Jesus as Lord, King, and Savior. It's not too late.

For those of you who were religious, you like to criticize how other people worship, rather than worshipping. Some of you say, "I don't like how they do it." I'll tell you this, I like how they do it, better than how you don't do it. It's a lot easier to criticize someone else than it is to be a worshiper yourself.

So as we go into our time of worship, for those of you who are more religious, don't worry about what everyone else is doing. You be glad. Raise your hands, raise your voice, shout, clap, have a little fun. I don't know if you heard, he's alive. That's good for us.

And lastly, for those of you who you were some of the first to be generous to Jesus and to exalt Jesus and to worship Jesus. Maybe you've been in this church for a long time or you're one of the first Christians in your family. You're like the disciples who went and got the colt and put the makeshift saddle together. And they got things started. Today, as you worship and rejoice, I want you to be glad and say, "Look at that, when we started there was only a few people," or "In my family, there was only a few people," or "In the relationships that I know, there's only a few people, but boy we're getting a bit of a crowd now. Seems like people are coming to see Jesus. This is a really great life."

So I'm going to pray. We're going to take Communion, little funeral moment. Then we're going to sing and celebrate, wedding time.

PRAYER

Father God, thank you so much that when we see Jesus we see the full revelation of who you are and how you feel and what you do. Jesus, please send the Holy Spirit to help us be funeral and wedding Christians. Yes, funeral Christians, like Jesus, here weeping, broken-hearted, wanting people to get saved, wanting people to respond, wanting our family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, people we love, faces we see, names we know, lives we're worried about, and we pray for them to meet Jesus. Jesus, we pray that they would see you, that they would join this magnificent crowd of worshipers

and rejoicers and adorers.

And Jesus, we ask that you would ride into their life as you've ridden into our life, as you rode into Jerusalem humbly, lovingly, graciously, magnificently, compellingly. God, we need to be funeral Christians. We need to always have our heart broken for those who don't know you, and for the city in which we live.

But God, please allow us, as well, to not only be funeral Christians, but to be wedding Christians.

That our King is alive, our King has conquered Satan, sin, death, hell.

Our King has taken the throne.

Our King is seated upon a throne.

Our King is wearing a crown.

Our King is coming again to judge the living and the dead.

Our King is coming to put an end to sickness and suffering and injustice and poverty and tyranny and evil and death.

Lord Jesus, we confess, you are alive. We confess that you died and rose. We confess that you are our great King, that you are our Lord, and you are our Savior, and you are worthy of praise, and we were made for that. And when we do, you get glory, we get joy, and others get saved.

And we pray for that, Holy Spirit, now and into our future for our children and our children's children.

In Jesus' name, amen.