

## **Sermon: What Kind of King is Jesus?**

**Scripture: Mark 11:1-11**

### **Introduction**

There are so many amazing teachings of Jesus we should follow daily. However, we need to understand the ultimate purpose of God sending Christ to earth was to die for our sins. Completely undeserved by us, mind you, but the purpose of Christ.

You must wonder what went on inside Jesus head. I always find it funny when people saying, “what kind of impact can I make?” Jesus didn’t start his ministry until he was 30 and then it only lasted 3 years – look at the impact he made! Arguably some of the greatest impacts he made was in his last week of ministry before His crucifixion.

So, we come to the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem.

- Personal story of kids playing and wanting to be the leader (king) and realizing there’s a lot more to “leadership” than just a title.
  - Everyone wants it the title, very few want the responsibility.

It seems as though throughout history there are two different types of monarch’s – Kings, Queens, Emperors. You’re either a super good one where your court and your people love you. You make great decisions and expand kingdoms through means other than war. Some examples here’s would be Roman Emperor Vespasian, King Charles I of England, and our very own Queen Elizabeth II.

Or, you’re a terrible, tyrant of a monarch making decisions based on personal gain, the betterment of yourself and you own selfish desires – while hurting and killing people along the way. Examples of these would be Henry VIII, Emperor Nero, Ivan the Terrible, King John (made famous through Robin Hood), and Emperor Caligula.

This is why it can get confusing when we call Jesus, “King” because we have so many examples of good and bad kings. I mean the coming of a “king” was the reason Herod killed a bunch of kids during the time of Jesus birth because he didn’t want someone to take his throne. He even killed his own family. What kind of king was and is Jesus? Is it fair to Jesus to give him such an earthly title? What emotions would come up in the people during this time when they’re told they’re getting a new king?

What emotions come up for us?

Turn with me in your scriptures this morning to Mark 11:1-11.

**READ SCRIPTURE**

**Exegesis (allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you, specifically, for this section)**

So, Jesus as King. If you remember in the Scriptures during his life on earth as recorded in the Gospels, there were times when people wanted to make him a king and he constantly refused. Where you read about that marvellous event when Jesus fed the thousands in the desert, afterwards the people were so excited and they were so glad he was in their midst, that they wanted to make him king.

They thought this would resolve all their problems. They would never have to worry about where they get their food or drink or anything. He would be their king.

And Jesus immediately went into hiding to avoid any big demonstration where people would try to acclaim him as a king. And when Peter proclaimed to Jesus, “**You are the Christ, the son of the living God,**” and Jesus congratulated him because he said, “**You have not learned this on your own, but God has enlightened you,**” and so Jesus praises Peter.

But then immediately afterwards, Jesus tells Peter and the other disciples, “**Yes, but now we’re on our way to Jerusalem. There the son of man will be handed over to his enemies. He will be tortured, executed as a criminal,**” and Peter says, “Oh, no! No! That doesn’t have to happen to you,” and I’m sure he’s thinking in terms of what Jesus could do. He has this huge following of people and he’s able to heal and brings care and fulfills people’s needs.

And Peter just can’t understand why Jesus would give himself over to his enemies, let himself be tortured and put to death, give up any power. I mean, this sounds like no other monarch in history. You know what Jesus said to Peter? “**Get behind me, you Satan! You’re not thinking according to my way, you’re thinking according to human ways.**” I mean, you would think Jesus would say, “Aww, Peter...thanks so much for thinking I could do that. Thanks for thinking so highly of me.”

But no, Jesus calls out Satan in his beloved friend and recognizes he is being tempted. Jesus would not let the disciples acclaim him as a king, as one who would overthrow the Roman empire and set the people free once more. He refused that.

How many of us would refuse that from our friends? See, if Jesus said, “Thanks Peter, that means a lot,” he would be taking glory away from God. We can read in Philippians 2, equality with God is something Jesus didn’t want, but to be a servant of man and emptying himself, being obedient to the point of death. He is not a self-glorifying king.

Even on the Sunday before he was put to death when he came into Jerusalem in triumph — we all remember Palm Sunday, the people gathering in huge crowds, acclaiming him as king of the Jews, throwing down their robes for him to pass over.

But Jesus wanted to make sure they understood. “Okay, if you’re going to try to make me a king, you’d better understand. It’s not going to be as a ruler who dominates, who has power, who has wealth,” because remember, when Jesus came into Jerusalem, he did not come in on a war horse, a leader of an army.

He rode on the back of a donkey, a beast of burden, the kind of beast that a poor, almost helpless person would have. He was trying to get across to the people, “I am not going to be one who rules and dominates, who takes over the world. That’s not who I am.”

And at his judgment before Pontius Pilate when Pilate says to him, “Well, are you a king?”, and Jesus says in effect, “No, I’m not saying that. You have said it.” But then he adds something: “If I am a king, my kingdom is not of this world. It’s going to be something very different, if I were king.”

And as you look earlier on in Matthew’s Gospel, you find that event where the mother of James and John comes to Jesus and says to him, “Here you have my two sons. Grant that they may sit one at your right hand and one at your left when you are in your kingdom.” See, she’s envisioning this kind of an earthly kingdom where Jesus will have a court and the most important places will be at his right hand and his left.

And Jesus said to the brothers in Matthew 20:22-28, “You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I’m about to drink?” They answered, “We can.” Jesus replied, “You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right or my left is not for me to grant.” Now when the other 10 heard about this, they were angry with James and John, so Jesus called them all together. He’s going to straighten them out. “You know that the rulers of the nations act as tyrants over them. The powerful oppress them. It shall not be so among you.”

He’s saying, “We’re not going to have that kind of a kingdom. Whoever wants to be more important in your community shall make himself the servant of all. If you want to be the first, make yourself the slave of all others. Be like the son of man.” Jesus, talking about himself: “Be like me who has come not to be served, but to serve and give his life for all.”

So Jesus refuses to be a king, a ruler — dominating, wealthy, everything you want in a human way. He has a whole different way, His way: “I came not to be served, but to serve, even to be a slave for all others.” And that’s the only kind of way that Jesus wants us to follow him.

### **What Does This Mean For Us?**

And isn’t it very clear in the Gospel lesson today that Jesus is asking us to be servants of one another, of our brothers and sisters anywhere in the world? Have we ever considered it that way that this is how I act as a disciple: When there are hungry people, I give them something to eat. I find a way to make sure they have enough. Or sick people, people in prison, or strangers.

As I said in a previous sermon, have we stopped believing there are lost people who need to hear about the Love of Christ? It’s not going to happen in here because they’re not in here! It’s going to happen out there when we diligently act and say, “I serve the king who gave His all for me, so the least I can do is put my pride aside and have a conversation with someone.”

People coming to our borders because they are fleeing a situation of violence and desperate poverty — the stranger. If we follow Jesus, we would welcome them in. We would do that on an individual basis when people are hungry and strangers come into our midst. But shouldn’t we be doing that as a nation? There are so many that are saying, “Push them back.” We spend tens of

hundreds, even millions of dollars on repellents. Really what we're saying is, "they're an inconvenience to me, so I don't want them."

If we want to honor Jesus today as a king we must be clear what kind of a king Jesus is and how he wants us to honor him. In the chapter of Matthew, Chapter 25, we have the program of action. **"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?"**

**"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"**

I hope each one of us will take this seriously, look into our hearts, see how I am carrying out that program of action. Has "servant" become a nice word we just use to feel good? Or are we going to use Jesus as our example to actually be servants in our community?

This is the first day of the last week of Jesus life. If we want each and every day to become more like Jesus, we need to know what kind of King he was and is: ***a servant king.***

Because don't we all want to hear Jesus say to us, **"Come, you who have been blessed by God. Come into the fullness of God's kingdom and live in the fullness of life and joy forever."** When we follow the program of action that Jesus has laid out, we can look forward to that moment when Jesus will say to each one of us, "Come, you who are blessed by God. Enter into the fullness of life forever."

May we be in the Word this week and in prayer to find out more about servanthood.

### **Make Me A Servant**

Make me a servant

Humble and meek

Lord let me lift up

Those who are weak

And may the prayer

Of my heart always be

Make me a servant

Make me a servant

Make me a servant today

### **To Be Like Jesus**

To be like Jesus!

This hope possesses me;

In every thought and deed,  
This is my aim, my creed;  
To be like Jesus!  
This hope possesses me;  
His Spirit helping me,  
Like Him I'll be.