

What is the gospel? 2: the King Jesus gospel

discussion guide

based on **Matthew 21.1-11** (Linked to sermon of 2/4/23)
which can be accessed at www.stjamesbythepark.org/talks

Intro: What would count as a 'triumphal entry' in 2023 – red carpet? Air Force One? ...?

Read Matthew 21.1-11

How many different hints at Jesus' royal connections, and of the crowd holding him in high esteem can you find?

NB the 'very large crowd' (v8) had probably journeyed with Jesus from Galilee in the north, where most of his ministry took place. The Jerusalem locals (v10) weren't so familiar with him – hence asking the question as to who he was.

What other hints do the gospel writers give us of Jesus' kingship in the passion narratives (Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday)?

Mark two columns on a piece of paper. In the left column, make a list of typical characteristics of a King (especially one with real political power, not merely ceremonial and constitutional duties) and his Kingdom. In the right hand column, write down how Jesus' kingdom subverts or counteracts the typical notions of kingdom and kingship.

Dan made 4 statements about what the gospel is:

1. *It's not about us: it's about Jesus.*

In what ways can Christians sometimes make the gospel about us?

2. *It's not good advice: it's good news.*

In what ways can Christians treat the gospel, or present the gospel, as good advice?

3. *It's about Jesus being the King of God's kingdom.*

Read Mark 1.16 as a summary statement of Jesus' message.

Why do you think Jesus being King of God's kingdom is even better news than the half-gospels we looked at last week (Jesus as the gateway to heaven; Jesus as our personal saviour; Jesus as the ultimate life-coach; Jesus as our liberator)?

4. *It's about what God has done, will do, and is doing, in and through Jesus Christ.*

Using the language of Jesus' kingship and kingdom, how would you describe the gospel in terms of (a) what God has done, (b) will do, and (c) is doing?

What do you make of this presentation of the gospel? Do you think it's faithful? What might be missing?

The implications of the "Jesus is king" gospel are many. Here are the reflection questions Dan used at the end of the talk:

Are you a Christian because of what Jesus can do for you, or because Jesus is the king?

Have you submitted to Jesus' rule, or are you merely adopting his advice?

Do you see church community as an optional support network for you, or as an essential part of how God's kingdom grows?

Choose one or two of these and discuss them a bit.

What are some other implications of this "Jesus is King" gospel message?

However exactly we phrase the gospel, it is good news! Take time to pray for opportunities to share the good news of Jesus with friends, family and colleagues – especially over Easter.