

John 12:9-19

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[0:00] Well, amen and good morning. Please take your copy of God's Word and join me in John chapter 12.! Please take your copy of God's Word and join me in John chapter 12.! Our text this morning is John chapter 12, verses 9 through 19.

As we've worked our way through John's Gospel, one of the recurring observations we've made is that people can possess an accurate understanding of certain truths about Jesus Christ, while remaining profoundly mistaken about the significance of those truths.

They may recognize His miracles, acknowledge His authority, or even employ the correct theological language to describe Him, and yet fail to understand who He is and what He came to accomplish.

And we have seen this repeatedly. Nicodemus recognized that Jesus was a teacher who had come from God, but He did not understand the necessity of the new birth.

The Samaritan woman recognized that Jesus was a prophet before coming to understand that He was the Messiah. The crowds who witnessed the feeding of the 5,000 correctly recognized the miraculous provision of Jesus, but they misunderstood the nature of the bread He had come to provide.

[1:25] And now in our passage this morning, we're going to encounter an entire city preparing to celebrate the arrival of a king whom they do not adequately understand.

What makes this passage especially interesting is that the people are not entirely wrong about Jesus. In fact, much of what they proclaim is correct. Jesus is the promised king.

He is the fulfillment of God's covenant promises. He has come to deliver His people, and His kingdom will extend beyond the boundaries of Israel to encompass people from every nation.

The problem is that they misunderstand the nature of His kingdom and the means by which He will establish it. And John tells us something that ought to capture our attention.

Even the disciples, those men who have accompanied Jesus throughout His public ministry, do not initially understand the significance of what is taking place. It will only be after Jesus has been glorified that they begin to comprehend the Scriptures and the events unfolding before them.

[2:33] I want us to consider this passage with a particular emphasis on that misunderstanding because I believe John intends for us to recognize something about the way God accomplishes His purposes.

Something about the danger of bringing our expectations to the Scriptures. And something about the necessity of understanding Jesus in light of His death and His resurrection.

The central truth I want us to see is this. Jesus is the promised king, but His victory is accomplished through the very suffering and death that His followers struggled to understand.

So let me pray, and then we'll read our text together. Father God, we pray that You will help us to this end that I have stated. We humbly recognize we need Your help to rightly understand Your Word.

And so we ask that You would help us by Your Spirit to believe its promises and obey its commands, have affection for You, its author, and we pray that You'll help us to this end.

[3:43] In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen. John chapter 12, beginning in verse 9. When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came not only on account of Him, but also to see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead.

So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well, because on account of Him, many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus. The next day, the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, crying out, Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.

And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Zion, behold, Your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt.

His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about Him and had been done to Him. The crowd that had been with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised Him from the dead continued to bear witness.

[4:58] The reason why the crowd went to meet Him was that they heard He had done this sign. So the Pharisees said to one another, You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him.

Let's begin by considering the circumstances surrounding Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem with our first point, Jesus, the King who divides the people, in verses 9 through 11.

Perhaps you'll remember that in chapter 11, Jesus performed what is the most remarkable of His public miracles. Lazarus, who had been dead for four days, was raised from the dead by the authoritative command of the Christ.

And John had been very clear to show us that the consequences of this miracle extend well beyond the resurrection of one man. In John 11 and verse 45, were told that many who witnessed what Jesus had done believed in Him.

But others carried the news to the Pharisees, resulting in a meeting of the Jewish council where the religious leaders determined that Jesus must be put to death. Caiaphas, the high priest, argued that it would be advantageous for one man to die rather than the entire nation to perish.

[6:18] And John explains, Caiaphas spoke more truthfully than he understood because Jesus would indeed die for the nation. And not for that nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

So already John has begun directing our attention toward the approaching death of Jesus and the significance of that death for the salvation of God's people.

Then in the opening verses of chapter 12, we find Jesus in Bethany where Mary anoints His feet with expensive perfume. Jesus interprets Mary's actions in relation to His burial.

His death is no longer something merely anticipated in the distant future. It is now immediately before Him. And that brings us to verse 9.

John tells us that a large crowd learns that Jesus is in Bethany and comes not only to see Him, but also to see Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead. Now, I think we can appreciate their interest.

[7:25] Imagine learning that a man who had been dead for four days was now walking around, eating meals, speaking with his friends, conducting himself as any other living man.

We would certainly be interested in seeing Him. But John wants us to recognize that Lazarus has become something more than the beneficiary of a miracle.

He has become a living testimony to the identity and authority of Jesus Christ. Every time someone sees Lazarus alive, they are confronted with the extraordinary claim that Jesus possesses authority over death itself.

And so in verses 10 and 11, the chief priests make the remarkable decision to put Lazarus to death also because his resurrection has resulted in many people believing in Jesus.

Consider the terrible irony of that decision. Jesus has demonstrated His authority over death by raising Lazarus, and the religious leaders respond by attempting to kill the very man whose life testifies to that authority.

[8:34] They cannot deny the significance of what has happened. So they seek to eliminate the evidence. And this is consistent with what John has been teaching us throughout his gospel.

The rejection of Jesus is not fundamentally an intellectual problem resulting from insufficient information. John 3:19 tells us that the light has come into the world, but people loved darkness rather than light because their works were evil.

The religious leaders have witnessed more than enough evidence to recognize that something extraordinary is taking place. But rather than submitting themselves to Jesus, they determine to destroy Him.

And this introduces a contrast that will become increasingly important throughout our passage. On one side are people who celebrate Jesus because of His miraculous power. On the other are religious leaders who reject Him because His popularity threatens their authority. Receive and reject. This is a repeated theme that I have presented to you throughout John's gospel.

[9:53] Which category do you belong to? Are you one who will receive Jesus as the Christ or one who will reject Him?

And John will show us that even among those who celebrate Jesus, there is a considerable confusion concerning His identity and His mission. It is possible to be enthusiastic about Jesus without understanding the gospel of Jesus Christ.

That's a distinction we ought to take very seriously. A person may be impressed by Christianity, attracted to the moral teachings of Jesus, appreciative of the benefits associated with Christian community, or even enthusiastic about Christ's substitutionary, excuse me, about His influence upon society without ever understanding the necessity of Christ's substitutionary death and victorious resurrection.

There is a difference between admiring Jesus and believing in Jesus as He has refilled Himself. And that distinction becomes particularly evident in the next portion of our passage.

Well, second point, Jesus, the King who defies expectations. We'll see this in verses 12 through 15.

[11:23] Beginning in verse 12, John describes the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem. A large crowd that has gathered for the Passover feast hears that Jesus is approaching the city.

They go out to meet Him, carrying palm branches and shouting praises. They employ language drawn from Psalm 118, celebrating the one who comes in the name of the Lord and they explicitly identify Him as the King of Israel.

Now, we need to understand something about the historical and theological significance of this moment. Most of you are probably familiar. The Jewish people have been living under foreign domination for centuries.

First the Babylonians, then the Persians, followed by the Greeks, and now the Romans have exercised authority over them. Although they have returned from their Babylonian exile, the full restoration anticipated by the Old Testament prophets has not yet been realized.

They possess the Scriptures which promise that God will raise up a descendant of David whose kingdom will be established forever. They know the promises of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah.

[12:44] They anticipate the coming of a Messiah who would deliver God's people and establish his righteous rule. And now, Jesus approaches Jerusalem having demonstrated an extraordinary authority that extends even over death.

It's not difficult to understand why so many people would anticipate that he has come to restore the kingdom to Israel. The palm branches themselves likely contribute to the atmosphere of national celebration.

In Jewish history, palm branches have been associated with victory and deliverance. And the proclamation from Psalm 118 is especially significant.

It's a celebration of the Lord's salvation and the language employed by the crowd is entirely appropriate for the arrival of God's promised king.

But then, John draws our attention to something Jesus does. Verse 14 tells us that Jesus finds a young donkey and sits chapter 9 and verse 9.

[13:52] You read earlier Jake led us in a reading of Zechariah 9, 9 and 10 and the previous week, the same because I wasn't here and I intended to preach this text. So, you had to endure Zechariah 9, 9 through 10 two Lord's days in a row.

I want to spend a few moments considering Zechariah's prophecy because without understanding its original context, we are unlikely to appreciate the significance of what Jesus is doing.

Zechariah ministered to the Jewish people following their return from exile in Babylon. The people had returned to the land and the temple would be rebuilt, but the glorious promises associated with the restoration of Israel remained largely unfulfilled.

They were still subject to foreign powers. The Davidic monarchy had not been restored and the people continued to await the fulfillment of God's covenant promises.

In the first eight verses of Zechariah chapter 9, God announces judgment against a series of nations and cities that had historically threatened or opposed his people.

[15:02] Damascus, Tyre, Sidon, and the Philistine cities are all brought under the judgment of God. The language is that of conquest, judgment, deliverance.

And then in verse 9, Zechariah announces the arrival of the king. He calls upon the daughter of Zion to rejoice because her king is coming, righteous and possessing salvation, humble and riding upon a donkey.

Now, you should notice, we do well to notice the contrast. The opening verses of the chapter describe the overthrow of powerful nations.

But when the promised king arrives, he does not appear as we might expect a military conqueror to appear. He comes in humility. He rides upon a donkey.

And then verse 10 provides an important explanation. God promises to remove the chariot from Ephraim, the war horse from Jerusalem, and the instruments of warfare from his people.

[16:16] The promised king will speak peace to the nations, and his dominion will extend from sea to sea to the ends of the earth. Do you see what Zechariah is describing?

God promises a king who will establish a universal kingdom of peace, but the character of that kingdom is fundamentally different from the kingdoms established by the military powers of this world.

The prophets are not promising merely another earthly empire with Israel occupying the position previously held by Babylon, Persia, or Rome. They anticipate the establishment of God's righteous kingdom under the authority of his appointed Messiah.

And yet, throughout the history of Israel, there was a persistent tendency to interpret the promise of God primarily through the lens of immediate political circumstances.

Deliverance meant freedom from foreign domination. Restoration meant national independence. victory meant the defeat of Israel's earthly enemies.

[17:26] Now, to be clear, the Old Testament really does promise judgment upon the nations, vindication for God's people, and the universal reign of the Messiah. The mistake would be to reduce those promises to a political revolution against Rome.

Because that is not the manner in which Jesus has come to establish his kingdom. And Jesus makes that unmistakably clear through his actions. Now, we sometimes hear that Jesus rode upon a donkey simply because donkeys are humble animals.

I made that point just a moment ago. Whereas, horses are impressive animals. There's some truth in that contrast.

We should also be careful not to oversimplify it. In the Old Testament, donkeys could also serve as royal mounts. Solomon, for example, rode upon David's mule when he was publicly recognized as king in 1 Kings chapter 1.

So the significance is not that Jesus chooses an animal entirely incompatible with kingship. rather, Jesus deliberately identifies himself with the particular kind of kingship described in Zachariah's prophecy.

[18:48] He comes as the promised king, but not as a military conqueror. His kingdom will not be established through the instruments of earthly warfare.

And this is consistent with everything John has already told us. In John chapter 6 and verse 15, following the feeding of the 5,000, the people intended to take Jesus by force and make him king, but Jesus withdrew.

Do you remember why? Not because he was unwilling to be king, but because he would not submit his messianic mission to their mistaken expectations.

And later in John chapter 18 and verse 36, Jesus will explain to Pilate that his kingdom is not of this world. His kingdom does not derive its authority or character from the political powers of this age.

Here, in John 12, Jesus is openly presenting himself as Israel's promised king, but he does so in a manner that challenges the assumptions of those who are welcoming him.

[20:01] the crowd expects a king who will defeat Rome. Jesus has come to defeat sin and death. The crowd anticipates a throne in Jerusalem.

Jesus is approaching a Roman cross. The crowd desires deliverance from earthly oppression. salvation. Jesus has come to accomplish the redemption of his people through the sacrifice of his own life.

All of this is better. And those distinctions are not intended to suggest that God's kingdom has no implications for the world in which we live.

Zechariah 9, verse 10, makes it clear that the reign of the Messiah will ultimately extend throughout the earth. The victory of Jesus Christ will be accomplished through his willing submission to death, followed by his resurrection and exaltation.

Now, there's another detail in Zechariah 9 that we shouldn't overlook. In verse 11, immediately following the promise of the coming king and his universal reign, God speaks of delivering prisoners because of the blood of his covenant.

[21 : 21] That language ought to remind us of the covenant established through sacrifice in Exodus chapter 24. And as we read the scriptures in light of their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, we recognize that the promised deliverance of God's people is ultimately secured through the blood of the new covenant.

Jesus himself will explain this at the Last Supper. So the larger context of Zechariah 9 brings together the coming of the king, the establishment of peace, the extension of his kingdom to the nations, and the deliverance of God's people through covenantal blood.

all of these things find their ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ. And all of this because Jesus went and found a donkey and rode it in to Jerusalem.

It's not to help us understand why his arrival in Jerusalem must be interpreted in light of the crucifixion that will follow. the king is coming, not merely to announce his reign, but to accomplish the redemption upon which his saving kingdom is founded.

I'm going to make a brief application here before we move on. I think there is a warning for us in the way the crowd appears to understand the Old Testament promises.

[22 : 50] It is entirely possible to take something God has genuinely promised and misunderstand its fulfillment because we've allowed our own desires to determine how we think God ought to accomplish it.

We are not immune to that temptation. We may approach the scriptures assuming that God's primary concern is to secure our immediate comfort, preserve our circumstances, advance our preferred political outcomes, or protect us from suffering.

And when God acts in ways that do not correspond to those expectations, Christians, we become confused. Has our God failed to be faithful to his promises?

But the proper approach to scripture is not to begin with what we wish God would accomplish and then search for promises that appear to support our desires. We must allow God to define his own purposes, his own promises, and the manner in which those promises will be fulfilled.

And nowhere is that more important than our understanding of Jesus Christ. If we interpret Jesus primarily as the means by which we obtain the life we already desire, then we have fundamentally misunderstood his mission.

[24 : 13] He has not come merely to improve our circumstances. He has come to reconcile sinners to God.

And that reconciliation requires his death. Which brings us to what I believe is the interpretive center of our passage in my third point.

Yes, it's a chiasm. Jesus, the king whose glory was misunderstood. Look carefully at verse 16.

John tells us that the disciples did not understand these things at first. But when Jesus was glorified, they remembered what had been written about him and recognized that these things had been done to him.

I want us to consider the remarkable nature of that admission. John is writing his gospel after the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus Christ.

[25 : 16] He has had the opportunity to reflect upon the life and ministry of Jesus in light of everything that followed. And looking back upon this event, he acknowledges that he and the other disciples did not understand what was happening.

Now, John does not tell us precisely which aspects of the event confused them, and we ought not claim more than the text reveals. But the connection between their lack of understanding, the Old Testament prophecy, and the later glorification of Jesus strongly suggests that their confusion concerned the relationship between the promised messianic king and the suffering that awaited him.

and this would be consistent with what the other gospel writers tell us. In Matthew 16, when Jesus begins teaching his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, suffer, be killed, and rise again, Peter responds by rebuking him.

In Luke chapter 18, Jesus explicitly tells the twelve that the things written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man are about to be accomplished, including his suffering, death, and resurrection.

And Luke tells us that the disciples understood none of these things. You see the pattern? The disciples believe Jesus is the Messiah.

[26 : 38] They have witnessed his miracles. They have heard his teaching. They have confessed his identity. But they struggle to comprehend that the Messiah must suffer and die. And in John 12, that difficulty is expressed again.

we should recognize that the problem was not an absence of biblical revelation. The Old Testament contains extensive testimony concerning both the glory and the suffering of the Messiah.

The promises of his kingship are unmistakable. Psalm 2 describes God's anointed king ruling over the nations. Psalm 72 anticipates a righteous king whose dominion extends to the ends of the earth. Isaiah 9 announces the coming of a son whose government and peace will have no end. But the same Old Testament also describes a suffering servant.

Isaiah 53 speaks of one who bears the sins of others, suffers under divine judgment, and makes many to be accounted righteous. Psalm 22 describes the suffering of the righteous one whose affliction ultimately leads to the praise of God among the nations.

[27 : 52] And Zechariah in chapter 12 speaks of the one who will be pierced, while chapter 13 describes the striking of the shepherd. The scriptures anticipate both the suffering and the glory of the Messiah.

The disciples' difficulty was understanding how those realities belonged together. And I would suggest that this is one of the great lessons John wants us to learn from his account.

The glory of Jesus Christ cannot be properly understood apart from his suffering. We cannot understand his kingship without understanding his cross.

We cannot understand his victory without understanding his death. First the cross, then the crown. And we cannot understand the nature of his salvation without recognizing the problem from which he has come to save us. Now, notice the turning point John identifies.

[29 : 04] He does not say that the disciples understood once Jesus had explained the prophecy more thoroughly. He said that they remembered and understood after Jesus was glorified.

That language is significant because John uses the concept of Jesus' glorification in a particularly important way throughout his gospel.

We might not naturally associate glorification, excuse me, we might naturally associate glorification with his resurrection and ascension, and certainly those events do belong to the exaltation or glorification of Christ.

But John also presents the crucifixion itself as central to the revelation of Jesus' glory. In John 12, 23, just a few verses beyond our passage, Jesus announces that the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

God. And then he immediately begins speaking about his approaching death. He compares his death to a grain of wheat falling into the earth, explaining that unless it dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

[30 : 24] Later in verses 31 and 32, Jesus describes the judgment of the world, the defeat of its ruler, and the gathering of people to himself through his being lifted up.

John explains that Jesus is speaking about the manner of his death. So in John's gospel, the cross is not merely an unfortunate circumstance that precedes the glorification of Jesus.

It's integral. It's part of the manifestation of his glory. The crucifixion, the righteousness, holiness, wisdom, love, and mercy of God are displayed in the accomplishment of redemption of his people. At the cross, Jesus bears the judgment deserved by sinners. At the cross, he accomplishes the work of the ordinary nature of divine love, not by overlooking sin, but by satisfying the demands of divine justice through his own sacrifice.

Only after these events the disciples begin to comprehend what had been taking place before their eyes. All the meaning packed into Jesus riding on a donkey.

[31:46] But there is another important observation here. John tells us that after Jesus was glorified, the disciples remembered what had been written about him. Their understanding of scripture was transformed by the accomplishment of Christ's redemptive work.

We enjoy an extraordinary privilege as Christians living on this side of the resurrection. We have the completed testimony of the scriptures, the canon, our 66 books of Old and New Testament.

We can read the Old Testament promises in light of their fulfillment in Jesus. We can recognize the relationship between the suffering servant and the glorious king because the apostles, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have explained that relationship to us.

And while this is true, we should be reminded that we still bring our assumptions to the text. We have to be humble enough to recognize that we do not understand everything.

In fact, the longer we study God's word, the more we become aware of the limitations of our understanding. But we should not be content to remain confused when God has given us the scriptures for our instruction.

[33:08] Our responsibility is to approach the scriptures prayerfully, humbly, carefully, allowing the revelation of God to correct our assumptions. Because it is possible to possess greater confidence in our interpretation of scripture while misunderstanding the very thing God intends to communicate.

The disciples themselves are evidence of that danger, and their subsequent understanding is evidence of God's kindness in correcting it.

Number four, Jesus, the king whose kingdom cannot be stopped. We see this verse 17 through the end of our text, conclusion of our passage.

In verses 17 and 18, John explains that the crowd who had witnessed the raising of Lazarus continued bearing witness to what Jesus had done. And the people who came out to meet Jesus did so at least in part because they had heard about this remarkable sign.

Now, notice again the relationship between the resurrection of Lazarus and the events unfolding in Jerusalem. Jesus has demonstrated his authority over death and the testimony concerning that miracle has produced an extraordinary public response.

[34:29] But we also know that not everyone who welcomes Jesus in this moment understands the significance of his mission. Some are undoubtedly motivated by curiosity. Others are impressed by his miraculous power.

Still others likely anticipate the immediate establishment of an earthly kingdom. John does not tell us the spiritual condition of every individual in the crowd, and we should not assume that every person participating between the popular enthusiasm surrounding Jesus and the fuller understanding of his identity that John intends his readers to possess.

And then we come to verse 19. The Pharisees observing the enormous public response express their frustration with the words, look, the world has gone after him.

Now, they are obviously employing a degree of exaggeration. They do not mean that every person in the world has literally become a follower of Jesus. They mean that their attempts to suppress his influence have failed, and that his popularity appears to be growing beyond their control.

people. But notice this. John places their statement immediately before the account of certain Greeks who come to Jerusalem and express their desire to see Jesus.

[35:55] And this is not an accidental arrangement. Remember what Zechariah 9.10 promises concerning the coming king? His reign will extend to the ends of the earth.

And remember what John has already told us in chapter 11? Jesus will not die only for the Jewish nation, but also to gather into one the scattered children of God.

Then in John 12, the Pharisees complain that the world has gone after him, and immediately afterward, Greeks appear seeking Jesus. It's a remarkable literary and theological connection between these events.

The religious leaders are concerned about losing their influence over Israel. people from every nation.

And the amazing thing is that this intentional kingdom will be established through the very death the religious leaders are conspiring to bring about. They believe that by killing Jesus, they will preserve their authority and protect their nation, but their efforts to destroy him will become the historical means through which God's eternal purpose of redemption is accomplished.

[37 : 13] This should remind us what Jesus taught earlier in John 10. He described himself as the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep.

And then he explained that he has other sheep who were not of the Jewish fold, sheep whom he must bring so there will be one flock under one shepherd.

That promise is being brought into focus here. The coming king is not merely restoring the political fortunes of one nation. He is gathering a redeemed people from every tribe, language, people, and nation.

And the means by which those people are gathered is the proclamation of the gospel concerning his death and resurrection. resurrection. This is why the mission of the church is fundamentally a gospel mission.

We have not been commissioned to establish the kingdom of Christ through coercion, military power, or political domination. We have been commissioned to make disciples of all peoples, proclaiming the good news of the crucifixion and risen Savior and teaching those disciples to obey everything he has commanded.

[38 : 29] That mission is grounded in the authority of the risen Christ who possesses all authority in heaven and on earth and has promised to be with us to the end of the age.

The progress of that mission does not depend upon the favor of earthly rulers. The kingdom of Christ cannot be prevented from accomplishing God's purpose.

That was true when the Pharisees conspired against him. It was true when Rome crucified him. And it is true today. The king has been raised from the dead.

His authority is supreme and he is gathering his people through the ministry of his word and spirit. So, Jesus entered Jerusalem as the promised king, knowing that the celebration would soon give way to hostility.

that his disciples would be scattered and that he would be condemned and crucified. And he went willingly, riding on a donkey.

[39 : 37] He did not misunderstand what awaited him. He had repeatedly explained to his disciples that his death was necessary. The misunderstanding of the disciples is not the end of their story.

Praise God. God. John tells us that after Jesus was glorified, they remembered. They came to understand what the scripture death would become the very witnesses through whom the good news of that death and resurrection would be proclaimed throughout the world.

They began that witness that is carried on to today. John himself is writing this gospel so that we might understand what he once failed to understand.

He tells us his purpose in John 20 verse 31. He has written so that we would believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing we would have life in his name.

And so if you are not a Christian this morning, I want to encourage you to consider the claims of Jesus as they are presented in the scripture. Not merely what you've heard about him, not merely what you would prefer him to be, some misrepresentation of who he is, but who he has revealed himself to be.

[41 : 07] He is the righteous king who has come to save sinners. And the call of the gospel is that you turn from your sin and trust in him, believing that his life, death, and resurrection are sufficient to reconcile you to God.

And if you are a Christian, I want to encourage you to continue growing in your understanding of the scriptures, your affection for this righteous king, that we would wrap our little feeble minds around all that his person and work means for us.

We should never become so familiar with the language of the gospel that we lose sight of the extraordinary wisdom and grace of God refilled in it.

Jesus, the king, has come. Jesus, the king, was crucified. Jesus, the king, is risen. And Jesus, the king, will reign forever.

Let's pray.