

The Kingdom of God

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[0 : 00] Good morning. My name is Matthew Capone, and I'm the pastor here at Cheyenne Mountain Presbyterian Church, and it's my joy to bring God's Word to you today.

A special welcome if you're new or visiting with us. We're glad that you're here, and we're glad that you're here not because you're filling seats, but because we're following Jesus together as one community.

And as we follow Jesus together, we've become convinced that there's no one so good, they don't need God's grace, and no one so bad that they can't have it, which is why we come back week after week to hear what God has to say to us in His Word.

We're continuing our study in the Gospel of Mark. You'll remember Mark, as a gospel, tells the story of Jesus in His life, in His death, in His resurrection, and we're asking two simple questions as we go through this book.

Who is Jesus, and how do we respond to Him? This is our fourth week now, so we've had a variety of answers. Three weeks ago, when we were in verses 1 through 8, we saw that Jesus is the physician.

[0 : 59] Jesus tells us in Mark 2, verse 17, Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

That's our first answer. Jesus is the physician. Then, in verses 9 through 11, we saw that Jesus is the Psalm 2 king, the one who comes to rule over the whole earth, and He's also Isaiah's suffering servant.

So on the one hand, He is so great that the heavens rip open for God to make a pronouncement about Him. On the other hand, He's so humble that He receives the baptism from John the Baptist, the one who's not even worthy to untie His sandals.

And so as He's receiving His baptism, remember we talked about the fact that Jesus stands in the place of sinners. It doesn't make sense that He would receive John's baptism, and that's the point. Then, finally, last week, in verses 12 through 13, we saw that Jesus is the perfect one. Jesus succeeds and obeys where we fail and disobey.

[2 : 02] And so those have been our answers so far. This morning, we are leaving the desert. So verses 1 through 13, all desert scenes. In a sense, the desert is meant to be this introduction to the Gospel of Mark.

We know that the real action hasn't happened. These things are private things for the most part, except for John the Baptist out in the wilderness as Mark presents it. Now we're going to take a shift of location. We're moving from the desert, probably likely in the south, and we're going to move to Galilee, which is more in the north.

If you're familiar with the geography of the nation of Israel, there's two main bodies of water. There's the Sea of Galilee in the north. There's the Dead Sea in the south. And you can guess it. The Sea of Galilee is close to which of those?

Or the area of Galilee is close to the Sea of Galilee up in the north. So Jesus is moving north. He's moving back to where He grew up. And I'll remind you, as we talk about Jesus, I've been telling you that Jesus is not a mythological figure.

He's not an abstraction in a theory or an idea, but He's actually a real man who lived in real time and real space. So I've been giving you these earthy facts about Jesus. We've talked the last couple weeks about the fact that Jesus had, or He was one of, at least seven kids.

[3 : 11] So Jesus came from a large family. And I told you about Jesus' brothers. His brothers' names were James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon. And I want to tell you just a little bit about Judas this morning.

Judas is not the same as Judas Iscariot. So it's a different Judas. And many people believe that Judas, Jesus' brother, is the same person as Jude who wrote the book of Jude in the New Testament.

That's not what I want to talk about, though. What I do want to talk about is that we have an ancient historical record about Judas' grandchildren, which means that they were Jesus' grandnephews. So think about that for a second. Jesus had grandnephews. Judas' grandchildren had a plot, a family farm in Nazareth, which means, most likely, Jesus' family had had this farm for generations. And so you might have heard that Jesus is a carpenter. We find that out in Mark 6, Matthew 13. It's likely Jesus was also a farmer. Okay? Because his grandnephews had access to the family farm. [4 : 13] That's your fun fact for the morning. Okay? Jesus is a real person. He lived in real time, real space. And this real person is moving from the desert to Galilee because we're going to see this shift from the introduction of Jesus' ministry to the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

And so because of that, we're going to ask a slightly different question this morning. Not who is Jesus? Although we're going to return to that question over and over again, but we're simply going to ask, what is the kingdom?

Now, I've been talking about this in various angles this morning about the kingdom of God. And you will find all sorts of people will say all sorts of things. It can be a little bit of a confusing topic. If you go to Embassy Row in Washington, D.C., there is no embassy for the kingdom of God.

I'm just going to break it to you right now. And so what are we talking about when we talk about this kingdom? We're going to look at two things this morning. First of all, the coming of the kingdom.

And second of all, Jesus' call to repentance and belief.

And with that, I'm going to invite you to turn with me to Mark 1, starting at verse 14. You can turn in your worship guide. You can turn in your phone. You can turn in your Bible. No matter where you turn, remember that this is God's word.

[5 : 20] And God tells us that his word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, which means that God has not left us to stumble alone in the dark, but instead he has given us his word to show us the way to go.

And so that's why we read now, starting at verse 14. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God and saying, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent and believe in the gospel. I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word. Our Father in heaven, we thank you that your son is not an abstraction or an idea or a theory, but that he's a real person in real time and real space.

And we thank you that he's not just a person, but God as well. And he has come as the king of this world. And so we ask this morning that you would help us to understand this king and this kingdom, that we would be able to see the beauty and the glory of it, and we would be challenged and encouraged to live in it.

We ask these things grateful and thankful that we don't have to earn them from you or deserve them, but instead we simply ask them in the mighty name of Jesus Christ. Amen. Three weeks ago, when we talked about John the Baptist, I gave you this illustration to explain the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus.

[6 : 54] Remember, I told you that it was like that between a nurse and a doctor, because when the nurse comes in, the nurse is preparing the way for the doctor. The nurse gets you to admit that something's wrong.

You have to confess why it is that you're there. You have to admit that you have a need. So the nurse is there to get you prepared, right? But the nurse doesn't have any power.

The nurse can't write a prescription. The nurse is not authorized to diagnose. He is just there to prepare you for the doctor. The doctor is the one who is coming, actually has the power and the ability to change.

He's the one who's able to write prescriptions. He's the one who's able to run tests. He's the one who's able to try to diagnose and figure out what's going on. Now, one thing I didn't mention when I told you that is, I talked, of course, about the nurse coming in and then the doctor coming in.

What happens between the nurse and the doctor? Well, if your doctor's office works like mine, the nurse has to leave, right?

[7 : 53] The nurse never just stays and hangs around and waits for the doctor to come in. The nurse always says, the doctor will be with you in a minute, and then walks out. And then 10 minutes

later, the doctor knocks on the door, right?

And then you say, come in, and the doctor comes in, and you talk about whatever it is that you need to talk about. Mark is telling us here that the nurse has left.

That's what we're looking at in verse 14. Now, after John was arrested, the introduction is over.

John has served his purpose. It's now time for the knock on the door.

You might wonder why John was arrested. Mark has no interest in telling you about that. That's irrelevant. That's not the point. He will tell us about that in chapter 6, and we're going to have to wait for chapter 6 to find out.

So we'll find out later why it is that John was arrested. The point, though, is that things are moving forward. We're done with the introduction. It's time to move on. The one with the actual power is here.

[8 : 56] And, in fact, we see that point as well in the comparison that's drawn between John and Jesus. There's things that are the same, and there are things that are different. The time is fulfilled here, we're told, in verse 15, which means that the moment has finally come.

Everything that John has been predicting, everything the Old Testament prophecies have told us about, these things are finally coming to fulfillment. It is time for Jesus to come. It's time for the doctor to finally show up.

The preamble has been finished with. But there's some similarities and some differences here.

There's some overlap. So if you have your Bible with you and you go back and look at verse 4, you will see that John was proclaiming a baptism of repentance.

Jesus here is also, verse 14, proclaiming. So Jesus and John are both doing this. This is the same word in Greek, by the way. They're doing the same thing.

They're also both talking about repentance. We see the baptism of repentance from John the Baptist in verse 4, and then Jesus tells people to repent.

[9 : 58] So there's a continuity here. They're both, in some ways, doing the same thing. There's also a discontinuity. They're doing something different because Jesus is able to say what John is not able to say.

That is, first of all, there's the gospel of God. We see this word twice, verse 14 and 15, the good news. The good news is finally here because the one who is powerful has finally arrived.

Jesus is able to come and do what John can only predict. So he's able to say the kingdom of God is at hand. The difference then, the similarity is they're both preaching.

They're both calling for repentance. The difference is that Jesus is the one who's able to bring the good news. He's the one who's able to say the kingdom of God is finally here.

The power has arrived. The ability to change, the ability to heal, the ability to rebuke is here. Jesus has arrived.

[10 : 59] And so as we come to this, this transition between the introduction of Jesus' ministry to the beginning of Jesus' ministry, we're still getting the framework, the understanding that we need for the rest of this book.

And this morning, we need to understand what we're talking about when we look at the kingdom of God. And so we're going to simply look at two things. As I mentioned before, the coming of the kingdom and repentance and belief.

So first of all, the coming of the kingdom. And I'm going to tell you, as I say many times, I'm going to say something, not everything. Because we need the whole book of Mark to understand what's meant by the kingdom of God.

So this is just an introduction. We're going to have the parables of the kingdom in Mark chapter 4, where we'll have a chance to slow down and look at the kingdom in detail. But I'm going to start with the most obvious thing of all.

If it's true, as we saw in verses 9 through 11, that the Psalm 2 king is here, then of course the kingdom is going to be here as well.

[11 : 58] Okay? It doesn't make sense to have a king without a kingdom. And so we need all of this background information, right? We're building step by step on what Mark is telling us.

John has already told us there's going to be a king. Now we're just learning what we should have already expected. Of course there's a kingdom, right? The king, by definition, has to have something he's in charge of.

And so, again, looking back, we know, okay, what do we have to know? What is absolutely true about this kingdom? Well, it's the Psalm 2 king. So what we're told about the king in Psalm 2 is true of this kingdom as well.

And you might remember some of the things from that. The kingdom, first of all, remember it's something that's supposed to be for all peoples and all nations. That was what happened with the Psalm 2 king.

In fact, it tells us in verse 8, I will make the nations your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession. Nation of Israel had very little impact on the nations around them.

[12:58] Jesus comes. He is opening up. Now, it was an option as a non-Israelite to follow Yahweh, the God of Israel. Didn't happen for many. Jesus is now bringing God in a greater way to the nations and the peoples.

Mark chapter 13, we're told the gospel must first be proclaimed to all the nations. So that's one way in which the kingdom is here. Jesus is bringing something fuller than what was there in the past. He's bringing something. We'll see this in Acts chapter 2 at Pentecost. We're going to see the nations coming. All the different peoples, all the different languages hearing the gospel preached to them.

Now, if you're a millennial like me, you interpret Revelation chapter 20 verse 3, the binding of Satan so we can't deceive the nations, as Satan no longer being able to prevent all the nations from coming to faith in Christ.

And so that's part of what it means that the kingdom has come. The Psalm 2 king, he's supposed to have the whole nations as his heritage. Jesus the king. He's bringing the prophecies that have been made throughout the Old Testament about the nations coming to worship God.

[14:07] Those things are coming true. We see that throughout the prophets and especially in the Psalms. Somehow, by the kingdom of God coming, not only is there going to be greater fullness as to who is going to hear the gospel and understand it, there's also greater power over demonic forces.

This is why Jesus is constantly casting out demons. We're told in Matthew chapter 12, Jesus says, If it's by the spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. In other words, there's this connection between the kingdom and power over evil forces. That makes sense, by the way, if Satan has now been bound, he can't deceive the nations. So there's a greater level of power now that Jesus has come than there was previously.

There's a greater level of access from the nations than there was previously because Jesus has come. Paul tells us, 1 Corinthians chapter 4, the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power.

So we understand our lowest hanging fruit. This is the Psalm 2 king. Of course he has a kingdom. This kingdom is coming for all the nations. It's a kingdom with greater power and authority over evil forces.

[15:17] We're also going to see that it's a kingdom where those who are on the outside are brought inside. And so that's why it's often called the upside-down kingdom.

Jesus is going to reverse the priorities of this world because his kingdom, like any kingdom, has rules and laws and expectations and a culture and norms.

And then, at risk of stating the obvious, not only does the king have a kingdom, here's our other low-hanging fruit, the king is finally present. The king is finally there with his people.

This is a basic logic of being human. We've learned this, especially in 2020. Presence really matters. There is something real and substantial about being able to look someone else in the eyes in person, not over Zoom.

Okay? Before COVID, now this is not necessarily true now, but as a minister of the gospel, people at hospitals would break all kinds of rules for me. So hospitals have all sorts of rules.

[16:25] The only way to break them is by being a pastor. Those of you who have been here for a long time, remember Stephen Clark passed away unexpectedly at the end of 2018, and there were rules about how many people could be in the hospital room.

So they told me, you can't go in. There's already two people there. I said, I'm a pastor. They said, the door's right there. Right? Right? Even secular nurses and doctors know you do not get in the way of the Lord's representative.

Why? Because presence matters so much. There's something new and different about this kingdom. The kingdom has come quite simply by the fact that Jesus is there as a man in real time and real space.

He brings blessings that were not there previously. Jesus is the one who casts out demons. Jesus is the one who brings healing. Jesus is the one who speaks over people who are outcasts and let them know they're accepted and forgiven.

And so these are some of the broad framework that we need to understand the kingdom moving forward. Of course there's a kingdom. There's a king. This king is the type of king that we were told was going to come in the Old Testament.

[17 : 31] So of course his kingdom is going to look like that. He's going to bring in the nations. He's going to have power over evil forces. He's going to come and he's going to give us and bring us his presence.

And so the same things are true of us today. We experience blessings because of the nearness of the kingdom that we would not have experienced had we lived 3,000 years ago. The kingdom of God is good news for us today.

I hate to break it to you, but most of us, if any of us, are Jewish. And yet we're here. Why?

Because the Psalm 2 king came. The king who is going to bring people from every nation and tribe and tongue. We experience a measure of God's power.

We have an understanding and a clarity around God's grace to us that we would not have had 3,000 years ago. Why? The king has come. The kingdom is here.

[18 : 32] It is near. With all of that said, we have to understand what I mentioned earlier during the Lord's Prayer. There's this important concept that the kingdom is here in part.

It's not yet here in full. There's the already, but the not yet. So we experience the benefits and blessings of the kingdom. We also long for the kingdom to come.

We also pray, Matthew 6, 10, your kingdom, your will be done, your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. And so that's the kingdom of God.

Just our introduction. By the way, I'll mention, this is extremely helpful as we think about it. I mentioned earlier that if you go on Embassy Row in Washington, D.C., there's no embassy for the kingdom of God.

And if there is, you should be very concerned. Which makes it hard to get our heads around it, right? Because it feels at times like maybe when we talk about the kingdom of God, we're talking about this pretend place that's kind of pie in the sky.

[19 : 34] And so I want to give you a couple categories as we're discussing kingdom of God. It's here in part, not here in full. There's a man who describes it this way. It is a reign more than a realm.

It's a power more than a place. It's a reign more than a realm. A power more than a place. Which means that unlike earthly kingdoms, the kingdom of God is not tied down by geography.

Okay, so that's part of what makes it hard for us to wrap our heads around. And another way we could look at the kingdom of God is one definition is the rule of God in the hearts and lives of his people.

So you might have one county or one state. There are some people who recognize God as king. Other people who don't. We also don't want to get the kingdom of God confused with the church. So this same person who says the kingdom is a reign more than a realm, a power more than a place, he also says the kingdom is a power. The church is a people. So the church are people who submit to Jesus as king.

[20 : 35] That doesn't necessarily make them the kingdom. Okay, the kingdom is God's rule, his reign over the world. And one day we'll see it in full.

Now we only see it in part. And so that's a small answer. That's the something, not everything answer to what is the kingdom? What is the good news that Jesus is proclaiming here?

How do we respond? Well, gospel means good news, right? If everything I've just said is true, and it is, this is something that we should be excited and joyful about.

There is real, true, and good news that has come to us that benefits us here and now because Jesus and his power are at work in this world. And so my question for you is simply this.

Is the kingdom good news to you? When you think about the fact that Jesus has come, is that good news? Is that something that causes you to have that feeling that someone might have when

they're thirsty and finally there's a drink of water?

[21 : 40] Is it good news to know that those who are on the outside are being brought to the inside? Is it good news to know that God is bringing in people who don't look like us, don't speak the same language as us, don't eat the same food as us?

Do you say, here's another paradigm I'm going to give you. Do you say when you think about the kingdom, oh no, or at last? Because ultimately as we go through the gospel of Mark, we're going to see there are only two responses to Jesus.

Either we love him and see him and his kingdom as more and more beautiful, or we hate him, we turn away from his kingdom.

Okay, so is the kingdom of God good news to you? When you look at it, when you think about it, do you say, oh no, or do you say at last?

And we're going to come back to that, I'm in the gospel, as we move forward. If you're a non-Christian, the response for you is to enter the kingdom.

[22 : 43] We're going to talk about that in a minute. If you consider yourself a Christian, the response for you is to know and love and follow the king more and more, living in his kingdom more and more, submitting to his rule more and more.

Do you want to know what that looks like? Keep coming back for the gospel of Mark. That's what this gospel is meant to answer. This is just a small introduction.

Okay, so we're not going to go into all the details of the kingdom now, but as we walk with Jesus through the gospel of Mark, we're going to see over and over again what it looks like to live and love in his kingdom.

Now, if you're familiar with kingdoms in the nations of this world, you know that there's many to choose from, right? Not everyone in this room is a U.S. citizen.

Some of you, if I have this correct, are dual citizens. You have citizenship in more than one country. And you know that if you're not a citizen of the U.S. and you want to become one, it's a long and arduous process.

[23 : 43] You have to have legal residency in the U.S. for three to five years. You have to take a test showing that you know United States history, thankfully. None of us who were born have to take that test. You have a long road ahead of you, right, to become a citizen.

It's a long and arduous process. If you want to become a citizen of the kingdom of God, there is a process for you as well.

And this is what Jesus is spelling out for us here in the rest of this passage. So we know the time is fulfilled. John the Baptist has left. The kingdom of God is at hand. Okay? Jesus now tells us what our response is supposed to be to that kingdom.

Verse 15, repent and believe the gospel. Now this idea of the king and the kingdom help us understand what it means to repent and why we would need to repent.

We've already talked about what it is to repent. I gave you the illustration earlier of heading in the wrong direction, needing to turn around. Repentance is more than just saying, I'm wrong, although it's not less than that.

[24 : 49] It's confessing our sin, what we've done that's wrong, and turning around in the other direction, and heading after new obedience. So that's what repentance looks like. It's a turning around.

The kingdom helps us understand why we need to repent. If there's a king, he has laws and rules and regulations. He has a way that he's called people to live. He wants people to listen to him, to obey him, to worship him.

Why do we repent then? Because we've done none of those things. Jesus calls people to repentance because they are not submitting to him as king. They are not listening to him as king. They are not worshipping him as king. The concept of kingdom, in other words, helps us understand what repentance looks like. It looks like turning away from one allegiance and turning towards another one.

Jesus is saying, I've come as the king. You have rebelled against me. You need to come and repent. If this is a challenging concept for you, I want you to think of it this way.

[25 : 51] Imagine, after we finished our little excursion down I-25 South to head to Denver, I finally turned around, so you were relieved. But then I got off here on this exit at West Meadow.

I got onto South Academy, and I said, we're going to take a little trip onto post. So I found the line, or I found the entry point where there was no line. And you think I'm going to break, but instead I just hit the gas.

And I just bust through the gates, right? And then I find an open space on post, and I just start turfing. I decide I'm going to do just like donuts in the grass. What's going to happen to me?

I've rebelled against the kingdom, right? I've refused to recognize its rules. I've refused to submit to its authorities. Of course there's a problem. Right?

We get this when it comes to things in this world. We get this when it comes to the post across the street. The same is true with God as our king. People would ask, why would a loving God need people to repent?

[26 : 58] Why would a loving army post require people who blast through the gates at 50 miles an hour? Why would they require anything of people? You've rebelled against the king. You've broken into the post.

Of course, this is how the world works. Jesus is a king with a kingdom who we have not recognized, worshipped, listened to, or obeyed. Of course we need to repent.

Of course we need to answer to him. Yes, he's a good teacher, and he's so much more than that.

He is not just in charge of one army post in one county, in one state, in one nation.

He is the Psalm 2 king of the world. He calls people to repent and to believe. Now, by the way, if I did all those things on Fort Carson, I'm pretty sure there would not be a good ending for me.

Okay? Jesus, as a much greater king, provides the opportunity for a good ending. We should not be offended at Jesus' call to repentance.

[28 : 06] We should be surprised and delighted by it. Imagine if they said, get out of the car with your hands up and everything will be okay. That'd be miraculous, right? It'd be miraculous for me to make it out alive.

Jesus here offers them something, offers us something miraculous. He offers us the opportunity to be forgiven by the king of the universe that we've rebelled against.

We have blasted through the entry point of God's post. And he offers to make us his sons and his daughters. And so we see this repentance as this turning around, turning from sin and towards righteousness.

We also see this phrase here, believe in the gospel. Now, you need to understand that in the Bible, belief and action are not two different things. They go together. If you don't act on something, it shows that you don't believe it.

So this separation from belief and action that we believe in in the Western world, it's a foreign concept to the world of the Bible. Now, we're also familiar with belief that requires action.

[29 : 15] In fact, I think one of our greatest examples probably comes. Some of you are on the app called Nextdoor. Nextdoor, if you're familiar with it, is where you find out about all the things that are going on in your neighborhood.

Nextdoor provides you with news. By the way, when we hear this word gospel, it's good news. It's news that's telling us about something. So it's not advice. Someone has pointed out before.

It's not a good idea. It's not a nice spiritual thought. It is news about what is true and happening.

Okay? The kingdom of God is near. So recently, there's been some important and actionable news in my neighborhood on Nextdoor.

It's been a couple animals that have been causing problems. First of all, there's been a bear who's been roaming around our neighborhood. Now, I know that you all who live on Broadmoor Bluffs think that's silly that I would bring that up, because you all have bears happen all the time, right? Bears are old hat for you. We don't have that luxury over Cheyenne Meadows. Okay? This is a new thing for us. There is a bear without adult supervision wandering around our neighborhood. And you can track it.

[30 : 22] People are posting their ring photo. This is a street over from me. Okay? This is not foreign. In fact, my neighbor told me he spotted it across the street on my street. So there's a bear on the loose. That's news that requires action.

I need to be aware. People need to be locking their cars. Okay? Bears know how to get inside your car and get your food. We ignore that news at our peril. I'll give you an even better one.

Now, I just recently found out there is a large fox wandering around our neighborhood. One street across from me. The fox is eating people's cats. This is not a joke.

I'm not making this up. There's one post talking about the fox eating cats. There's another post underneath it of someone asking about if anyone's seen their missing cat. You can't make this up. Now, depending on how you feel about cats, your response might be, oh, no, or at last. Right? And if you don't like cats, you might think of that fox. You know, you might think, may his tribe increase. May the Lord bless his ministry. If you love cats, you want the fox to be stricken down.

[31 : 26] You want him to die. Regardless, this is news that demands action. It's news that demands a response. People are saying, if you're a cat owner, you need to keep your cat inside until the fox goes away.

Jesus, when he says, believe in the gospel, this is not an intellectual act. It is something that requires action. If we are believing in the gospel, it means that we believe that God's kingdom is true and that his rules are real.

And so we're following after him in faith and obedience, acting on the knowledge that we've been given. It is news that demands a response.

It's news that demands repentance. And it's news that demands belief. Belief that leads to action. And so that's our introduction here to Jesus' message.

We're going to hear over and over that Jesus is preaching. When we hear that, we look back to this passage. What is it that he's preaching? He's preaching that the kingdom has come near. The king has finally arrived.

[32 : 25] And he demands a response. We have to enter that kingdom. Now, if you're familiar, I mentioned earlier, the kingdoms of this world, there's many of them, right?

Some of you are members of more than one kingdom. Ultimately and finally, the Bible presents us with only two kingdoms. There is the kingdom of God and there's the kingdom of this world. Colossians chapter 1, Paul talks about the fact that we have been transferred from the domain of darkness to the kingdom of his beloved son. So there's two kingdoms you can be in. Kingdom of darkness, kingdom of the son.

Jesus says the same thing in Mark chapter 9. When we get there, verse 47, he says, It's better to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be cast into hell. And so when we look at this kingdom and the response that it demands, that's why it's news that has to be acted on. Because there are only two options. There are only two choices. And that's why the announcement of the kingdom is immediately followed by a command. Jesus commands you to choose the right kingdom.

[33 : 40] And he commands us to choose it with faith and repentance. Now we know that Jesus is going to pay for our entrance into the kingdom and he's going to pay for it by his own death.

There's a reason that he offers us what I would not be offered if I smashed through the gates of Fort Carson. And he offers it to us because he ultimately is headed on his way to the cross.

He is headed to a place where he's going to die. He's going to take the penalty for our sins onto himself. And as living the perfect life that we should have lived, he's going to give that to us.

Jesus, in other words, offers us what he should not, which is the chance to be a part of his kingdom. Philippians 2 tells us this, that Jesus was in the form of God.

He did not account equality with a God, a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

[34 : 49] Remember, so great the heavens rip open. So humble, he receives baptism from John the Baptist. He stands in the place of sinners.

And so our hope as we go through this book is looking towards Jesus at the end, knowing he's the one who allows us to be a part of this wonderful and glorious kingdom.

But Paul goes on in Philippians 2 and tells us this, because Jesus did this, because he paid for our sins, God has highly exalted him and bestowed him on the name that is above every name, so that the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Okay, did you hear that? Every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord.

And so as we begin looking at Jesus teaching and his ministry, these two verses are the introduction to that. We know, I am telling you, you will either confess Christ now or you will confess him later.

[36 : 02] But you will confess him one day. And so you can choose, you have two choices. You can serve the king and you can live.

You can live full and abundant life in his kingdom. Or you can rebel against him and die. God is coming with his kingdom for those who serve him.

Who is Jesus? He is the king coming with the kingdom. How will you respond? Let's pray.

Our Father in heaven, we thank you and praise you that the kingdom of this world is not our only hope, but that you are bringing something greater and more glorious.

But you also ask us to do what is difficult and hard and foreign, that we would repent and believe in you. Father, we know that that's impossible without the help of your spirit. And so I ask that you would give us a full measure of your spirit, that we would follow you with faith and obedience.

[37 : 12] For those who are not part of your kingdom, we ask that you would, by your spirit, soften their hearts, help them to see their sin and their need of you, that they have to confess and turn around, following you as king, so that they can live confessing and following and obeying you.

We ask these things, grateful that they don't come by anything we do, but instead they come by the death and the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. So we ask them in his name.

Amen.