

The Words and Wonders of Our King

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[0:00] Take your Bibles and turn to Matthew chapter 4. Matthew chapter 4 and verse 23. And we'll read through chapter 5 and verse 20.

! So Matthew 4, 23 to 520. Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them.

Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and the region across the Jordan followed him. Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

[1:10] Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven. For in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. You are the salt of the earth, but if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?

It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl.

[2:17] Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the law until everything is accomplished.

Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

The good news is that Jesus Christ has come bringing salvation as the great prophet, priest, and king. And if I'm to be saved, then I must have this Jesus as my king to rule over me and to defend me.

[3:41] So we're looking at the kingship of Jesus Christ and how he fulfills that office. Last week, we looked at the origin of the office of kingship in Israel.

When did this office of kingship begin? And we saw how that the children of Israel or the children of Abraham, when they got to Mount Sinai, God enters into a covenant with them.

He is their king. They are his nation, his kingdom of priests. Living under his rule and in submission to his reign, they experience wonderful blessing.

But Israel kept turning their backs upon God. And in the days of Samuel, the last judge, they asked for a king. They wanted to be like the other nations around. And they asked for a king like the nations around them had.

And God told the dejected Samuel, It's not you that they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.

[4:46] This is what they've done since the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day. They wanted to be out from under God's rule. And yet God gave them what they asked for. God gave them a king.

And yet it would not be to get out from under God's rule because the king that he gave them is to rule under him as the ultimate king. He's to be a mediating king between God the king and the people.

And so this king is to obey God's commands and is to enforce God's law in the kingdom. Well, King Saul, the first king, failed to rule for God.

Instead, he ruled for himself, what he wanted to be done. And so God rejected him as king and he set up David as king. And set up David's family as the line of kings that would come.

Some of David's sons were good kings. Some were bad. The best of them gave hints of the blessedness of what life is like under God's reign.

[5:51] But none of them were perfect kings and none were able to bring in the blessings of the perfected kingdom of God. They couldn't deal with man's greatest problem, man's sin.

They couldn't deal with their own sins as kings, much less the sins of their people in the kingdom. And so God brought judgments upon them. The prophets were sent to warn them of this coming judgment.

To call them to repentance and to point the nation to a coming Messiah king who would save them. And when talking about this coming saving king, he first told them he will come through the line of the tribe of Judah.

And as scriptures progressed, we learned that he's to not only be in the tribe of Judah, but in the line of David. That he would reign on David's throne.

It would be the clan of David and he would reign on David's throne. He would reign in righteousness and justice and his kingdom would be forever and ever. It would never end.

[7:00] This king would be born of a virgin. This king would be born in Bethlehem and so on goes the prophecies. And so these Old Testament prophets were shouting in unison. The king is coming.

The king is coming. But the people continued rebelling against God. And so his judgments fell upon Israel. Their king was taken into captivity.

And for over 500 years, there was no Davidic king upon the throne in Jerusalem. Rather, they were ruled by foreign kings, foreign powers.

First the Babylonians, then the Persians, then the Greeks, and then the Romans. And so for a long time, it looked like God's promise of an everlasting king of David had failed.

And then, in the fullness of time, God sent forth his own son. The king was born. A shoot came out from the stump of Jesse.

[8:00] And the overwhelming message surrounding the birth of Jesus is that the king has come. The king is born, whether it's the angels announcing his birth to Joseph, the wise men from the east asking, where is the king?

Or Zechariah. The message is the same. This baby is the long-promised king of David. But only a few people seem to believe this news.

Remember King Herod's response. He went out and killed all the baby boys, two years old and under, in the vicinity of Bethlehem, thinking, I've got to kill this baby king.

Joseph was tipped off by an angel in a dream, fled into Egypt with the baby king and his mother. And nothing is ever heard again about this newborn king, at least for a while. Perhaps they presumed him dead. But King Herod did indeed get him. There he is hiding out in Egypt.

[9:04] And when Herod dies, they quietly slip back into Israel. But they don't go to Bethlehem to live. Instead, they make their home in a little town of Galilee called Nazareth, far off the beaten track, out of the public eye.

And nearly 30 more years pass in quietness with no further word from God. No other word about this king. And then a strangely dressed prophet appears in the desert to prepare the way for the Lord.

And John the Baptist breaks the silence, saying, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

That's the summary of his message. What did John preach? The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Therefore, you need to repent. And so the Old Testament prophets had repeatedly said, God's kingdom and God's king is coming.

John the Baptist now says, the kingdom is here. It has come at last. Repent. The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[10 : 24] And of course, God's kingdom is here because God's king has come. The one coming after me, John says, who is preferred before me, whose sandals I'm not fit to carry.

That's the one that has come as king. And one day soon after, John pointed him out to the crowd. He introduced the king to Israel, saying, there he is.

Behold, the Lamb of God. Some believed him and told their friends, we found the Messiah, the one the prophets wrote about, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

And Nathanael says, Nazareth? Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Come and see, said Philip. And upon meeting Jesus and hearing him, Nathanael said, Rabbi, you are the son of God. You are the king of Israel. So John the Baptist introduces the king to Israel with a call to repent because the kingdom has now come with the presence of the king on earth.

[11 : 35] Well, then Jesus himself begins to preach. And his message is summarized in the very same words that John the Baptist's preaching was summarized in. Matthew chapter 4 and verse 17 tells us that from that time on, Jesus began to preach, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

So the kingdom of God was no minor point of interest to the Lord Jesus. The kingdom of God is at the very heart of his message.

It's the summary of all that he said. In fact, the word kingdom is found no less than 125 times in the four gospels. That shows us how much Jesus talked about the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven.

They're all one and the same. In fact, according to Jesus, the kingdom of the message of the kingdom of God is the gospel.

In Matthew 24 and verse 14, Jesus calls his gospel. This gospel of the kingdom must be preached in the whole world. So the gospel is all about the kingdom of God.

[12 : 51] The gospel is the good news of God's reign come to earth in Jesus Christ, the king. You see, the long prophesied kingdom of God, the king is coming.

He'll bring in an everlasting kingdom. That is all about the Lord Jesus Christ and his work of salvation. There are not two gospels.

There's not the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of salvation. No, there's only one gospel. And the gospel of the kingdom is all about the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ, the king.

So all those Old Testament kings and the kingdom, they were just types and shadows of the coming real king. And the best of them were just dim shadows of what life will be like under the true king.

And then he comes and here he is. Everything that the Old Testament was pointing toward, he's here. God's kingdom is here.

[13 : 53] In God's king, who is himself, God. Now, if you have your Bibles open to Matthew 4, notice verse 23 gives another summary of Jesus' ministry as he went throughout Galilee.

Matthew 4, 23, Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues. What was he teaching? Preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness among them.

I want you to see the twofold ministry of King Jesus. It was a ministry of words and of wonders. A ministry of words and wonders. Preaching and healing.

We're going to look foremost this morning at his words, his teaching and preaching. And then we'll also notice very briefly, if we have time, his ministry of healing.

So the promised king of David is here. But what kind of king is he? And what kind of kingdom has he come to bring? And I want us to see that the very first thing we must settle about this kingdom is that it is good news.

[15 : 04] He came preaching the good news. That's the word for gospel. The good news of the kingdom of heaven. That the kingdom of God has come in Jesus Christ to this earth is good news for sinners.

It is good news for us slaves of sinful desires and slaves of Satan taken captive to do his will. It's good news that a mightier king has come to set up his reign in the hearts of sinners.

It is well for us that he ruleth, we say. It's good for us that he is the reigning king. Psalm 72 prophesied of this coming king.

All nations will be blessed through him. It's good news. All nations will be blessed through him. Not cursed, but blessed. Not diminished, but increased. Not worse off for having him king, but better off. Not made sad, but made glad.

[16:06] Dear people of God, are you not better off for having Jesus as your king to rule over you and to defend you? That's what was prophesied. He comes to bring blessing.

No wonder he's preaching the good news of the kingdom of God. It is indeed good news. Blessings abound wherever he reigns. The prisoner leaps to lose his chains.

The weary find eternal rest and all the sons of want are blessed. Blessed where? Where Jesus reigns. He brings blessing. So Jesus' reign is good news.

And if we ever think of his kingdom otherwise, we are missing something huge. We're out of touch with the king and his kingdom.

The kingdom is good news. The kingdom of Jesus is good news. So as we turn to the gospels, what do we find? We find there's a lot of confusion about the kingdom that Jesus is bringing.

[17:09] What kind of king would he be? What would his reign look like? You know that most Jews expected their messianic king to have a political agenda for the nation of Israel.

The enemies they wanted to be rescued from by their king were the Romans, their oppression.

They were ruling over them. They wanted their king to bring physical prosperity to Israel, to raise them to economic and military supremacy over all the nations of the world.

We don't like being the heel. We want to be the king. And our king one day will bring that to us as a nation. And these false expectations of the kingdom of Christ, the Messiah, were found in the Pharisees and in the Sadducees, the rulers, the religious rulers of the Jews.

They were found in most of the common people, these false expectations. But they were also found in Jesus' own disciples, weren't they?

They were not totally free from these wrong ideas of the kingdom. And the expectation that, oh, if the king's here, then there's going to be immediate glory and no more suffering for the followers of King Jesus.

[18:22] And even today, we find many Christians failing to see that the kingdom of God is established in the hearts and lives of sinners through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And it is not something about a king reigning over in Palestine and Jerusalem upon a physical crown, a physical throne. No, it's not a national something for Israel.

He's come to establish his rule in the hearts of sinners. They were missing it in his day. Many are missing it in our day. And because of these false expectations that were prevalent in the people throughout Jesus' earthly ministry, what do we find him doing?

He's busy teaching and preaching about the good news of the kingdom of God. He's telling them what the kingdom of God is like. You know those kingdom parables. The kingdom of heaven is like. The kingdom of God is like. And then he sets forth some aspect of life under the reign of King Jesus. Teaching, teaching, preaching. And he's emphasizing the spiritual nature of the kingdom of God.

[19:32] Don't be expecting as a nation to be made the head and Romans to be thrown off. No, no. It's a spiritual reality and you need to know that first.

It doesn't come with outward manifestation, but it's within you. And you need to see that my kingdom is not like the kingdoms of this world. And so he emphasizes the spiritual nature of his kingdom.

Not that it won't have physical and material benefits as well, but they were missing the very heart of it. Why would the king's name be called Jesus? Not because he would save the Jews from the oppression of Roman emperors.

He would be called Jesus, this king, because he will save his people from their sins. Because sins have them by the throat and are dragging them to an eternal hell. And he'll come and save them from their worst enemy, sin.

It's all about the kingdom. It's all about Jesus saving us from our sins. So let's consider Jesus' words. What did he teach and preach about the kingdom that he had come to bring?

[20 : 40] Well, Matthew 5 through 7 gives us a sample sermon. We know it as the Sermon on the Mount. It's been called the King's Manifesto because the theme is clearly the kingdom of God.

And he is the king himself. And so we have in the Sermon on the Mount, the king setting forth important teaching about his kingdom. There's three parts to his sermon.

The first part describes the citizens of his kingdom. Who belongs to this kingdom? And it's not those who can trace their physical ancestry back to Abraham.

It's not those who are circumcised showing that they belong to those descendants of Abraham.

Rather, what we find in Jesus' description of the citizens of his kingdom is that they're people whose lives are characterized by eight beatitudes.

Their lives are characterized by spiritual graces. They have these eight marks upon them. And so he begins, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[21 : 55] Do you want to know who the kingdom belongs to? It's the poor in spirit. Those who are bankrupt spiritually and know it. Those who mourn for their sins. Those who are meek, not pushing their way around in life, but meek under the providence of God that he has placed them under.

They are hungry and thirsty for righteousness. They're merciful. They don't give back to people what they deserve.

They show mercy, showing love and compassion on people that don't deserve it in their lives.

They're pure in heart, not just with pure hands, but pure in heart.

They are peacemakers. They love peace. And they make peace wherever they go. And they are persecuted because of righteousness.

Yes, I tell you, theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Don't miss again that there is a blessing attached to each beatitude.

[23 : 01] These people are called blessed. You know that means happy kids? Blessed is happy.

The citizens of Jesus' kingdom are blessed. They're a happy bunch.

They're not only called happy, the blessedness is explained. They will inherit the earth. They will be shown mercy. They will see God.

They'll be called the children of God. They will be comforted. And on and on go the blessings. And so again, I tell you, we must think of the kingdom of God as a kingdom of blessing.

It is indeed good news. Kingdom blessings are the blessings of salvation found in Jesus Christ, the king. And you notice the first and the last blessing is that theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The first beatitude, the last one. Theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Simply belonging to this kingdom, simply belonging to this king and being under his rule is the all-inclusive ultimate blessing.

[24 : 07] Do you consider it that? To be in Jesus' kingdom? The definition of blessedness is to live with Jesus as our king. Then since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful and worship God with reverence and awe.

These are the ones then who belong to God's kingdom. These are the citizens of Christ's kingdom. This is what it looks like in the hearts and lives of those where Christ reigns.

Eight beatitudes. Eight spiritual characteristics. And being such, they are the salt of the earth. They are the light of the world wherever they go because of who they are.

So that's the first part of the sermon of this king, the manifesto of the king, who are the citizens.

Secondly, the king goes on to set forth the righteous laws, the laws of his kingdom.

This is the major part of the sermon. Every king has his laws. King Jesus is no different in that respect. And what we find is that he upholds the same moral laws given in the Old Testament and summarized in the Ten Commandments, which he freely quotes from in his sermon.

[25 : 30] And he says quite pointedly, I've not come to abolish the law. No, the moral standards of the kingdom of Jesus are the same moral standard of God in the Old Testament.

It's a reflection of the nature of God. And so, it's not a new law that Jesus brings as king. He brings the old law, the only law, the reflection of God's holiness and how it impinges upon man in our relationships to him and to one another.

But he does not agree with the prevailing interpretations of those laws by the Pharisees and the scribes. In fact, he stands in opposition and says, well, they have said this, but I say to you.

They say this is what the commandment means, but I say to you, this is what the commandment always meant. And I'm here to interpret it for you. So, what did the Pharisees and the teachers of the law do?

They reduced the law. They brought it down to something manageable, just outward performance, external actions and behavior. And Jesus shows that the commandments make spiritual demands of our heart, our minds, our attitudes, our will, our motivations, so that the sixth commandment is not just forbidding actual murder and stabbing of our neighbor in the heart.

[27:04] But the sixth commandment is forbidding the anger and hatred in the heart that may lead to the murder and to the deed. Yes, that too is forbidden in the sixth commandment.

Always was. I'm here to tell you, I am the only lawgiver. That's what it means. And the seventh commandment was never meant just to forbid acts of adultery, but to forbid the very lust in the heart that leads to lustful looks.

That is forbidden. It is called heart adultery. Adultery in the heart. A break, a breach of the seventh commandment.

So you see, the righteous rules of God's kingdom are far higher than most realize. The people were hearing from their scribes and Pharisees, well, if you just do this, this and this, then you've got that commandment settled.

And Jesus says, oh no, the standards, the laws of my kingdom search the heart and try the affections and try the motives of a man's heart.

[28:10] For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter, what? The kingdom.

This is a kingdom sermon. You will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven. Because the citizens of my kingdom order their lives according to heaven's standards, not man's and not man's interpretations of them, but the king's.

And that's why I say unto you. So he's correcting the faulty interpretations of the true laws of the kingdom. So he's saying the one critical concern in the kingdom of God is what does our king say? That's what rules the day in the kingdom of God. It's not what is everybody else doing? It doesn't matter to the kingdom of God. Their ears are open to one mouth.

The king's mouth. Our uncontested priority in life is to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Chapter 6 and verse 33 of this sermon.

[29:17] Kingdom citizens submit to his righteous rules, recognizing the king's authority and living under it. He reigns in their hearts, you see. That's the throne he sits upon.

And you can see it by what they do with his laws. And I want you to realize that this is no less a part of the blessedness of Jesus' kingdom. Living under his rule is a blessing, not a liability.

His law is the law of liberty, James 1.25. His law is the path of true freedom where freed hearts love to run, Psalm 119.32. His commandments are not burdensome.

They're not only holy and righteous but also good, Romans 7.12. They're good. His commandments in the kingdom of Christ. They're good. They're good for us. His law set forth the very best way to live.

He ought to know he made us. He became one of us. And he says, this is the way to live. My laws are good. When Moses rehearsed to the people the laws of God, their king, he emphasized this point.

[30:25] He said in Deuteronomy 4.8, what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I'm setting before you today. He's got it in the positive category column.

It's not in the negative. It's not one of the negatives. Well, you know, it's really a lot of blessings in the kingdom of Christ but there are these negatives over here. You've got to keep his command. No, that's over here. That's a blessing. What other nation has laws so righteous and just and fair as King Jesus laws?

It's a privilege to live under them. And so now here is King Jesus, gracious, gentle, and humble in heart setting forth the laws of his kingdom. And he says, you know, my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

And coming to me and living with me under my rule brings rest, deep rest, rest to your soul. The law summed up is loving God with all your heart and loving your neighbor as yourself.

It's doing to others what you would want to have done to you. That's how Jesus sums up this law of the kingdom. It's a blessing to belong to such a kingdom with such righteous good laws of a righteous and good king.

[31:47] So the laws of the kingdom are set forth secondly and then lastly the king ends his sermon with an urgent command to enter his kingdom. It's both an invitation and a command.

It's in the imperative. Enter chapter 7 and verse 13 enter through the narrow gate for wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction and many enter through it but small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life and only a few find it enter there.

Boy girl man woman enter the kingdom of God. I want you to see that entering the kingdom is nothing less than being saved.

I think a lot of the misconception on the kingdom of God would be settled if we just got that point to enter the kingdom of God is to be saved by Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the door he's the gate into the kingdom you get into the kingdom by getting into Christ. It's by the gate of conversion to Jesus then that we enter the kingdom it's how we get in.

[33:01] You remember when the rich young ruler came to Jesus he wanted eternal life but when he realized he couldn't have two masters he couldn't hold on to all of his money and have Jesus too he went away sad because he had great wealth and he loved his wealth more than Jesus and eternal life.

And Jesus takes this opportunity to turn to his disciples and to do some teaching on the kingdom of God and he says to them it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God get that he's talking about what just happened this man walked away from what the kingdom of God it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God listen to the disciples question in response who then can be saved they said Jesus doesn't now time out you missed it guys I said to enter the kingdom of God and you're talking about salvation those are two separate things no he doesn't say that at all to enter the kingdom of God is to be saved and Jesus says you know that is impossible it is impossible with man but all things are possible with God what's possible being saved entering the kingdom of God to enter the kingdom is to be saved they're used interchangeably there in Mark 10 25 to 27 you remember in Jesus dealings with Nicodemus who comes to Jesus by night in John chapter 3 and Nicodemus is a Pharisee he's a member of the ruling council of the Jews he's the leading teacher in Israel and yet he's a man with wrong ideas in his head about the kingdom of God and how you enter it you know what Nicodemus thinks if you got the right blood in your vein if you were born with the right stock of the children of Abraham you're in you're in the kingdom and Jesus says no you never get in unless you're born again there is a spiritual birth that has to take place to enter the kingdom it's a spiritual reality and so

Jesus says to him I tell you the truth no one can see the kingdom of God unless he's born again how can a man be born again when he's old Nicodemus asked surely he can't enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born and Jesus answered I tell you the truth no one can enter the kingdom of God you can't see it perceive it or enter it unless you're born of water and of the spirit because flesh gives birth to flesh nothing more but spirit gives birth to spirit I'm talking about a spiritual reality here folks you have to have the spirit of God to bring you into this blessing and so you should not be surprised Nicodemus at my saying you must be born again after all you are Israel's teacher and the Old Testament prophets spoke all about this birth of the spirit there's no entrance into the kingdom of God just because you're born a Jew you must be born again whether you're

Jew or Gentile your Jewishness has nothing to do with entrance into the kingdom nothing short of a supernatural act of God the Holy Spirit giving you a new beginning a new creation creating new desires new powers new loves new hates so that you do live the eight beatitude life because he dwells within you by his spirit furthermore to enter the kingdom of God you must believe on me Jesus tells Nicodemus you've got to believe on me because just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert so the son of man must be lifted up so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life you see the kingdom of God is about eternal life it comes by believing in Jesus as the king the savior the redeemer there's no salvation there's no kingdom of God apart from him and in order to believe you've got to be born again and unless you're converted and become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of God so

I want you to see that entrance into the kingdom is a spiritual reality and that's something that was going on right as Jesus was ministering and it's still going on today men were and men are entering the kingdom of God by being born again by being converted by repenting and believing the good news of Jesus Matthew 11 says from the days of Jesus is speaking from the days of John the

Baptist until now right now as I'm teaching on the earth the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing and forceful men are laying hold of it they're forcing their way into the kingdom as they hear the good news of the kingdom being preached so it's a present reality as Jesus is preaching on the earth it's a present reality today people are entering the kingdom but not all were entering were they no not at all Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people in Matthew 21 I tell you the truth the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you for John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did and even after you saw this you did not repent and believe him you didn't enter the kingdom but they did you see it's a present reality as Jesus is on the earth people were entering the kingdom in fact the Jewish religious leaders not only refused to enter themselves they tried to hinder others from entering remember what Jesus said to them in Matthew 23 13 woe to you teachers of the law

[39:17] Pharisees you hypocrites you shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces you ever had a door slammed in your face that's what the Pharisees were doing the gate into the kingdom of heaven they slammed the door shut you shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces you yourselves do not enter nor will you let those enter who are trying to you know the whole aim of the Jewish leaders teaching the whole aim was to keep people from coming to Jesus who is the only way into the kingdom of God he's the only door and they were doing everything they could to keep people away from Jesus so the king ends his sermon exhorting his hearers to enter the kingdom by conversion to him it's something that was to be done right there right now on the spot enter the narrow gate and he then warns of the consequences of those who don't he claims that on the final day of judgment his hearers will find him to be their judge and from him they will receive their eternal sentence for he says in 7 22 and 21 to 23 not everyone who says to me

Lord Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven but only he who does the will of my father who is in heaven many will say to me on that day Lord Lord didn't we prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles!

Then I will say unto them plainly I never knew you away from me you evil doers that's a that's a searching word but I want you to know think a moment of the kindness of the king to warn us in advance this isn't the last time you're going to see me he's saying to these people you're going to see me in the last day of judgment and what you hear from be warned be warned he's saying what a kind king what loving king the storm of God's wrath is coming and if you're a wise man you will hear these words of mine and put them into practice and you'll stand in that day you will stand you can be confident in the day of judgment but if you hear these words of mine and don't put them into practice you will not stand in that day you will be smashed by the king what a blessed king he is to warn his enemies and when

Jesus had finished saying these things the crowds were amazed at his teaching why because he taught them as one with authority and not as their teachers of the law none of their teachers claimed to be the one judging them in the day of judgment but he did he did Jesus is a real king the real king with real authority with a real kingdom and submitting to his reign is nothing short of salvation we don't have time to cover some of the other points we'll see in the future that he does speak of two comings of the king that wasn't known in the Old Testament but the fact is that there are two comings of the king and that's partially the explanation for why they had false expectations of the kingdom they expected Jesus to do then what he was only going to do after he came back the second time that for another time and so the teaching of the kingdom the parables they make that plain that there's two comings and so he's teaching about the kingdom with words he's teaching he's teaching he's preaching about the good news of the kingdom but then there's a second method that he uses and that's his healings and again I don't have time to speak on this just to say that those healings of Jesus were visual lessons of the coming kingdom yes he has come but there is more to come and when I come back blessings upon blessings will abound and so he heals the sick all sorts of diseases raises the dead he's giving a prelude of what it will be like in the final completed version of his kingdom to make us long for that day because you see

King Jesus will not perfect his kingdom until all his people are saved to sin no more he will not be done putting under his feet all of his enemies until he has removed every trace element of the curse from this planet and there will be a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness and blessings will abound where he reigns these he raised from the dead they died again but Jesus is showing this is a sneak preview into what it will be like when I come back and consummate my

kingdom complete my kingdom and there you will see that the last enemy death has been swallowed up in victory what a gracious kind use of his powers he heals sin's consequences that's what diseases are they're the result of sin Adam sinned against God and so disease came upon the planet it's part of the curse so what does the king do he takes away his plan in the end is to take away the consequences of sin he takes away the curse he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities he's such a kind king blessings abound wherever he reigns the lesson for today the good news of the kingdom of God is the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ there are not two gospels there's just one and it's good for us that Jesus has come to save we enter his kingdom by coming to faith in Jesus Christ and that requires a new birth making us a new creature and all who enjoy his salvation enjoy it forever and ever have you entered the kingdom of God have you come to Christ and been converted to him turning away from your way and turning to him to save you believing on him and that work on the cross as he told Nicodemus so that you not perish but have the eternal blessedness of his kingdom which is eternal life that's the issue set before us in the coming of the king that's why the kingdom of God is at hand what's the important word?

[46 : 27] repent repent believe because this is the issue you must repent you must believe to enter the kingdom of God the issue is who rules in my heart whose laws and desires are followed King Jesus the rightful heir to the throne or King Self the great usurper of the throne and the dirty little secret is that we've all said with those in the kingdom parable we don't want this man to rule over us we don't want this man to be our king we've joined that universal conspiracy that throws off the king and his commands treating them as fetters to be free from and so get the picture this king comes to save us from our sins and we didn't want to be saved from our sins we loved our sins we didn't want to be saved from them any more than a dog wants to be saved from eating a T-bone steak we were fine with our sins and so we weren't interested and we'll see that in lessons to come that's why they rejected their king when they came to realize what he came to save them from was not Rome not physical national deliverance spiritual deliverance from the things they loved called sin we loved our sins we hated his laws we had no appetite for the king and his ways we were opposed to God's rule so opposed that nothing short of a new birth could change it and as I close

I want you to realize that sin is treason against the high king of heaven sin is treasonous it's preferring the kingdom of darkness to his reign it's preferring king south to king Jesus you know sometimes kings have executed traitors and rebels to their kingdom our king reclaims rebels and makes them the beloved citizens of his kingdom who sit and rule and reign with him forever is that grace or what is that kindness where do you find that in a king that's our king instead of executing them he dies for them instead of punishing them he takes the punishment himself laying down his life that they might live in the late 18th century and I need to be careful here because our brother Jeff is with us from the United Kingdom but I was reading that in the late 18th century the United Kingdom sent tens of thousands of their convicts to Australia where they were made to work off their debt to society and entire penal colonies were established sometimes on little islands that's the whole colony the whole island where other than the soldiers every member of the colony was a convict you got the picture?

that's the way it is in the church what is the church of Christ? it's an outpost of the kingdom of heaven it's a colony where Jesus' rule as king is being manifested right now on the earth and you must know this that every single citizen in the kingdom of Christ in his church once was a traitor to our king every one of us instead of damning us he loved us and he reclaimed us at the cost of his own blood by dying for us purchasing the new birth of the Holy Spirit for us giving us the gifts of grace and of faith and repentance without which we could not enter the kingdom of heaven working in our hearts so that we can be marked with the eight beatitudes working in our hearts so that we do submit ever so imperfectly yet do submit to the kingdom's laws and are thereby marked as the citizens of this kingdom of heaven and because of

Jesus' redeeming love we are saved from God's wrath in the day of judgment I want you to leave this morning realizing that the kingdom of God is a kingdom of blessing the greatest blessings salvation blessings that's what they are and lost person there's good news for you and it's just that that the king has come and he's willing to receive sinners he is the door into the kingdom repent because the kingdom of God is at hand enter today by faith and repentance in Jesus Christ Lord Jesus Christ we gladly own you as our king we are struck that you would have owned us we have read in history of kings that killed their own people for far less than treason and we deserved eternal

damnation and instead you died for us you reclaimed us and you made us citizens of your kingdom you've put heaven in front of us eternal life forever and ever with you whom to know is life whom to know is the blessedness and so lead us deeper into your love and stamp us more and more with your character what a gentle what a kind king you are make us gentle meek peacemakers you have loved us make us to love our neighbor and to love you we pray save others this day bring them into your kingdom lest they stand before you and hear those dreadful words depart from me so we praise you for the blessings of salvation that you've given us and we pray in your name amen