

God's Servant Receives Praise

Mark 10:35-11:10

In 1858, a scientific expedition passed through what we now call the Grand Canyon. A young lieutenant by the name of Joseph Ives made the following entry in his report:

"This region we last explored, the Grand Canyon, is, of course, altogether valueless. It can be approached only from the south, and after entering it there is nothing to do but leave. Ours has been the first and doubtless will be the last party of whites to visit this profitless locality. It seems intended that the Colorado River, along the greater portion of its lonely and majestic way, shall be forever unvisited and undisturbed."

Obviously the young man did not see what was right in front of Him. I have been to the Grand Canyon on a number of occasions and each time I am filled with awe and wonder. Yet Ives saw nothing that inspired. Nothing that stirred him. Ives had eyes, but he was blind. He did not grasp the grandeur and majesty of the Grand Canyon.

Far from being "unvisited" and "undisturbed", this natural wonder arouses awe in millions of visitors each year. Ives never returned to the Grand Canyon and he boldly predicted that no one else would visit this "profitless locality" either. **The lieutenant's report however is not an indictment upon the grandeur of the Grand Canyon; rather it is an indictment upon the young lieutenant.**

Many are spiritually like Joseph Ives when they encounter Jesus. They look at Him and perhaps see some of His attributes. Perhaps they see His humility or His gentleness or His kindness, but they miss His grandeur . . . His majesty. They see nothing that prompts awe or adoration. They think Him a "profitless locality" and after having taken a quick look, they leave Him unvisited and undisturbed.

This morning we hope to capture a glimpse of the majesty of Jesus.

Central Idea: Jesus is the Sovereign King who is worthy of our complete devotion. He is a King like no other in His humility, love, power, saving work and future glory.

Jesus is worthy of our devotion because . . .

Reason #1: Jesus' Service of Redemption.

The Twelve disciples have walked with Jesus for three years. In that time, they become convinced that He is the Messiah . . . the King whom God has foretold all through the OT.

Now they are walking with Jesus to Jerusalem the Royal City. And their thoughts are upon Jesus as King. Though believing in Jesus, the disciples are mistaken and confused. They do not know what to do with Jesus telling them on **three different occasions** that when they arrive in Jerusalem, *“the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise.”* (Mark 10:33-34 [ESV](#)).

They all gloss over it. They do not let it settle upon their minds. So as they think about Jesus bringing in the Kingdom of God to them, their thoughts move toward their own personal glory as participants in Jesus’ rule.

And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.”

(We envision Jesus’ shaking His head in disappointment at this question. The disciples have learned much from Jesus, but not enough.)

Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?”

(Remember the disciples are not processing what Jesus has said about his condemnation by the religious leaders and His suffering and death at the hands of the Romans.)

And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”

(Jesus knows that they will understand the truth of His kingdom when the Holy Spirit baptizes them on the day of Pentecost. He knows that when the Holy Spirit indwells them that they will suffer for His Name. Yet in this moment, the thing they ask is not for the Son of Man to give. That is the Father’s prerogative.)

And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John.” (Mark 10:35-41 [ESV](#))

The other ten disciples are angry that James and John tried to **“cut the line”** . . . James and John are attempting to push their way to the places of honor in the kingdom. Perhaps this character flaw has been gnawing at the other 10 over the past 3 years and this is the last straw for the 10. They unload on James and John!

And Jesus called them (all Twelve) to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.” (Mark 10:42-44 [ESV](#))

Jesus’ first corrects the disciples understanding of the Kingdom of God. **He wants us to see that His Kingdom is opposite of the kingdoms of this world.** His kingdom will not be one where the powerful, the aggressive, the forceful possess positions of honor and authority, but rather **God gives His kingdom to the gentle, the poor in spirit, the merciful, the persecuted and the peacemakers.**

But then Jesus says something most profound about His Kingship.

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”” (Mark 10:45 [ESV](#))

Jesus loves using the title “Son of Man” to refer to Himself. This title points to Jesus as the beginning of a whole new humanity. He is in the line of Adam yet He is the New Adam. **As the “Son of Man”, Jesus is the origin/source of a new race of people . . . He is the fountainhead of all who God’s chosen seed . . . He is the MAN through whom every other human may be included into God’s kingdom.**

Notice the last phrase of this profound statement:

*“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, **and to give his life as a ransom for many.**”” (Mark 10:45 [ESV](#))*

A “ransom” is a price paid for the release of slaves or captives. In our day, we use this term to describe hijackers who hold people until a “ransom” is paid to them. The hijackers promise that they will exchange the freedom of the person that they are holding for a specific sum of money.

By using the term “ransom” Jesus reminds us that we are born as captives to sin and to Satan’s realm. We are slaves in the dark kingdom where fear and shame and guilt and oppression control. Yet Jesus provides a way to be free of all that!

Here, Jesus says that He willingly pays the “exchange price” so that we might be liberated from the kingdom of darkness. What is the exchange price? His very life!

*For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who **gave himself as a ransom for all**, which is the testimony given at the proper time.” (1 Timothy 2:5-6 [ESV](#))*

Jesus claims to be a King who yields His own life so that His people may live as free men and women.

*He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom **we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**” (Colossians 1:13-14 [ESV](#))*

This King does not take to make His people poor; this King gives to make His people rich. This King does not fleece His flock; this King forfeits His life for His own.

*knowing that **you were ransomed** from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.” (1 Peter 1:18-19 [ESV](#))*

The ransom price to accomplish our liberty is nothing less than Jesus’ own suffering and death.

Truth: The price to ransom us from the dark kingdom is this noble King’s humiliation, His open mockery, His punishment for our sin, His shame, His condemnation by the Father on our behalf.

Friends, if you trust in Jesus as your King and Rescuer, **you have a King who willingly pays an exorbitant price in order to bring you out of misery and death and into joy and life.** Our captivity is alienating, isolating and life depleting. This King makes ransom for us so that we are now reconciled to God, adopted in to His family and heirs with Him of heaven’s joy.

Question: Why do we devote our whole lives to following Jesus? Why give up ourselves to bring glory to His Name?

Answer: Because Jesus is the King who ransoms us out of the kingdom of darkness and welcomes us into the kingdom of light. He is the King who loves every member of His kingdom with a costly and unending love. He is a King worth worshipping!!

Gospel: There is only one place to go if you wish to be delivered from the Failing and Fallen Kingdom and to belong to the Fruitful and Forever Kingdom. King Jesus alone pays that ransom and He alone can bring liberty to your life.

If you wish to belong to God's Kingdom, you must come to Christ. The cross of Jesus is where God's righteousness is satisfied and where mercy flows to us.

Jesus is worthy of our devotion because . . .

Reason #1: Jesus' Service of Redemption.

Reason #2: Jesus' Gift of Sight.

And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" (Mark 10:46-47 [ESV](#))

You recall the story in Mark 8 where another blind man begs Jesus to heal him. In that story Jesus spits on his eyes and laying hands on him. Jesus asks him, "Do you see anything?" The man in wonder says, "I see men! But they look like trees walking. Everything is very fuzzy." Jesus then again lays hands on the man's eyes and the man sees EVERYTHING with complete clarity. 20/20 vision!

Here is another blind man who comes to Jesus for healing. Note that this man KNOWS that Jesus is the KING of a new kingdom. He says, "Jesus, Son of David". Bartimaeus knows that Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT prophecies. Jesus is the One whom Nathan prophesied to David about in 2 Samuel 7: is the future

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." (2 Samuel 7:12-13 [ESV](#))

Bartimaeus is blind in body, but not in soul. Every miracle is a witness to Jesus' divine Person. Jesus is who He claims to be . . . both Lord and Messiah/King. He possesses authority over everything . . . even death and disease.

Mark records the healing of two separate blind men in order to drive home to us a central truth about Jesus' work in our soul. **Both stories of the opening of blind eyes reminds us that Jesus opens the eyes of our heart.**

God tells us in His Word are born blind to God and to His glory. If we are to have any spiritual sight of God, we need His mercy. Here Bartimaeus cries to Jesus for mercy. Jesus listens and He performs the miracle. **Jesus makes it possible for us to not only know ABOUT God, but to actually know Him . . . to experience Him . . . to see Him for the great God that He is.**

Paul describes this miracle this way:

"For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6 [ESV](#))

Truth: Conversion is an explosion of light in our soul. Conversion brings a radical change from darkness to light, from blindness to seeing the God of glory.

Question: Do you wish for this miracle in your life? Let us look to Bartimaeus for help!

And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" (Mark 10:48)

Bartimaeus is desperate. Desperate people find a way around and over obstacles to get to Jesus. I do not know the obstacles standing in your way of approaching Jesus. For Bartimaeus it was a literal crowd of people. For you, perhaps **some hurt from your past** shouting, "Stay away!" Perhaps **some moral failure**, "Stay away!" Perhaps **some lust**, "Stay away." Perhaps **a friend or a spouse**, "Stay away!" I know that most people have obstacles in front of them. But if long for Jesus' saving miracle, these obstacles will not keep you from Him!

Truth: Longing faith finds a way to get to Jesus even though big barriers block them. Pray for such a faith!

And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." (Mark 10:48-49 [ESV](#))

Jesus never turns any humble person away from Him.

And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way." (Mark 10:50-52 [ESV](#))

Question: Why do we devote our whole lives to following Jesus? Why give up ourselves to bring glory to His Name?

Answer: Because He opens our eyes to see God in His glory and wonder. He gives us sight to understand our world and the world that is to come. He is the King who loves us and does not darken our souls, but fills them with light. He is the King who does not hide His agenda and workings, but unveils them to us. He is a King worth worshipping!!

"For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light." (Psalm 36:9 [ESV](#))

Reason #1: Jesus' Service of Redemption: Jesus gave His life as a ransom.

Reason #2: Jesus' Gift of Sight: Jesus opens blind eyes.

Reason #3: Jesus' Identity as King: Jesus arrives humbly to serve His people.

In Mark 11, Jesus is entering the final week of His earthly ministry. It is the Sunday before the Friday when he would take up a cross and walk the Via Dolorosa to Calvary. Some estimate that two million people are traveling to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. The time is now ripe for Him to present Himself publicly as the King who possesses all authority.

This story is often referred to as the Triumphal Entry, but that is not completely accurate. Here He is announced as King, but He is not fully received as King. One day, Jesus will experience a Triumphal entry into Jerusalem when He comes again to establish His kingdom. But that event is yet future to us.

As a child, I remember thinking that this story was a nice one, but I wondered why it was so important that we devoted one Sunday every year to thinking about it. As you read the four gospels, you will find that all four accounts record this vital event.

I now understand that the Easter story would not be complete without this chapter. When Jesus came to die, He would die as King. When Jesus emerged from the tomb, He would resurrect as King. When Jesus would return in the clouds, He would return as King.

So five days before His death, he enters the royal city in a royal fashion. In so doing, Jesus declares, “I am the King. I am worthy of your allegiance and obedience. Yield to me. Honor Me. Receive Me.”

Now Jesus does not merely claim to be a good king, or even the best of kings. No, Jesus is in another class. He is the “King of Kings”. In other words, if we gather all the greatest king of this earth from all human history in one place, each one bows down to Jesus and honors Him by proclaiming Him Lord of all.

Question: What sets Jesus apart as the King of Kings?

Four majestic attributes Jesus possesses:

Majestic Attribute #1: This King possesses infinite knowledge.

We all want a leader who is really smart and understanding. No king possesses wisdom and knowledge like Jesus. Every detail of all creation is laid bare before Him. He always has all the facts in order.

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it.” (Mark 11:1-2 [ESV](#))

How did Jesus know about the colt? Jesus had been staying in Bethany some 18 miles away from Bethphage.

Notice that Jesus does not say, “Go and hopefully you will find some animal that I can ride upon.”

Jesus did not say, “Go and find any donkey you happen to see.”

Jesus did not say, “Go and snoop around and you are bound to find a donkey that has never been ridden.”

Instead notice the specificity of Jesus’ command, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it.”

And the two disciples found the colt EXACTLY where Jesus said they would find it.

He sees everything and knows everything, even before it happens. The Gospels are clear in communicating Jesus' omniscience to us.

In one place we are told that Jesus knew the thoughts of His enemies. (Matt 12:25)

In another place, that Jesus knows what is inside a man's soul. (John 2:25)

In another place that Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who followed Him but did not truly believe and who it was who would betray Him. (John 6:64)

The Samaritan woman after one conversation with Jesus exclaimed to her village, "He told me all that I ever did."

Such infinite knowledge is peculiar to God. Passages like these remind us that this King is more than a man, He is God of very God.

Principle: Jesus' infinite knowledge is both a great comfort to those who rest in Him as King and a great concern for those who resist Him as King.

Jesus' infinite knowledge is a comfort to those who rest in Him. Jesus is not a King who sits aloof in His palace, unaware and unconcerned about the lives of His subjects. Jesus knows about those internal fears and sorrows that weigh on your heart. Jesus knows about the dangers just ahead of you and the trials that are about to pounce upon you. He keeps a keen eye over your life to such a measure that he has detailed knowledge of every cell in your body. Nothing about you escapes His kind notice. He sees us in the hour of our unspoken need and silent sadness. So we are right to take our troubles to Him, knowing that He understands our sorrow and He cares about us. His loving eye is set upon His own.

An old song says, "His eye is on the sparrow and I know that He watches over you." Here from this story we can change the lyrics, "His eye is on the donkey so I know He watches over you."

What a comfort to have such a king keep His eye on our past, present and future.

Yet this King's omniscience also produces fear in those who seek to undermine His rule in their lives and in this world. If our King can see the donkey tied to a post miles away, he can see us behind our closed doors, behind any mask we may wear in front of our parents or peers. How foolish to hide from Him. He sees our secret sins as surely as God saw Adam and Eve eat the fruit in the Garden and Cain strike his brother Abel to the ground. Remember to Adam and Eve, God

asked the question, “Where are you?” They were trying to hide from God out of their guilt, but they could not run from God’s knowledge.

The thought of Jesus knowing everything about us should alarm us and push us toward repentance! It is futile to try to hide from God.

Question: What secrets plague your soul? What are you hiding from God? Come to God in faith. Turn from those sins that destroy your soul and believe in the Savior who loves you even though He knows everything about you!

Majestic Attribute #2: This King possesses sovereign authority.

“If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.’” (Mark 11:3 [ESV](#))

Imagine being the owner of this colt: *“Hey! What are you think you are doing with my brand new colt. He has zero miles on him and still has that new colt smell. Now you come and untie him and think you could just make off with him!”*

“The Lord has need of it!”

The disciples were not instructed to barter with the owner, nor to offer a fair market value price, nor even to assure the owner that they would bring the colt back by 5 pm the next day!

“The Lord has need of it.”

That is the only word of explanation offered because that is the only word of explanation needed. Here the owner understood the authority of the King and yielded immediate submission to Him. The Lord could have at least told the owner of the colt, *“Listen, this colt is going to be used for something very special. This colt is going to carry me into the Royal City in fulfillment of sacred scripture and what this colt does today will be recorded in sacred scripture and be talked about for the next two thousand years.”* “Oh, in that case, take it.” **But no, just “The Lord has need of it.”**

This commitment required unwavering faith in the King. The owner had to believe that the King would not ask for anything that would rob the owner of joy and future gladness. In faith and obedience, the owner released the colt to the disciples.

Principle: Jesus lays rightful claim to everything in His kingdom. He is no mere president, presiding over a republic. He is a monarch ruling over His realm. His authority is complete, absolute, and all-encompassing. He asserts His right over everything in our lives just like He asserted His right over that colt!

And some of those standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go." (Mark 11:5-6 [ESV](#))

This King's authority never brings sorrow and regret, but always joy.

Question: Do you think that the owner of this colt regrets that Jesus used his colt for Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem that first Palm Sunday? No way! What glory there is when we yield ourselves over to the King!

Majestic Attribute #3: This King possesses kingly glory.

And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!" (Mark 11:7-10 [ESV](#))

I love this part of the story. Here the people give worship to Jesus both by their words and their actions. That day was the time for Jesus to pull back a little bit of the curtain and display His greatness and glory. The people on the road to Jerusalem were given a small glimpse of Jesus splendor on that Sunday. Jesus' personal majesty cannot be hidden forever.

Principle: When we see Jesus for who He really is, our hearts will be filled with joyful worship. When Jesus reveals His glory and grandeur, we cannot help but move toward Him in adoration. Praise becomes a natural response for all who see Him in His power.

Interestingly not everyone saw His glory that day. Luke tells us that the Pharisees asked Jesus to rebuke His disciples for their worship of His person. They did not see anything in Jesus because they were blinded by their own willfulness.

Sadly, most today are like the Pharisees, they consider Jesus, they do not see His glory and are troubled that so many worship Him in deep devotion. They resent that others dedicate themselves so fully to Him.

It is easy to bolt past many of the details here and miss the truth that Jesus is glorious and He is calling everyone to worship Him as the King. Let us look at two of those details briefly:

1. The young donkey. 500 years before Jesus came to the earth, Zechariah prophesied about this day. Zech. 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter of 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.

The young foal of a donkey signified that this Messiah King would be humble, not proud . . . A man who brings peace, not war. When the Roman generals in Jesus' day came riding into a city after a conquest, they rode on white horses. These horses symbolized military might, **but Jesus came riding into Jerusalem on a donkey to proclaim shalom to the world.**

2. The cloaks and the song.

Why did the people throw their cloaks on the ground do?

This putting one's garment down on the ground for the king to walk on is an ancient custom. It symbolized that you were submitting to the authority of the king. They were in effect saying we place ourselves under Your feet as our King.

The song they sang was an even more plain of a declaration. They sang out: Hosanna! Which means "Save now!" Blessed is the King who come in the name of the Lord. This song is the spontaneous response to their recognition of the majesty of Jesus.

The song comes from Psalm 118. This was a psalm sung by the Jews in worship to Yahweh for the hope of a Messiah who would come and rule over them and save them from oppression. **This Messiah comes in the name of the Lord because He is the One whom the LORD sent as King.** The people know what they are singing when they take up the lyrics of Psalm 118. They are proclaiming Jesus as King!

Question: Why do we devote our whole lives to following Jesus? Why give up ourselves to bring glory to His Name?

Answer: Because He is the King of Glory. There is no other King like Him. He possesses the right to rule over us. He alone creates the Kingdom that we long for. To refuse Him is both wrong and foolish! He is a King worth worshipping!!

Conclusion: 4th of July. Flying in to Peoria. Fireworks in all the surrounding communities. From the air it is underwhelming.

Central Idea: Jesus is the Sovereign King who is worthy of our complete devotion. He is a King like no other in His humility, love, power, saving work and future glory.