

## The King Who Has Come: An Unexpected Way to Victory

When you hear phrases like, “We ate like a kings last night.” Or “They treated us like royalty.” What comes to mind?

For the vast majority of us we immediately think of fancy food, huge portions, over the top service, people treating us like we are far more important than we really are we think of leisure, comfort... luxury.

When in reality, for the Christian... those who follow Jesus in *His kingdom*... what should come into mind is bread and wine. The Lord’s supper. His body and His blood . That’s the feast we long for.

To be treated like royalty should bring up images of crowns made of thorns. The King who has nail pierced hands.

We actually shouldn’t expect to be loved by the world that has rejected her king.

Words like persecution, marginalization, and exile should fill our minds.

The kingdom of God is not like the Kingdom’s of this world.

Listen – following Jesus in His Kingdom is radically counter-intuitive.

What I mean by that is that the ways of King Jesus don’t *feel normal*. We swim upstream. We really do go against the grain.

One of the temptations that we constantly face is trying to fit God into our pre-conceived narratives... we try to fit Him into our stories... rather than realizing that we actually fit in God’s story.

Don’t we sort of go through life as though we’re the author of our own stories and we’re the main characters of our own life and we sort of write God into our stories? I mean... Afterall... at least he plays a major role in the story...

Friends – the reality is that God is the author, the main character, the hero, the whole climax of this story and *we’ve actually been written in as supporting actors*.

*Our lives revolve around Him and his kingdom*... He doesn’t revolve around us and our Kingdom... and friends... His kingdom is a very different kind of Kingdom than we would expect.

In Luke chapter 19 – we see that Jesus is making His entry into Jerusalem as the King.

But because all the people had pre-conceived ideas as to *what kind of king they were waiting for... they totally missed it.*

If you were with us last week, you'll remember that Jesus told a parable to those He was with because they were expecting the Kingdom of God to appear immediately.

They were looking for a military and political king who would overthrow the Roman oppressors and give them their power back.

That's not the kind of Kingdom that Jesus established. He established a kingdom of peace between God and man by dying on the cross for our sins and raising from the dead, taking His throne in heaven where He reigns and rules in grace and mercy.

In the same way that Jesus established His kingdom in an unexpected way, his kingdom advances in unexpected ways as well.

So the big question for us this morning is this; What does it look like to live under the counter-intuitive reign of Jesus?

As we walk through Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem we'll see what it looks like from 3 different angles.

### 1. **It's looks like We go with Him into the hard places. (v28)**

*And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem*

Kent Hughes says, "Jesus was at the end of a journey that had begun some nine months before when he purposefully began a zigzag journey first through Galilee, then Samaria, then Perea, and finally Judea. During this final journey he had ministered in at least thirty-five localities, timing the journey just right in order to end up in Jerusalem for Passover."

Ever since Luke 9:51 Jesus has set his face towards Jerusalem. There is no secret what awaits him there.

Just last chapter, in Luke 18:31-33 Jesus says plainly "*See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. <sup>32</sup> For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. <sup>33</sup> And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise.*"

Jesus was set on the mission that he was given by the Father. He came to seek and save the lost. He was set on Jerusalem where he would be rejected, mocked, shamed and ultimately crucified.

Notice that it says, "*he went on ahead.*" That is, of the disciples that were following Him. Jesus had a unique mission that he was to accomplish by Himself. He alone was going to make it

possible for reconciliation between God and man. We don't add anything to that equations. He saves us by his grace alone... And yet, he leads his people right into the very place where He will be rejected.

Listen... following Jesus means that we go where He leads.

And the whole mission of the Triune God from eternity past was that Jesus would come into the world on a rescue mission that meant that he would go into the darkest and most difficult places. Jesus is the light of the world that *shines into darkness*.

And aren't you thankful for that? Aren't you thankful that Jesus didn't stand at arm's length from those of us who are lost and hurting? Aren't you thankful that Jesus is the kind of King who goes into war on behalf of his people, rather than simply sending a delegation?

Aren't you thankful that Jesus isn't simply seeking to transform societies by legislating new laws, but never actually addressing the real problems of the human heart?

Praise God that he goes into the dark and difficult places! Praise God that he can actually bring about transformation.

But it always comes through sacrifice and suffering.

In the same way that Jesus brought salvation by being crucified on that tree...

We his church proclaim and embody that salvation by going into dark and difficult places with the hope of the gospel. Love compels us to follow Jesus, where Jesus is needed.

Friends – We can't have the person of Jesus apart from the narrative of Jesus. The whole pattern of the life of Christ is going down into death and then resurrection life.

Listen to the apostle Paul – this was so normal and expected for him. Look at 2 Corinthians 4:7-12

<sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. <sup>8</sup> We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; <sup>10</sup> always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. <sup>11</sup> For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. <sup>12</sup> So death is at work in us, but life in you.

Friends, as we share in Christ's sufferings, we also share in His resurrection life.

Every year we invite Minnesota Adult and Teen Challenge to come to worship with us here at Waterbrooke. There is something profoundly beautiful about hearing the testimonies of Jesus reaching into the lives of those plagued with addictions and heartaches.

The story as to how Teen Challenge started is amazing. David Wilkerson was a farm town, small church pastor. One night he was in his study reading through Life magazine when he turned the page and something gripped his heart. On the page were 7 boys with anger, and emptiness in their eyes. They were on trial in New York city for brutally murdering an innocent person. They were all teenagers part of a notorious gang.

As he looked at the picture more he began to cry. He didn't understand why he was crying because he lived 350 miles away in a rural area that had nothing to do with New York City. And then, out of nowhere, The Holy Spirit impressed upon him, "Go to New York and help those boys." He tried to suppress the prompting of the Holy Spirit, but it only grew stronger.

So he ended up taking trips to New York during court trial, seeking to pray for the boys, seeing how he could help them. In the process his heart began to break for all the kids in New York who were part of the gangs, and after the trial was over, he kept taking trips to New York. He would go where the gangs would hang out and try to talk to them, and try to reach them, not having a clue what he was doing really.

Eventually some of the kids started to come to faith in Christ. And then some more. And then eventually he decided he had to leave the rural church and move to New York so he could help these teenage kids in the gangs full time. More and more of these kids started to come to faith in Christ that eventually they needed a center to help facilitate their discipleship as they left the gangs and began to follow Jesus.

Here we are a little over 60 years later with over 200 Teen Challenge centers in the United States and over 1,000 worldwide helping men and women, boys and girls all over the world to find Jesus and be set free from the deep and dark world of drug addiction.

Now think about this – That's a parachurch organization that's very limited in it's scope.

Think of all that the church has done over the last 2,000 years as Jesus has lead his people, empowered by the Holy Spirit, into the most difficult places in the world?

What about our own backyards? Did you know that in Carver County the largest growing belief system is the "Nones"? Those that claim no religious affiliation at all?

The next generation is growing up in a community that is absent of the hope of the gospel.

Waterbrooke – there was a day and age when the church could set up a great Sunday service and expect those who don't know Jesus to come to us... those days are basically over. We, the church, need to go to those who don't yet know Jesus.

We must count the cost and receive it from the Lord. Our lives may get a bit uncomfortable, but as we share in Christ's sufferings as we seek to make Him known, we have to trust that He will bring about resurrection life in others.

Waterbrooke – in the last few weeks I've heard countless times, from well meaning people say something along the lines of, "Wow, with all these new laws getting passed in MN, we need to get out of here."

No. We, the people of God, need to stay here! How else will our neighbors and the next generation know that there is a real hope in Jesus?

Friends – to live under the counter-intuitive reign of Jesus means that we follow him into, not out of, the hard places that he leads. And for many of us, that's right here in our own communities.

Jesus went into Jerusalem to secure salvation for those who would believe. He went to be mocked and shamed and ultimately crucified for our sins. We carry that message into the world that has rejected Him. Trusting that He will bring about resurrection life in and through all the sacrifices we make for the sake of the gospel and the glory of His name.

Next, living under the counter-intuitive reign of Jesus..

## 2. Looks like humility and surrender (v29-34)

<sup>29</sup> When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, <sup>30</sup> saying, "Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. <sup>31</sup> If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.' " <sup>32</sup> So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. <sup>33</sup> And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" <sup>34</sup> And they said, "The Lord has need of it."

So here there are. Just about a mile outside of Jerusalem. During the entire earthly ministry of Jesus we don't see him riding anything. He certainly could have walked the rest of the way, and yet here we see him *needing a colt*. What's going on here?

It was normal for a king to enter a city with an entourage. Usually riding on a warhorse coming back from battle to brag about and celebrate victory.

In our passage we see Jesus, the True king coming... but not on a warhorse. He's coming on a donkey. He's coming not to slay his enemies, but to offer salvation to his enemies.

Jesus is fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9

<sup>9</sup> 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.

Notice that the donkey *is a sign of humility*. Of lowliness, of accessibility. Jesus didn't come like all the other kings. Boastful and riding in with a warhorse... He came lowly.

Listen to Philip Ryken, *the donkey stands out as a deliberate rejection of this symbol of arrogant trust in human might, expressing subservience to the sovereignty of God. Jerusalem's king is of humble character, yet victorious, and so it has always been that the church does not effectively spread the gospel by sword or by arrogance, but by mirroring the humble spirit of its king and savior. Rather than riding in to set everyone straight, we are more like Jesus when we come to people with our Savior's gentleness and peace.*

It's been said that humility is the recognition and embrace of the fact that our lives are not our own.

We belong to Jesus. The humble servant King.

Friends – if Jesus *is humble at heart...* and He *established his kingdom in humility... and he reigns in humility...* then that means that we join in His kingdom advancing in humility.

It's the open-handed surrender of our whole lives and all that we have. It's a deep desire that Christ's name... not our name be glorified in however He chooses to use us.

I love what Luke does here in our passage.

Notice that the two disciples that Jesus sends are unnamed.  
Notice that the owners of the donkey are unnamed.

You know – My greatest sin struggles is pride. Seriously, please pray that Jesus would humble me and keep me humble.

I often laugh about the fact that the first book someone gave me after becoming a Christian is Andrew Murray's book "Humility."

I really do believe that if I can learn enough, God will use me. If I can do enough, God will advance His kingdom. If I preach clear enough. If I am relatable enough...

It's all non-sense. In all those thoughts I'm at the center of it all, functioning as Lord, and not Jesus.

Pride, not skill or competency, or knowledge, is the greatest hinderance to the advancement of the kingdom of God.

There is a really amazing word play in this section of scripture that we can't see in English.

V33 says, **And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, “Why are you untying the colt?”**

Then in v34 the disciples respond, **“The Lord has need of it.”**

The word *owners and Lord is the same word in the Greek text.* It could be translated, “The lords said why are you untying it? And they respond the Lord needs it.

You see what’s going on here?

The Humble King is Lord of all. He is Lord over all lords. And he welcomes us to come under His lordship.

And this is amazing. Because this means that there is nothing too small, surrendered to King Jesus... to be used for great kingdom purpose.

Pride says that we must first be something great in order to be used by God... humility says that anything and everything surrendered to the Lord can be used greatly by God... because He is the Lord and not us!

Even the smallest things. The things that will never be noticed by anyone. This is how God loves to work.

Did you know that every single revival has begun by a small group of people, who are essentially unnamed and unknown through history who have sought the Lord in prayer, surrendering everything to Him?

We live in a world that fundamentally thinks that bigger is better. More is merrier.

Not so under the counter-intuitive reign of King Jesus.

Some of us hear that Jesus leads us into dark and difficult places and we immediately think, “I don’t have what it takes!”

Jesus might just be saying, ‘You have exactly what it takes, surrendered to me, you’ll be blown away at what I’m going to do.’

Friends – our lives are not about us, they are about Jesus. Praise God for that. That means the burden is off. All we have to do is surrender. Open our hands and hearts and say, “Lord I’m yours. Have your way.”

Some of us have prayed that prayer years ago. We can look back in amazement. We wouldn’t have planned our lives to go the way that they have, but we can see God all over it.

Today is a good time for all of us again to open our hands and hearts and say, “my life and everything in it belongs to you Jesus, for your kingdom and your name sake. Have your way.”

So living under the counter-intuitive reign of Jesus means following Jesus into the difficult places, it looks like a life of humility and surrender and lastly,

### 3. It looks like being a people of praise (v35-40)

<sup>35</sup> And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. <sup>36</sup> And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. <sup>37</sup> As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, <sup>38</sup> saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” <sup>39</sup> And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.” <sup>40</sup> He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.”

All of Jesus’ disciples saw who Jesus really is. As we learned last week – they didn’t understand the nature of the kingdom. They thought it was going to appear immediately... but they did understand that Jesus was the king.

Jesus was, in not-so-subtle ways declaring Himself to be the king. He was owning it. No longer was he telling his followers to be silent. His time had come.

They lifted Jesus up onto the colt, exalting Him.

They threw their cloaks on the ground – like they would any king – giving him a royal entry.

This is pretty cool – in 2 Samuel 15:30 King David was conspired against by his son Absalom. The king was being ran out of Jerusalem. And it says that David ascended the Mount of Olives, and he and all those who were with him were weeping. The king was dethroned.

But now – here is Jesus... Descending the mount of Olives and those who are with Him are rejoicing. It’s a great reversal. The true King – the True Son of David has come! And all those who are with him are rejoicing. Praising God for all the mighty works that He has done have seen.

We live in a world where we build our lives on what we have done. On what we have accomplished. On the resumes that we have built.

We celebrate our victories. We rejoice in our accomplishments.

My friends, in the Kingdom of God we rejoice in what another has done!

The disciples rejoiced because the mighty works of God.

If you would have been there and asked them, “What’s all the commotion about?”

They would have responded:



Haven't you seen? Haven't you heard?

Let me tell you about when Jesus first started proclaiming that the Kingdom of God had come and then he started healing people of all their sicknesses.

Let me tell you about that time when Jesus went into the synagogue and there came a man who was possessed by a demon... and with a single word from Jesus the demon fled.

Let me tell you when I first met Jesus – and how he knew all the sin of my life... and proclaimed that I was *forgiven of all my sin*.

Let me tell you when he stood up for me when all the religious leaders wanted to condemn me.

Let me tell you when I saw him *touch a leper and heal him*.

Let me tell you about the time he walked on water.

Or the time he fed 5,000 people with a few fish and some bread.

Or that time when he actually empowered us to proclaim the gospel and heal the sick.

I could go on and on about all the times he has been patient with me.

All the times he has been merciful to me.

And Waterbrooke – we can look back and say,

*Let me tell you about the time, the Lord of Glory was nailed to that tree.*

When he Cried out, "Forgive them, they know not what they do!"

Let me tell you about how He was crucified so that we could go free.

How he was buried in the tomb... but on the third day he rose from the dead!

Let me tell you about how the grave couldn't hold him.

Death couldn't stop Him!

Let me tell you about how lost I was when he sought me out.

How I was running in the opposite way and he rescued me from the pit of hell.

Let me tell you about all the ways that God has been merciful to me.

How he has never given up on me.

Never grown tired of me.

What about you? What great works has God done in your life?  
What wounds has he tended to? What sin has He pardoned?  
What family member has he rescued?

In what ways has he brought you back? Kept you in His love?

How has He restored your hope, even when your circumstances didn't change?

Waterbrooke church we have so much to praise God for.

All the benefits of Christ have been poured out onto us freely by His grace.  
He has done everything for our salvation through the cross and resurrection.

Friends, because of God's free grace in saving sinners we can say yes and amen to what Paul says in Romans 5:3-5

we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Even in our sufferings we can rejoice. Even in our hardships we have hope. Because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us!

Because of the radically counter-intuitive reign of King Jesus we always have something to praise God for.

But because we live in the "already but not yet fully realized" kingdom of God – there will always be people trying to silence the people of God.

Look at v39 and 40. <sup>39</sup> And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." <sup>40</sup> He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

I remember a few years ago my wife and I had one of our neighbors over for dinner. During the conversation Chelsea and I started talking about how Jesus had saved us and turned our lives around. We were thrilled as we were retelling the story of God's grace in our lives and all that He had done.

And one of the saddest things happened next. Our neighbor looked at us straight in the eye and said, “No. You turned your life around. And you should be very proud of that. Jesus has nothing to do what it.”

I’m sure many of us have been in similar situations. When we are praising Jesus for what He has done only to be met with pushback just like the Pharisee’s did in v39.

Waterbrooke – I want you to hear Jesus here. He says... The most natural, and appropriate thing in the universe is to Praise Him because of who He is. In fact – all of creation praises God. All of creation gladly displays and proclaims the glory of God.

The most un-natural and inappropriate thing in the universe is to keep silent about the glory and goodness of Jesus Christ.

So Jesus is telling us – Just keep on going. Just keep on praising. Don’t let anyone silence you! Don’t let anyone stop you. Don’t let anyone make you think you’re the odd one for rejoicing and praise the King of kings and the Lord of Lords!

Waterbrooke – Is Jesus worthy of our praise?

Living under the counter-intuitive reign of King Jesus means that we are a praising people.

And friends there is coming a day when the King will return. When the sky will open... and Jesus won’t be riding in on a donkey... He will be riding in on a warhorse. Because victory belongs to Him. The King of Kings and the Lord of lords will return to make all things new. To finally and fully bring about total and complete justice. Total and complete peace. Total and complete joy and happiness.

We will see Him face to face. All our sorrow will be undone. All our wounds will be healed at last.

He will be coming with a new Jerusalem. Adorned as a bride prepared for her King. We will be radiant in the presence of the King.

So while we wait for that great day. While we live under the count-intuitive reign of King Jesus **let’s keep going with Him into the dark and difficult places.**

**Let’s keep surrendering all our lives and all we have for His use.**

**And let’s keep praising Him for all that He has done.**

Let’s pray.