

The Beginning of the End
Mark 11:1-11

This morning we return to Mark, and we begin chapter 11, what we've talked about and discussed as a shift and a change here in the life of Christ. As we approach now the final week of His earthly ministry, as Mark records it this far, as we just kind of look back and think on what we've covered, we're reminded of the beginning of Mark's gospel, 1:1, when he says, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." That is the identity of Jesus. Mark has used this space and this time in his writing to try and prove that, to make that clear, that this is the beginning, the foundation, the historical truths, the reality of who Jesus is as the Messiah the Son of God. But when it comes to the last ten chapters and what we've seen in how Jesus has conducted Himself and how He's interacted with people, to say that Jesus has been low-key about that identity is an understatement. He's gone out of His way several times to try and make sure that this fame and popularity doesn't just rise up and bubble over to extreme levels. Jesus has gone out of His way to tell people, after He heals them, don't tell anyone. Don't speak of this. He's even went to certain locations all because of trying to dodge certain crowds and be away from certain people. He spends a little time in an area teaching in Galilee, doing miracles, and then He would withdraw from that area with His disciples and spend time with them. Jesus has been flying under the radar. He's been making it kind of His point almost to not make this as publicly known. And the few times that we have seen it, when someone has declared or the truth has come out about His identity, that He is the Messiah, that He is the Son of God, it's been like one person or it's been in private where not many people are even there to hear it. This has been such a low-key thing about Mark's gospel and how he's presenting Jesus which has fit with His overall tone - Jesus predicting His death three times, talking about what He must do, talking about His mission as a servant. Jesus is the humble Servant, and we've seen that over and over again. This portrait of Jesus coming to life in how He interacts with everyone consistently serving them and counting Himself lowly.

Today in Mark 11, it's like we've finally hit the opposite. It's like we've finally hit the other end of the spectrum completely. We finally get this other aspect, this other portrait of Christ that we know very well, that we are made know, this fact, this part of His identity, when we become a Christian, that

we sing often. And we see other places in Scripture that He is not just a humble Servant, but He's a King. He's the Messiah, and that by nature carries with it His identity as King over all, King not just of the Jews, but even over all. So, finally we get this kind of balance that comes today, this morning's passage in Mark 11, this triumphal entry as we know it. So, important, this event, that it's in all the gospels. They all have this account. So, this morning we get to examine Mark's perspective here as he writes about this triumphal entry and our King Jesus.

Let's look at it together. Mark 11:1-11; "Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, 'Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.' And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. And some of those standing there said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the colt?' And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!' And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve." This is the text for this morning, this triumphal entry here, this grand scene and display of Jesus as King in these 11 verses that we will cover.

Beginning with the first three verses, it all is set up here with this commissioning – this commissioning. In verse 1, we read. "Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives..." We've seen yet again another change in location. This is now where we find ourselves right here on the cusp on the brink of entering into Jerusalem at these two locations Bethphage and Bethany. As a way to remind ourselves, this is what we've been talking about for some time now in Mark, that Jesus had set His sights to Jerusalem. He joined in with all the other Jews from Galilee that were heading down to Jerusalem for this major festival, Passover, one of the three major annual festivals. Passover was one

of the largest, and so they're all joining together. It's not just Jesus and His disciples traveling, it's these crowds, these other Jews that are living up there in Galilee with them, and they don't travel through Samaria because of the issues there with the hatred even that exists between the Samaritans and the Jewish people. So, we've seen Jesus in this journey doing more ministry still, not just stopping and ministering, but continuing to interact with people, continuing to teach, continuing to give opportunities to instruct not just His disciples, but anybody in the crowd that's around them as they travel and they cross over the Jordan River, head through the region of Perea, finally making their way down to cross back over the Jordan River.

And where we saw last time, they were at that last and final stop before you went up into the hills, into Jerusalem where the temple was, that last stop at Jericho, and that's where we saw Jesus coming with the crowd and this bold statement of faith from blind Bartimaeus. We remember that Jericho was fairly low in its altitude and elevation, and after Jericho you ascend up. You move up about three thousand feet in elevation to go up into the hills and to get to where Jerusalem and the temple was. So, in doing this, this is as we start to zoom in a little more that we can see now Jericho and Bethany and Jerusalem and these location as they unfold, and we realize that Bethany is very close to Jerusalem. It's right there just east of it. We zoom in even a little more and where the temple was located in the city of Jerusalem, and then you go east, and it dips down into this valley, and then it goes back up into a mountain that we've heard of often the Mount of Olives. As you continue east and it's up on that Mount of Olives, as you continue about a mile east there of Jerusalem, that we come to these places, Bethphage and Bethany. So, they make it this far. They're pretty much there.

They're right there knocking on the door of Jerusalem, and it's at this location that Jesus stops, and He sets into motion this plan - thus, the commissioning. We look back at our text; "Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, 'Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it.'" This is the instructions that He gives, and they're fairly specific. You think about this plan that Jesus is starting to unfold here; He specifically draws these two disciples to do this for Him. He sends them ahead, not into the village that they're in, but into a village ahead of them to find this colt, probably the first colt that they would see tied up, and there's even details about this colt that's never had a rider; no one has actually ever

ridden on this colt. And so, they go to get his random colt that's tied up, that has never had a rider and start to untie it, and so you think, wow, this is getting pretty specific here, very specific plan as He's rolling this out. And His plan even includes, not just these specifics, but it's fairly thought through, just in case, you know, someone might think this might be odd as two disciples go and approach a random animal that is not theirs and start to untie it and take it. In verse 3, Jesus says. "If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'" It's to be expected that someone, I don't know, maybe the owner of the colt might be going, ahh, what are you doing? Why are you trying to take my animal? What's going on right now? Why are you doing this? And so, Jesus has that even thought through. He's honestly not thinking that this might happen. Jesus has the knowledge of these things. He knows the future. He has these plans lined up.

Jesus instructs the disciples to say, "The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately." This phrase - some people think, okay, so Jesus just worked this out ahead of time. At some time, He snuck away from the crowd. He went into this village. He talked with the owner. He set it all up, and said, hey, two guys are going to come and try to take this colt. You just tell them, you know, you ask them what they're doing, and if they say this, then that means they're from Me, and you can let them have it. That's possible. Jesus could've set up this plan and given a password here that "The Lord has need of it..." Or, more than likely, Jesus just knew this was all going to happen, and He kind of had this all set up in His divine nature, the ability that He has as He is God in human form. And so, this concept here. How would this phrase, "The Lord has need of it..." convince the owner to let it go, convince the owner to say, sure, fine, that's all good? Would he just trust these two men? Well, the word Lord isn't some, like, insignificant term. It's not like saying, aw, there's a guy over here that really wants it. So, I'm going to take it to him. You know, "Lord," starts to have a significance that it could even be referring to just someone of high prestige or prominence in the culture at that time. Or, more than likely, even how it's often utilized back then. There's this principle this was kind of like the idea where a king could draft anybody they wanted to fight for them in their army. In the same way they could kind of do that with people's possessions. Oh, the king has need for that. Oh, the king has need for this. And they could take possessions as well, including even animals. So this phrase could've even been understood like that for these men - as these owners heard this

phrase going, okay, apparently someone really important needs it, but it's going to come back to us. It'll be returned, so that's fine.

What is happening here no doubt is not just Jesus' knowledge of all these things, but He is embracing what is next in His ministry. He has come to this point where He is making this decision. He's lined up all the dominos, and He's pushing over the first one, and that will set into motion what cannot be undone. At this point, you might think, you know, leading up to this in His Galilean ministry and everything He's been doing at any point, He could still just retreat. You know, He could just leave. He could just kind of bail out on this and say I'm not going to Jerusalem. I'm not going to go on the cross. I'm not going to do any of this. He could bail at any point. But when we come to this point, He's getting the plans assembled here, and He's actually bringing the attention to Himself. He's setting this all up. He's bringing this animal that He would ride into the city in this kind of obvious and very loud way, that it would be hard to not notice. He's doing this. He's embracing what lies ahead. He's got the necessary components together. He's going public officially as we've seen other people make statements from time to time. We've still seen the crowd at different points, and sometimes they like Jesus and maybe they don't. But now, He's going public, and He Himself is not just affirming what someone might say about Him. He's setting this all up. He knows what's to come. This string of events would come together, and it would be His entry today which would lead to His crucifixion on Friday. He's embracing it as He did with everything else in His ministry. He was humble and obedient in submission to His Father and no less. At this point, He realizes the point of no return is gone. He is past that. He is in and engaged with what needs to take place by doing this and setting this up.

Of course, this unfolds, as we would expect, very much like Jesus says in verses 4-6 where we see the collecting of this colt - the collecting that takes place in verses 4-6; "And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. And some of those standing there said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the colt?' And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go." Very much just like Jesus said, these events would unfold. It continues to highlight how Jesus is completely knowledgeable of all these things, in His divinity, in the very fact that He is God, He's able to know these things. He knows what's going to happen. He knows who's going to be there. He knows what town's going to have the colt. He knows how to identify the colt that has never had a rider. He knows

who's going to say what and how they're going to react when all this happens. He knows what can be said to make sure that this continues to go forward. And it's not just that - it's not just that He knows all those things - it's not just that He has really good knowledge and He's able to kind of think, ah, maybe let's go that way or let's try this - it's that He actually brings these details together. He's in control of all this too. There's no denying that. This isn't just really smart and a lot of information and facts of Jesus. This is Him in His sovereignty and His control bringing these events together, the timing of it, and who goes and what they say. This is Him controlling this so it exactly turns out the way that He has desired for it to go.

At this point, there's no altering Jesus' plan. His course is set. He knows what's before Him; it's to get to the cross. And you can't throw a wrench into this. At this point, you can't deter Him. You can't throw Him off. He has full control over all of this and every detail including the very animal that He must assemble to Himself to ride to approach Jerusalem. Think about how much control this is. The God we serve, the God we worship, He has these details totally under control. Of the most momentous occasions in history, when Jesus goes to the cross, God has all the details worked out perfectly that will get Jesus onto that cross, dying for the sins of mankind, offering forgiveness to everyone. That's the control that God has. You think of all the different ways that this could've fleshed out and all the things that could've happened. God controls it all so that it perfectly happens in the time that it happens, in the way that it needs to happen.

If that's the case, if God has that kind of control over such details to get Jesus onto the cross here on Good Friday, how much more so does God have control over the details that come your way? Because we all know this; we're in trial. Some of you are suffering at this very moment even. Some of you, the suffering is still yet to come. The trials will come, but when they do come, how do you approach it? Did God throw the trial at you to see how you're going to handle it or does God have all the details covered? What kind of control are we talking about? How powerful is our God? He has detail control over everything, He knows exactly what's happening. He has impeccable precision on whatever suffering or trial that might come your way. Just as He has here with Jesus in setting this all up, God knows exactly how long the trial will be that you're going through. He knows the exact amount of difficulty that you can handle and not an ounce more. He knows

the impact that it will have on your life. He knows the people that it will affect beyond even you. And even more importantly, He knows the outcome. He knows that it won't break you for good. He knows to give you exactly what you need that will grow you and bring you closer to Him. Every single detail, He has under control, just as Jesus is able to show that He has every detail here in just bringing this animal under control because it's this event that would then set into motion the week ahead where He would go through the ultimate trial of going to the cross. He knows what He's doing. He's not seeing how this might play out. He's not entering Jerusalem with high hopes and fingers crossed. He knows what the end is. He knows that. He'll be crucified, but this is His control, not just His knowledge but His control on the entire event.

Not only does it unfold the way Jesus said it would, looking at verses 7-8, we see kind of the approach to Jerusalem that starts to take place where we see covering - covering in verses 7-8 as the colt is brought back. Verse 7; "And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields." Quite an interesting scene. Many of us are aware of this scene. We're aware of this story, but as you just start to think of it, it's just interesting how this starts to just unfold in the way that Mark's describes it for us. They bring back the animal, and right away, people start making a little makeshift saddle for Jesus there out of their garments and their cloaks there on the colt itself. And then, the path in front, the path leading from Bethany and this area down to Jerusalem, they're throwing down their garments and cloaks there as well and bringing branches from the field and kind of making sure the whole path is covered. And you're thinking is this just like a random trend that's starting to go viral in Jerusalem? Where is this coming from? Is this kind of just out of nowhere? Is this maybe just because these Jewish people, the crowd, really likes Jesus, and this is kind of their way of returning the favor to Him because they respect Him a lot? What's exactly happening here?

The crowd knew exactly what they were doing. When we bring in and realize some of this significance of the imagery and the details of what they're doing, the actions that they're performing, we realize that they're giving Jesus the royal red-carpet welcome. They're laying out the path, literally the royal red-carpet for Him to then enter into His city, His capital

Jerusalem. They know exactly what they're doing. These actions are pointing to one thing, their view of Jesus and who they think He is - not just the humble Servant - the King, the Messiah and King. You think, well, okay, how do we know this for sure? We start to take into together even all of the Old Testament, all the Scriptures and what it says about some of these actions that they performed. For instance, when they're throwing their cloaks and their garments on the ground, how do we know that that's something you would do for royalty? We can see this even back in 2 Kings 9. In 2 Kings 9, we have this reference here where Jehu is anointed as king, and after he's anointed, he tells the people that he's been anointed by the prophet. And the response - 2 Kings 9:13; "Then in haste every man of them took his garment and put it under him on the bare steps, and they blew the trumpet and proclaimed, 'Jehu is king.'" So, here we're seeing that throwing garments on the ground isn't just a nice thing or a congratulations. You just had a wonderful moment. It's your birthday. You know, let me throw some garments on the ground for you. This is a way to pay homage, a way to recognize royalty, a way to do what is respectfully deserved to any king as takes place.

And then we even think of the animal here, the specifics of a colt or a donkey that's been summoned by Jesus and Him riding on it and why that might be significant. And we see even some Old Testament pictures here with David and his son Solomon when we go to 1 Kings we have the end of David's life, and he's giving instructions, "And the king, David, said to them, 'Take with you the servants of your lord and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet there anoint him king over Israel. Then blow the trumpet and say, 'Long live King Solomon!'" So, in a similar fashion, David had a mule. The kings had a donkey they would ride on. And so the way that David did and then pass it along to Solomon, you have now Jesus summoning here a donkey, a colt that He would ride upon. And in our text, you'll notice that we had that detail, "...on which no one has ever sat." This is exactly what they did for kings. They didn't just grab a random donkey. They found a donkey "...on which no one has ever sat." and brought it to the king. And so, the same thing is happening here for Jesus. On top of that, the Jewish people, not just knowing the customs of what David and Solomon did and Jehu, but even the prophecies that existed, for instance Zachariah 9:9. This is what the other gospels actually quote - this prophecy to show what's taking place. As we're aware of this prophecy, we remind ourselves,

“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.” This reminder is exactly what the people knew.

They understood what was happening as Jesus was summoning this animal and bringing all this together, and they respond the way that they do. It's clear. It's so obvious. It's evident. They're declaring that Jesus is their King. This isn't just a favor. This isn't a nice thing to do. They're making it so evident; He is their King, the King of the Jews. This is their response, and it's appropriate, and it's fitting. They've spent time, they've probably seen a lot of His ministry up in Galilee, and then they've had this time of traveling with Him as this crowd has gone together and heard more of His teaching, seen more of His ministry. And then you have what took place even right before this when they were in Jericho, where you had a clear proclamation that Jesus is the Messiah, and Jesus welcoming this. This crowd has become convinced of that. They're displaying that in their actions. They're treating Jesus like the King that He is - as the way He ought to be treated and respected in the same way.

This is still true. This positive example from the crowd is what needs to be in our lives as well, the way that we live as Christ's followers, as people who identify with Him. He is our King, no doubt, and we say that. We've talked much about following after Him as He is a Servant, and He put Himself below everyone else and humbled Himself. So too, we must walk in those footsteps. But also, on the other end, we cannot forget He's the King, and we are simply His servants. We pay homage to Him. We fear Him. We fall down before Him, and we worship Him as such, the King. Does your life demonstrate that Jesus is your King? Is that demonstrated in your life? Are those actions evident? Do the actions that you have in your life, do they amount up to clearly communicating that He alone is the authority over you? Do your decisions stem from a proper fear of Jesus? Do your goals find fulfillment in Christ being glorified, or in you reaching some other milestone that you want for yourself or your life? If and when you have recognized Christ as your King, you'll no longer be living for self. The Scriptures say this over and over again; you die to yourself. You stop living for yourself. You've been crucified with Christ. You no longer live. Christ now lives in you and through you. Your life has one meaning, one purpose, one goal, and that's to do homage to Him, to worship Him, to praise Him. Are your actions

declaring that, or is Jesus a little more than a casual friend and not so much a King in your life?

In our text, the actions of the crowd aren't the only thing showing that, they've come to the conclusion that Jesus is their King. It's just in their very words and what they say, and that's what we find next in verses 9-10. And all the cheering that we see and the content of that cheering and what they say, we read in verse 9; "And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!'" Again, they know exactly what they're doing. They know what actions they have performed, and they now know the words that they're saying. They're not aimless and random words that are assembled to try and say something nice or of meaning or value to Jesus. This is very purposeful. First of all, they're proclaiming two things. In verse 9, we see the first thing they're saying, and that's they're proclaiming Jesus is their Messiah. They're just simply saying that. There's no other way to take it. They're quoting from the Old Testament and declaring boldly that Jesus is their King and Messiah. We read, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" They didn't make these words up. They didn't bring them together and say, aw, this is a nice thing to say. They took these words from the Old Testament.

They took these words from a Psalm in the Old Testament that actually has a reference to the Messiah. That's what they expected. The way that this Psalm 118 was composed was that it was pointing to this Messianic figure that would save them. And so, they're taking that language and applying it to Jesus. To go back specifically to the Psalm - in Psalm 118, we read in verse 25, "Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord." This is what they're doing. They're taking those specific words, meaningful, purposeful, intentional on their part. Since Psalm 118 is a royal song of thanksgiving for military victory, this is what they're doing. They're treating Jesus as such, their victor, their Messiah, their Savior who's being welcomed into Jerusalem, welcomed into Mount Zion, who's ruling not just over them for good, but over the nations, over the world. The picture in 118 is clear if you read the entirety of it. And so, it is here with them quoting from it; Jesus is their Messiah. He is their King, and they are shouting that,

not just treating Him that way, but shouting it, declaring it, that everyone might hear it, not just the crowd that is there with them.

The second thing they're clearly saying in verse 10, not just that Jesus is the Messiah, but they're also saying that His kingdom is coming; "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!" If you remember last week, we had that loaded phrase, that title that was used for Jesus. And it was the first time we saw it when blind Bartimaeus shouted out, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" and we recognized this is new. This is not what people are typically calling Jesus. They called Him Jesus of Nazareth. But blind Bartimaeus was so confident and so certain of His opinion of Jesus that he calls Him Messiah and this term the Son of David. And we're reminded of what God had promised to David and how David would have a son that would sit on the throne forever and rule and reign forever. So, Bartimaeus said this last week, and he was convinced that Jesus was that Son, that Messiah. And so in the same way here, we have the people now in verse 10 saying, "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" Not just the man, but the kingdom attached with it. What is a king without a kingdom? He is the King, and He brings the very kingdom that was promised to David, that eternal kingdom that no one would be able to rise up against. This is what they're saying. They're declaring this. They're shouting this. They're cheering this. They're confident that Jesus isn't just a random descendent of David, but He is the son of David that they were anticipating.

So, you bring all these elements together, and you consider everything that we've looked at just in our text and these details, and you start to bring them together, and there's no question about the portrait of Jesus that we have before us. He's riding on a donkey that no one has ever sat upon. He's got people's cloaks and branches that are covering the ground as He approaches Jerusalem - the sign of respect that is only done for kings. He's got people that are shouting out and blessing Him as the King, and you have also people saying that His kingdom is also with Him. All these things together, all these actions, and now we have, rather than a portrait of the humble Servant, we have the King of kings overall. You know that I've kept emphasizing that Jesus knows what's going to come at the end of this week. I've been emphasizing that His ultimate mission and His ultimate act of service is to go to the cross. So, when we really think about what's happening here, we scratch our heads a little bit. If the people really view Jesus this way, if you

really just have, not just two disciples, not just the twelve, but this crowd, this massive crowd, all believing, chanting and agreeing that Jesus is the King, then how do you get Him crucified on Friday? How do you get to the point where Jesus will then go to the cross, when there is such favor and respect and worship of Him here? Some people like to try and make a big point about this, and they say it just shows how fickle the crowd is. They like Him one day, they don't like Him the next. This is how they are. This is how mankind is, very fickle. You can't ever pin them down.

The hard thing about that is when you look at what takes place in the rest of this gospel account and what takes place in the last week of Christ's life, you have this Galilean crowd that has come down, these Galilean Jews that have followed Him down here, and they've seen so much of what He's done, and so, they're finally coming around, especially with Bartimaeus and what happens in Jericho. They're finally coming around to this and actually embracing this and calling Jesus their King. They have hope, and they're actually doing that, and when you think about the rest of the week, Jesus only continues to instill confidence in them because, think about what happens, He goes toe-to-toe with the religious leaders again, and He makes them look silly. He continues to do things that are showing His authority and showing how He deserves this title of King. There's nothing that undermines it at any point. So how does He get to the cross? Well, one of His own betrays Him. And in the middle of the night He comes and He gets arrested by these religious leaders, and they hold a trial that's not even legal, and the conclusion is that He's blasphemous, and He needs to be crucified. And right when morning comes, they rush Him off to the Roman trial with Pilot, and they stir up the crowd that's Jerusalem Jews, not Galilean Jews anymore, and they stir up the crowd to believe this stranger they don't really know, that they've heard bad things of, and they get everyone to decide, okay, let's just crucify Him. It's a different crowd. It's not the same people. The people here shouting that He is the King are not necessarily the people that are there early Friday morning when this decision is made that He must be crucified.

I think these people legitimately are at a place here where they're worshipping the King. I think you have different people at the end of the week when you come to Friday that decide to crucify Him. No doubt mankind is fickle. No doubt mankind has their tendencies. I understand that, but I don't think that's exactly what's happening here. I think we have a

portrait of the King being worshipped by His subjects. That's what's happening here. Come Friday, it's a different story. When we get to that right here, we have people cheering, rejoicing, speaking truth about Jesus, that He is the Messiah and the King. And the same thing must be true for us. If we are His subjects, we must be speaking and proclaiming and speaking well about our King. Do you proclaim Jesus as King of kings? Do you actually say it? Do you talk about this? Are you ready to speak about this? Are you waiting for the moment to come and hit you in the face? And even if it did, would you be ready to speak about Christ your Savior, your King? Are you looking for people? Are you trying to find people that you can tell this good news to? Are you trying to find people that you can inform them of the true King, rather than letting them sit there and hope that a new politician or a new person will come along the way that will be our hope and turn things around? Tell them the person that turned things around has already come, and He's demonstrated by your own life because you are not the same. Are you praying? Are you praying for opportunities to declare, to speak this good news about Jesus as the King of kings? As His subjects, this has to be what we're about, not just living it out in our actions, but also speaking it, opening our mouths and telling people about Christ.

In our passage in verse 11, we come to an interesting ending in verse 11. We see this checking that takes place - this checking. In verse 11, you have this glorious display of people worshipping Jesus as the King, and this crowd ushering Him into Jerusalem, and then in verse 11, we read, "And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve." Kind of anticlimactic. Right? You have this amazing scene where we're thinking, finally, the people are getting it. They're rising up with one voice to declare that Jesus is the King, and then He gets to the temple and says it's kind of late; let's head out. Alright? I was expecting something more. Right? There at the end, what's happening here in verse 11 is not so much as an anticlimactic ending, it's actually a very calculated move on Jesus' part because if you were to scan ahead and look at what we're covering next - you jump down to verse 15, and you recognize this story of Jesus cleansing the temple. This is what will happen next. Jesus will get to a point where He actually goes into the temple, and He's not very happy, doesn't like what He sees. It's corruption. It's terrible what man has done in the house of God, and Jesus will have to cleanse it, but notice He doesn't do it yet.

He comes into the temple, and He's just surveying. He's investigating. He's not coming as a tourist that's amazed at the architecture and how the temple is just so grand and all the jewels and marble and everything that's there. He's not coming for that. He isn't even coming for an offering or to give a sacrifice. He's coming just to survey the situation. He is the rightful King. Jerusalem belongs to Him as well as the entire earth. So, He comes to survey what they've done with His house, with the temple. He's simply checking. He's looking around at everything, taking it all in, and then He will come back for the cleansing that will take place. This is somewhat in line with other prophecy that we have alluding to this. In Malachi 3:1-2, we read, "Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap." And if you go on reading Malachi 3, it goes on to talk about this cleansing of the tribe of Levi who were the ones that brought the priests to serve in the temple - John the Baptist preparing the way - Jesus suddenly coming to the temple, surveying it and needing to refine it, needing to cleanse it because it is corrupt, and man has done what man does. In their corruption, they've used these means to worship God as a way for them to get rich and get more attention and popularity themselves.

Our verse also says that in their leaving, they return to Bethany. He goes to Bethany with the twelve, and you think, well, why would they do that? Well, first of all, He knows people there, Mary, Martha, Lazarus, some major players that are in the gospels that you might see from time to time. But also, you think about all the people that are coming to Passover. They all don't fit in Jerusalem. There's people that live there. They can host people, but not everyone, not all the Jews of Israel are going to fit in Jerusalem, so many of them have to then stay outside the city, and then come back in, day to day, and that's exactly what they'll do. They'll stay in Bethany and then come back in, day to day, to interact and engage. And that's what we'll see the rest of this week in Jesus' life, Him engaging, coming back in the temple, and having these opportunities, these moments to continue to show His authority. (We will leave that for another time.) What we have now before us is this portrait that is juxtaposed to what we've seen so far, the humble Servant - so much of Mark. And now, we see the King, and the people giving honor, respect and worship to Him as He deserves.

And we remind ourselves, we do follow Christ as the humble Servant. We do recognize that as He predicted suffering, not just for Himself but for us, we too must be ready for that. But at the same time, we recognize He is the King of kings, that He has control over all things, and we are His subjects. We exist, we breathe, we live, we have another day simply to worship Him, to make sure the world knows that He is the King, and no one else comes close. People need this message. Until then, they're going to keep trying to find alternatives. They're going to look for other options. They're going to look to themselves. They're going to look to whatever else the world promotes and puts on a pedestal. They're going to find other ways to find hope. And unfortunately, if we love them, we will tell them that all their things that they're putting hope in are going to disappoint them severely. People need the true hope. People need the true King, the One that will not let them down, the One that has conquered, the One that has changed our lives, and the One that is coming back. And you do not want to be against Him when He returns. He will do what is just and right and fair, and He will bring punishment to those that have not cried out to him for mercy and forgiveness for sins. May we be His subjects in that way, that we live as people that have been forgiven and also speak boldly of the wonderful King He is, that we get to serve.