

The King Prepares His Procession, Part 2

Luke 19:28-30

So that brings us to a second point for our outline, number two the Lord is humble. The Lord is humble. Though he be regal, he is yet humble. Let's look again at those verses, Luke 19:28, I'll read this time just through verse 34. "When he had said these things, he went on ahead going up to Jerusalem. And when he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples saying, 'Go into the village in front of you. Where entering you will find a colt tied on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it,' you shall say this, 'The Lord has need of it.' So those who were sent went away, found it just as he had told them, and as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, 'Why are you untying the colt?' And they said 'the Lord has need of it.'" We'll stop there.

As we read that section and it's, it's very similar if you read all the different Gospel accounts, especially the synoptic accounts, Matthew, Mark and Luke. But we noticed in that section that the writers give a relatively significant amount of space to show Jesus procuring an animal. To see the king commandeering the foal of a donkey for his royal purposes.

Lot of detail given to that. Lot of mention of tying and untying the animal. Lot of attention on this donkey's offspring. What none of the accounts tell us, though, are the names of the two disciples whom Jesus sent to retrieve the colt. They're unknown, and that doesn't prevent some commentators from being very eager to fill in the names for us and tell us, even though we don't know it. They tell us the two disciples are, guess who? Peter and John, right?

Truth is, we just don't know. And that is intentional. We're not supposed to focus on those two disciples. Precise location of the colt. That detail too, is also vague and unknown. It's just the village in front of you. If the name of the village was known, you know what? We'd have the "Church of

the Holy Donkey" sitting in Jerusalem. We've all got to go there and buy expensive artifacts, and all that stuff.

That's not known. Names of the owners of the colt. They're also unknown to us. We can see from verse 34 and then from corroborating evidence that comes from Matthew 21:3, Mark 11:6, we can have, I think, reason, probable cause to see that the owners probably knew Jesus. They probably knew him, knew of him, maybe even disciples of his, but living in that area, and they're eager to provide him with whatever support he asked of them. But As for the names of the owners, unimportant as well.

None of the three synoptic writers provide their names. So Luke, along with Matthew and Mark, the other two synoptic Gospel writers, they want us to not focus our attention on those details. They want us to give our attention and our focus to something else. And what is that?

Quite simply, they want us to see that the Lord is intent on getting a colt. OK, got that? He wants to get a donkey, the

young offspring of a donkey, a foal that has never been sat upon. That's it.

That is what we're supposed to see, consider, and reflect upon. So let that be the subject of your daily devotions for the rest of the week. Think about this. Let me help you with that a little bit.

It may seem like a rather mundane and kind of a pedestrian detail at first glance, but I promise you, this section reveals such a profound insight into the humility of our Lord's character. And notice I keep referring to Jesus here as Lord. And that's intentional because that is the way that he is identified in the text.

You can see there in verse 31, he is called the Lord, he is called *kyrios*, even what has been translated into our English Bible as pronouns. The word he, the word he, those pronouns are actually not explicit in the Greek text, they're contained in the verb forms. So you have to discern that it's he that we're talking about. And the first explicit reference to Jesus in the

text is not by his name, it's not with a pronoun, it's by a title, *kyrios*, which means Lord. There's an emphasis here on lordship.

And the emphasis on lordship we can see is further strengthened by the verbs that are used and the verbs drive the meaning to show his lordship, to show his leadership initiative, to show him taking action here, revealing and exposing his lordship, his in-chargeness. It's not a word, just made it up. But, starting in verse 28, notice the emphasis, so the revelation of his lordship, it says in verse 28, he went on ahead. He goes on ahead. He takes the lead.

Remember where he is in Jericho? Everybody would love him to stay in Jericho for a little while longer. No, he leaves and he takes the lead. He goes out in front heading up to Jerusalem. In verse 29 it says, here's an active verb again, he sent two of the disciples. He sends them. Shows he's in charge. He's exercising authority. He's telling them what to do.

There are two imperatives in verse 30. Notice go, and then bring. Go and bring. And if we add the participle of attendant circumstance, that acts like a third verb or a third imperative, a command. Go, untie and bring. He's commanding everybody. He's telling everybody what to do.

Then in verse 31, "If anyone asks you 'Why are you untying it,' you shall say this." There's a future tense use there, "You shall say." And that future tense there is being used as a very strong imperative. That's the sense. So these disciples, when they're challenged by the owners about untying the colt, they are to say this, and they are to say exactly this, no more, no less. Which is actually what we see.

They say exactly that. They get the sense of the very strong imperative. You shall say this. They say no more, and I they say no less. The Lord has need of it. That answer is enough. That answer silences any challenge, overcomes any obstacle to them completing their task. It's the end of the matter.

And then what Jesus prophetically anticipated that actually does happen, as we said verse 33, "As they're untying the colt, its owners said to them, 'Why are you untying the colt?'" There he is showing the competency of his lordship. The, the insight and the knowledge he has and his right to be the Lord and tell us what to do because he knows everything.

By the way, English translations say owners there in the verse, the Greek is actually *hoykuriyoi*. Which is the plural of *hakyrios*. So it can mean owner, and it does mean owner in this context. But when it's set against the lordship of Christ, we see a clear subordination of the rights and the authority of these lords as property owners, in contrast to the supreme right of the sovereign Lord. His authority, his initiative, his interests outweigh theirs. Even overcomes what is a legitimate right of ownership for them.

Then we see as we said verse 34, the disciples said as the Lord instructed them, no more, no less, "The Lord has need of it." Done, no argument, narrative continues. I am drawing that out to make the point. The lordship of Christ is being emphasized here.

But when we stop to consider the lordship of Christ, and reflect on this, and the kind of lordship that it is, there's another thought that hits us, it should hit us with force and with clarity. And it's actually a question. What in the world is the sovereign Lord doing arranging his own transportation? Isn't that bit beneath his pay grade?

It's kind of like me calling up the President to come fix a pothole on my street. Doesn't he have more important things to do? Isn't that arranging his own transportation a bit below his station? You think King Charles III made a bunch of phone calls to arrange his transportation so he could get to and from his own coronation? Not a chance.

In fact, if he did pick up the phone and try to do that kind of thing, the royal entourage around and would be absolutely appalled. They'd consider such a thing on his part to be an outrage, reflecting poorly on them. An abject failure on their part to do their duty. The king of England busying himself with such mundane matters as transportation?

But Jesus doesn't have a royal entourage, does he? What does he have? Ragtag bunch of disciples, peasants around him? He didn't have a retinue of knowledgeable, competent servants surrounding him. His twelve closest men, even they, knowing the messianic secret that they've been keeping, even they don't understand what's going on here. Even they are unable to make, it's not just that they're unwilling, they'd be willing in a heartbeat to go and get a animal for him. In fact, two disciples do. They're unable to make the arrangements. They don't have it within them. They don't understand what's going on. So of course it's got to be him.

And so though Jesus, though he is Lord of all, he prepares his own transportation. He makes provision for himself. He does this detail after detail after detail. As we read earlier in the service in Isaiah 59:16, he saw that there was no man. He wondered that there was no one to intercede, and so his own arm brought him salvation and his own righteousness upheld him. "I'll get it done myself."

So as we move through the text, all the way to the cross, we notice how Jesus as Lord, he does what no one can do. And by that I mean, emphasis on, no one can. They are unable. They don't know, they don't understand, they don't see, they don't discern. They don't have it in them to understand it. Why? Because everything about his first advent, his suffering and his death on the cross is a mystery that's been hidden for ages past. Which is now going to be revealed in real time. How are they possibly supposed to understand it?

The Lord knows that. He's humble, he does, steps in, does what no one can do. He directs everything. He's clearly the Lord here. He's the one in charge. He's the one who is in command. He's directing everything. He's making use of everything to accomplish his own ends.

There is no way whatsoever that he will fail to do so. There's no way that he will fail to accomplish what he came to Jerusalem to do, which is to die for the sins of his people, to win eternal salvation for them, and having done all, than to ascend to the throne that his Father has given to him. So that said, because he is the only one who gets it, he is going to

take up and do everything for himself. There is a true and genuine regality here and yet at the same time there is an amazing humility.

Thirdly, the Lord is intentional. The Lord is intentional. He is regal, he is humble, and the Lord is intentional. Sub-point A, just notice he's intentional by taking the lead. He's intentional by taking the lead. Just another look at verse 28. "When he said these things, he went on ahead and going up to Jerusalem." His intentionality starts right there and how he finishes his journey.

He leaves Jericho, heads up to Jerusalem and he's out in front. He's at the head of the pack. He is outpacing everyone else. They've got to try to keep up with him. He's so eager to get there. Sub point A, he's intentional by taking the lead.

Sub point B, he's intentional by setting priorities. He's intentional, sub point B, by setting priorities. You can see this just to the first part of verse 29 says, "When he drew near

to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet.”
Okay, we'll stop there.

Luke narrates this from the perspective of Jesus and his disciples who are arriving from Jericho. They're approaching Jerusalem from the east, they go from east to west. They approach Jerusalem and before they get to Jerusalem. Before they can even see Jerusalem in the city, they are on the outskirts of the city of Jerusalem and there is a district known as Bethphage. And the very first village that they come to in Bethphage, the district of Bethphage is Bethany.

Not a lot is known about Bethphage. The name, the name actually means house of unripe figs, house of unripe figs. There are no references to any Bethphage in the Old Testament, so we find no help there in identifying the place or the location. The Talmud though refers to Bethphage several times and refers to it as a district. So if there was a village with that name, the location it's not known today, not able to locate it today.

Again in the Talmud, Bethphage was something like a district, maybe a precinct of Jerusalem, but it started at Jerusalem was kind of the eastern part of that area. So think of maybe, we think of cities and urban areas, and then we talk about suburbs, suburban areas. You could think of this as a suburb of Jerusalem.

Extended eastward beyond to the Mount of Olives, over the Mount of Olives and beyond the Mount of Olives all the way to the little village of Bethany. So likely that Luke is describing Jesus and the disciples here arriving in Bethphage. And the very first village of Bethphage is Bethany, and Bethany means house of figs. So is that there's the House of unripe figs, and then there's Bethany, the place where the figs are ripe.

All right, so we got Bethphage, house of unripe figs, and Bethany, house of figs. And then we got the Mount of Olives, which has on it olives, I presume. Agrarian names, right from the perspective of those who'd lived in Jerusalem. They look out to the land of the East, and they identify that region with things that they really enjoy, things that they really need. Olives, olive oil, figs refreshment.

So as Jesus comes into Bethany, he's within two miles of Jerusalem, and at this point in verse 29, he's not yet within sight of Jerusalem. Bethany is east of Jerusalem, and it's separated actually by the Mount of Olives. And the Mount of Olives is actually not just a single mount or pinnacle. It's actually a ridge that runs north and south for about two miles, about one hundred feet higher than Jerusalem. So they can't see Jerusalem when they come to Bethany.

According to John 12 and verse 1, Jesus arrived in Bethany six days before the Passover, which means he arrived in Bethany on a Friday, the day before the Sabbath. He arrived in Bethany on a Friday exactly one week before his crucifixion. In fact, scholars they're pretty certain about the date of this.

Since the crucifixion was on April 3rd of A.D. 33, Jesus arrived in Bethany the previous Friday, March 27th, A.D. 33. So you asked, why is this so important? Why are you telling us all this? How does it show us intentionality? So glad you asked.

About a, three weeks earlier than the scene before us, Jesus and his disciples, they were in Bethany according to John 11. Remember what happened in John 11? Remember the miracle that Jesus performed in John 11? He raised Lazarus from the dead. He told Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he die, yet will he live."

You might think that raising Lazarus from the dead won Jesus everlasting favor with everyone. You would have think that the Jews would have given Jesus the proverbial key to the city. Never let him buy a meal again. Well, we see, according to John 11, that the people, common people loved him. It's exactly the way it was for them. But for the Jewish leaders, for the chief priests and the Pharisees, they demanded a meeting be organized with the Sanhedrin to discuss, to discuss the problem of Jesus.

John 11 and verse 45. I've got a few things to show you here. Jesus, after he raised his friend Lazarus from the dead, in John 11 you can see 43 and 44. It says there in verse 45 that many of the Jews, therefore, who had come with Mary had seen what he did. They believed in him. Many of the Jews believed in him. They're rejoicing. They celebrate him. So excited.

Some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. So the chief priest in the Pharisees gathered the council and said, "What are we going to do for this man performs many signs." Can I insert an idea here? Drop on your knees before him, bow at his feet and worship him. That'd be a good idea. Maybe that's what you could do.

Not to be. Instead, they say, "If we let him go on like this," look at the hubris, if we let him. Are you kidding me? Do they? Do they know what they are? Little limited human beings. He just raised the dead. You think you're going to allow him or not allow him something? If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.

We see their agenda. Hold on to the, the little bit of power and authority that the Romans have remanded to us. Keep our overlords happy. Keep our slave masters happy so that we can keep our sense of our own authority, our own liberty.

How many sinners do you know like that today? They don't want to let go or relinquish their own sense of liberty. And so they want to stay enslaved to their sins, enslaved to their evil, enslaved to the whole, the world, the flesh and the devil. All that's destroying them. They want to stay enslaved to it, shackled to it. They can have a sense of I'm in charge, nothing's changed.

Let's skip past the pragmatic reasoning of Caiaphas and take a look down at, "So from that day on, they made plans to put him to death. Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews, but he went from there to the region, near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim. And there he stayed with his disciples."

What is he afraid? Is Jesus on the run? Has the warrant for his arrest and his execution caused him to cower and turn tail and run? Not at all. He knows though, it's not his time, he can't be killed three weeks earlier. He must be killed, put to death on the Friday, the day of preparation, the day when the Passover lamb is sacrificed. Why? Because he is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Can't be a week earlier,

can't be three weeks earlier, can't be one day earlier. Got to be on April 3rd of A.D. 33. So he's timed it.

You know what Jesus would have liked to have done after raising his friend Lazarus from the dead? Like to have stuck around. He would prefer to stay right there in Bethany, hang out with his resurrected friend Lazarus. Lazarus's two sisters, Mary and Martha, whom he loved. He would have enjoyed their hospitality, their company.

But knowing the threat and knowing that dying then would have been premature, not on the divine timetable, Jesus moved on, he left. And as a result, we have the benefit of everything we have studied from Luke 17:11, all the way to this very moment, all that section happened from the time he left, went up to that place in Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples.

All that to say, in the intervening time, as Jesus has been through Judea, Perea, come down to Jericho, he's been missing his friends, he's been missing their company, the warm

hospitality of a warm home in Bethany. Home cooked meal, enjoy their company, rejoice in their friendship.

And so we see in John 11:53 and following they made their plans. It says the Jews made their plans to put him to death. "Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews. He went from there to the region, near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and there he stayed with the disciples. Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand. [So skipping ahead a few weeks] many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves."

So Jerusalem, the city of Jerusalem is swollen with numbers, crowds, pilgrims coming to the Passover feast. They're look, the Jews are looking for Jesus. They're saying to one another as they stood in the Temple, "Well, what do you think? That he will not come to the feast at all?"

"Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where Jesus was, he should let them know so that they might arrest him." Six days before the Passover, Jesus

therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead, and so they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at the table.

There is so much to see there, especially if we were to keep on reading, but we're going to have to content ourselves with this. Jesus has been missing his friend. He's been separated for a time, and now he's back. Now he's in his company. Now he's enjoying his fellowship and his friendship.

The dinner was not at their home exactly. It was actually at another home in Bethany. Matthew 26:6, and Mark 14:3 say they were in the house of Simon the leper. Jesus, had evidently cleansed him of leprosy, and now he's a disciple. Jesus, though he eagerly anticipated seeing Lazarus, Martha, Mary, if you could possibly imagine this being only one week from the gruesome reality and the awful loneliness of the cross, as all of his disciples leave him, he's hungry for their friendship here.

He's longing for the close intimacy of their company, of their fellowship. And yet we read, go back to Luke 19:29, we read in Luke 19:29, he is undeterred from his mission even as he comes to the place, comes to Bethany. He is focused. He's intentional. He's setting above his own desires and his human longings, he sets priorities.

Luke 19:29 says, "He drew near to Bethphage, and Bethany at the mount that's called Olivet, and when he drew near there, he sent two of the disciples. [He takes care of business first] 'Go into the village in front of you, [and why,] were entering you'll find a colt tied on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it. Bring it here.'" "

He arrives on that Friday before spending any time with his friends before taking in his Sabbath rest with them on the following day. He's intentional. He makes preparations. He sets priorities. So intentional by taking the lead. Intentional by setting priorities and taking care of business first. That's sub point A. Sub point B.

Here's sub point C, final one. He's intentional by selecting the symbols. He's intentional by selecting the symbols. Up to this point, we know that Jesus has traveled everywhere, been content to travel everywhere by foot. He's walked everywhere he's gone. He's an itinerant peripatetic preacher, peripatetic meaning walking around. He walks everywhere. Hardy, strong, powerful. He's got his walking legs on. He's worn out, some walking sandals, several pairs.

But now, for this occasion, Jesus selects a very particular mode of transportation. He selects an animal. Not just any animal, but one that will symbolize his messiahship. Selects a beast of burden, a donkey. Further, it's the foal of a donkey, and even further, it's a colt, one on which no one has ever yet sat.

OK, so why? Why does he select this particular mode of transportation? Broadly speaking, it's because he intends to fulfill Scripture. More specifically, it's because in fulfilling Scripture, each and every element of his selection is symbolic: A donkey.

Just very quickly, kind of unlike our image and view of a donkey today, our sophomoric age, donkeys symbolize stupidity and thanks to be to the cartoons that always portray donkeys in a very unfavorable light. But in the ancient near East, donkeys and mules were very highly regarded, highly regarded. Meryl Unger writes this, "Donkeys are spoken of in connection with the history of Pharaoh, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and most notable persons mentioned in the Old Testament. There was nothing in any sense degrading in the idea of riding a donkey, as might be perhaps inferred from Zechariah 9:9 [which we've quoted]. It was the sign of the peaceful mission of Christ [and we're going to get to that]. Kings, high priests, judges and the richest people of ancient and modern times have ridden on donkeys. Many donkeys of Damascus, Baghdad, Aleppo, Cairo, Cyprus and other parts of the east are beautiful animals, very easy in gait, perfectly sure footed. They often cost very high prices and are adorned with magnificent caparison. Caparison is a ornamental covering spread over the saddle of the harness." End Quote.

So Jesus chose a donkey. He chooses the colt of a donkey and broadly speaking it's because he intended to fulfill Scripture. We can start with Genesis 49:10, Genesis 49:10. That's Jacob's prophecy about Jesus' tribe, which is the tribe of

Judah. Jacob says there the scepter, the royal scepter, "shall not depart from Judah nor the rulers staff between his feet. Until tribute comes to him, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples, the obedience of the nations, binding his foal to the vine, his donkey's colt to the choice vine. He has washed his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes."

Prophecy is fulfilled ultimately, we know in the millennial Kingdom, but for, for sure, but notice the foal, the donkey's colt, it's chosen the vessel for transporting the king from the tribe of Judah and the choice of this particular donkey's colt. It has to be one on which no one has ever yet sat. Why is that? It's the principle of things dedicated to the Lord that was just set apart for a holy purpose cannot have been used before for any other purpose, it's singled out. That Jesus selected a young colt, the foal of a donkey, one that had never been put to work for any other use, any other purpose. This is his choice. It's an animal fit for a king.

Can't help but notice that Jesus is born into the world through the virgin womb, one that had never given birth. He'd be buried in a new unused tomb, one that had never held a body. And

keeping with the same level of intentionality shown by his Father, by the Holy Spirit in his birth and would show in his death, Jesus too is intentional.

He selects the specific animal, the one that should carry him along his coronation procession. One that's yet unused, one that is ready, useful to carry a holy burden. The chief prophecy that Jesus intended to fulfill, it's Zechariah 9:9. Zechariah 9:9, which says, "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."

From what we read in verses 36 to 38, no one missed that point. Everyone in the crowd saw the symbolism as fitting, and they said, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord." They got it. So our Lord is intentional about getting to Jerusalem, finishing his course. He's intentional about taking care of business before he rests in Bethany. He's intentional to secure his transportation, and in particular, it's got to be a colt. It's got to be the foal of a donkey, one on which no one has ever yet sat.

But let me close a brief comment about application. What application should we find in a text like this one? Should we consider the obedience of the disciples and do what they do? When he tells us go, go. And when he says say this, we say that? No more, no less? Sure. We should do that.

Should we reflect on the subordination of Lords and owners of the colt? That though we are property owners, and though we have things, we really have them as a stewardship to use for his purposes? Sure, that's valid. We should freely give whatever Jesus asked of us.

But the point of a coronation procession it's to try to get a, a glimpse and a look at the incoming king. I mean, if we just get a glimpse of that king passing by. When Melinda and I were in London some years ago, we visited Buckingham Palace, along with many of the spots that were along the procession route.

The Mall, Saint James Park, Trafalgar Square, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace. I had to leave from there, go to a

meeting, but Melinda was with a friend near the gate of Buckingham Palace and there was a black Rolls Royce that pulled through the gate, opened the gate, black Rolls Royce pulls through.

Through the tinted window she saw somebody very important in that black Rolls Royce. She approached the gate, which was still open at the time, and one of the police guards came near. And you never know, I mean five foot two woman might be a terrorist up to no good at all, might be hiding something in that purse of hers, this mountain of a man who was towering over her up at about six foot five or higher and just huge.

Melinda asked him, "Who was that?" He said, "That was the Prince Mum." It was then Prince Charles who was yesterday crowned King Charles. She only got a glimpse as he passed by and through tinted windows. People along the procession route yesterday for the coronation, they only got a fleeting look as the king and the queen passed by in royal carriages.

Our Lord comes to us as a king who is righteous. Who has salvation. And he comes to us humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt the foal of a donkey. And as he goes by, he slows down. He wants us to look, he wants us to take notice. There's nothing separating him between where he is positioned on that foal and where all the people are along the route.

It's his humility that took this king to the cross. What mere human king do we know besides him? What mere human king dies for his people? People die for kings, not the other way around. And why do they die for kings? Because kings are mortal and they don't want to lose someone like that. Someone with the competency and the knowledge and the, the wealth and the power and the authority to command nations. So they put their body on the line for someone like that.

But our king, he comes humble and he comes dying for us. He does what we can't do for ourselves. He came to die for our sins. And unlike any mortal king, this one died and passed through death. He conquered death, and he's risen from the grave, and he walked out of the tomb in which he was placed.

For forty days he appeared to his disciples, appeared to his people, he was rejoiced and celebrated by them. And then he ascended into heaven. That's where he is now, bodily, at the Father's right hand, caring for you and me. He's doing what no one can do. He serves his people. He serves us even now, even today.

So yeah, he comes, and along his procession, he invites us to take a look. To take a good long look. He doesn't mind if we stare. He wants us to stare, to see him so that we might truly know him as he really is. And that by the help of the Holy Spirit, the one who rejoices in his role of revealing Christ to us. That's the point of this text. That's really the key application I think we need to make, don't you?

Let's pray. What a joy it is ours, Father, that you have given us that we would behold the king in all of his glory. He's not hidden behind tinted windows or bulletproof glass. He's not covered in gems and gold and robes and ostentatious displays of wealth and power. He's not surrounded by armies. He comes in simplicity and humility. And what a power and a boldness we see as he goes back into the very city where the leaders of that

city are intent on killing him, and he says the very things and does the very things that will fan into flame their murderous intent. And yet all of this designed to fulfill your salvation purposes, to reveal your wisdom, to reveal your decree.

That nothing can stop what you have intended to do from before the foundation of the world. Our Father, we thank you so much. We're caught up in the story that you have granted to us in Him an eternal salvation and the opportunity for all of eternity. To gaze on his glory, to see the beauty of his majesty and be reconciled to you. And I pray that there would be no heart here who is hardened against this story, that you would soften every heart. Save and sanctify your people. Let us be willing and eager to serve our king. In his name we pray. Amen.