

God's Son Saves the World
March-April Sermon Series
Kenwood Baptist Church
Pastor David Palmer
March 7, 2021

TEXT: Mark 1:1-15



This morning is an important Sunday for us. It's an important Sunday because we transition to the New Testament. We move across the threshold of the journey we have taken this fall and winter to traverse the territory of the Old Testament narrative. This morning, we begin with the Gospels. The Gospels – four of them – are critically important to understanding our faith. We refer to the Gospels as these four writers: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Although there are four Gospels, there is only one gospel. This morning, we engage in the topic of the beginning of the gospel. I want to invite you, if it's helpful to you, to imagine a pyramid, a triangle. If you're a note taker, I want you to draw a triangle, and I want to build up five steps along this triangle. If you're not a note taker, and taking notes distracts you or intimidates you, forget about it. Just pay attention.

Step One: *The gospel is a noun and a verb.*

We start with Mark's Gospel, which begins in Mark 1:1 with the statement:

“The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

In the bottom layer of the triangle, I want you to write or note that the gospel is a noun, but it's also a verb. The gospel is good news. Mark 1:1 says that the gospel has a beginning to it, and it is a noun in this verse. Later in our passage, however, Jesus is proclaiming the gospel as a verb,

so the gospel is good news, but the gospel is also something that can be “good news-ed.” The gospel in Greek is the evangel, the *euangelion*. “Evangel” can be a noun, but it can also be a verb, “to evangelize.” The gospel has a content to it. It's a thing, but it's also an action, to gospel. To gospel isn't just a style of music, it is to herald the content of the gospel. It is to proclaim, to publish, to announce. We would say “to evangelize,” “to make it known.” That's the bottom of our triangle: the Gospel, a noun and a verb.

Step Two: *The gospel is about Jesus the King.*

The grammatical lovers among us are already feeling satisfied. They are ready to go home now, but there's more. Moving up on the triangle is to recognize that the gospel is about Jesus the King. Mark 1:1 says that this is the beginning of the gospel, and then he modifies the gospel. The first thing we discover in Mark's account is that the gospel is about Jesus Christ. There were hundreds of people who bore the name Jesus, Yeshua in Hebrew, Joshua in Greek. Hundreds of people have this name in the New Testament. It is a very popular name in Israel. There are 22 people named Jesus in the writings of Josephus, for example. But what Mark has told us is that the gospel is about Jesus Christ. When we link those two words together, whether we say “Jesus Christ” or we reverse the order and say “Christ Jesus,” the linking of those two words is an important feature of the gospel. It means that the gospel is about the kingship of Jesus. This is one of the most distinguishing beliefs that separates Christianity from non-Christianity. Early believers in Jesus were slandered. Slander is not new, and early Christians were slandered by the surrounding society in three main ways:

Number one: We were accused of being atheist. Did you know that? We were the original atheists. Because we did not believe in all the gods of Greece and Rome, we were atheists.

Number two: They also said we eat people. We were accused of being cannibals. They heard rumors that at the climax of the service, just like the climax of this morning's service, we are going to drink blood and eat flesh. They said, “Man, that sounds like a dangerous religion. They are atheists, and they are cannibals.”

Number three: It's worse. They call each other “brother” and “sister.” Then at the end of their services, in the ancient version of Fellowship Hall, the Romans heard that we had something that we called “love feasts.” They said we must get together and have incestuous relationships. “What a dark religion.” That's how we were slandered. You may never have encountered those slanders. I've never been accused of those myself, though I've been slandered in other ways as a Christian.

The philosopher and statesman Celsus is one of the earliest Romans to actually read the Bible and attend Christian services. He read the Bible, and he wrote a book saying that Christians are

dead wrong. His book had the modest title: *On the True Doctrine*. But this is what Celsus said about us that is actually very accurate. He said that Christians and Jews share this nonsensical idea that a divine Savior was prophesied long ago and would come to dwell among men. Do you believe that? He said Christians and Jews all think this crazy idea that it was prophesied long ago that a divine Savior would come down to earth. All that they disagree on is whether He has come or not. The Christians say, "Yes."

The gospel is a noun, and it's a verb. The gospel is about Jesus the King. And whenever you see those two words, don't pass over them. Sometimes we imagine that Christ is like Jesus' last name: Jesus Christ. This linkage is the shortest confession of faith in the New Testament. The gospel is about Jesus the King.

Step Three: *The gospel is part of a larger story about God's coming kingdom.*

Let's go up to the third step on this triangle, or this pyramid, and that's to say that the gospel is part of a larger story about God's coming kingdom. In Mark 1:2-3, we read:

"As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, 'Behold, I send My messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.'"

Mark says "Isaiah," and yet he quotes from Malachi and Isaiah. These two passages were often quoted together in the literature of the time. It's not that Mark makes a mistake.

What is being cited in these passages? It's part of a larger story. We heard last week how the Old Testament ends with Malachi, where God says, "I am coming; prepare for My arrival." In Isaiah 40:1 and 3, we read:

"Comfort, comfort My people, says your God In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

In Isaiah 40:4-5, in words that I can't hear without also hearing Handel's Messiah, we read:

"Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

This is big news. Get ready a highway for God. God is so big, so powerful, that everyone needs to see it, so fill in the valleys and lower the mountains and get ready for God. This messenger, this herald, goes up on a high mountain and heralds the gospel. Herald the good news, herald the gospel, evangelize, lift up your voice. And what is the content of the gospel? "Behold your God. He has come with might, and His arm rules for Him." In Isaiah 40:9-10, we read:

“Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’ Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and His arm rules for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him.”

The Gospel is part of the larger story of God's return. God's return was predicted by the prophets in Isaiah 40, Malachi 3, and Daniel 2, which we spoke of a few weeks earlier. In Daniel 2, King Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a statue with a head of gold, chest of silver, thighs of bronze, and feet of iron and clay. While he was watching, a stone cut without human hands – divine agency – struck the statue, and the stone became a mountain that filled the earth. If I could summon all the powers of my being, I would just write this image on your hearts. This is one of the most important images in the Bible. It's an image that this stone, cut without human hands, strikes the base of the statue of the kingdoms of this world, and they are toppled. Daniel's interpretation of the dream predicts a sequence of kingdoms: Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, and, alas, the kingdom of God. In Daniel 2:44, we read:

“And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever.”

The God of heaven will set up a kingdom, and the good news is that this kingdom will never be destroyed. There's no other kingdom coming, just this one. It's never going to be destroyed. It's not going to be left to another people. It is going to break apart all of the power structures of this world and bring them to an end, and it's going to stand forever. I want to be part of that.

Did you know that the prayer for the arrival of the kingdom of God is the ending of the synagogue liturgy? A thousand times a year, the synagogue liturgy ends with a prayer for the arrival of the kingdom and the toppling of idolatry.

Step Four: *The gospel collides with all other kingdom stories.*

The gospel is a noun, and it's a verb. It's good news. It is something to be heralded, to be proclaimed. The gospel is about Jesus as King. The gospel is part of a larger story. Let's move up. The gospel collides with all other kingdom stories. The gospel knocks into other stories that are shown to be counterfeit. Let me give you just three:

Story one: The gospel collides with religious stories. You know these stories: “I'm a good person, and I'm part of a group of good people. When God comes back to earth, and the dust has settled, surely He will be pleased.” We see the gospel collide with a religious story in Mark 1:4, where John, the herald, coming in the wilderness, was baptizing people and proclaiming

that the religious folks need to repent for forgiveness. This was a summons to his hearers. In Mark 1:5, we read that all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were streaming out to him in the wilderness, because the gospel collides with the religious story that says, "I'm basically good." The gospel says that you're not – you're actually not in a situation that is any different from that of the most pagan of your neighbors. The gospel collides with that religious story, and John's announcement is: "Get ready – the King is coming." And the people said, "I have to repent and get ready." They came, and they confessed their sins.

Story two: The gospel also collides with self-important stories. There a lot of the stories around us. I love this country. There are times when I find the culture of my own country to be strange and difficult to understand. Eighty-five percent of Americans think that they are someone about whom other people will write books. That's just difficult, isn't it? The narcissism index in our society is beyond statistical measuring. Ninety percent of Americans rate themselves as above average. I'm not a statistics person by training, but that seems like a statistical impossibility. The gospel collides with the story that says "I'm the most important person." Have you rubbed shoulders with people who find themselves really, really important? They find ways of directly and indirectly communicating that what they're doing or what they're thinking and who they are is really important. The gospel just plows right into that.

John the Baptist had a ministry where the entire region and the citizens of the city were coming out to him. His popularity was such that people were streaming out to him to hear his preaching and were responding with confession of sin and repentance. And John says in Mark 1:7:

"After me comes He who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie."

I love to hear this kind of language from prominent preachers. I love to hear prominent Christian leaders say, "I am not worthy to untie the sandal of the Lord Jesus."

Harold John Ockenga was used to start Fuller Theological Seminary and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in a time when the church needed robust God-honoring, Bible-believing seminary education. He helped start a seminary on the West Coast and then in the Midwest and on the East Coast to train the next generation of Christian leaders. Though he was president of two seminaries and pastor of a prominent church in Boston, he was a profoundly humble person. When Billy Graham came to visit him, he walked into Ockenga's office but couldn't find him. Ockenga's secretary said, "Well, he's in there." Billy Graham looked again and saw a big lump underneath the throw rug. He lifted the rug, and there was Ockenga under the rug on his face before the Lord, saying, "Oh Lord, breathe Your Spirit on your church. Oh Lord,

breathe Your Spirit on your church, so that we can recover a robust engagement with Your Scripture and recover the power of the gospel to be people who understand its content and to proclaim it to the next generation. Oh Lord, breathe on Your church.” And Billy Graham just climbed under the rug next to him and prayed. The gospel collides with self-important stories. John says, “I’m not worthy to even loose His sandal.” The gospel collides with religious stories, and it collides with self-important stories.

Story three: The gospel also collides with all cultural stories. We all have this. A few weeks ago, I showed you the map of ancient Babylon, where there was a circle of the world, and Babylon was at the center. China is called, by their own terms, Zhong Guo, the middle kingdom or central kingdom, as in “we’re the middle.” We often depict global maps with our nation at the middle. All cultural stories are confronted by the gospel.

The last time I was in Rome, I stood next to a very famous statue. It is an iconic statue, the Augustus of Prima Porta. It was found at the villa of Livia, his wife, at the Prima Porta on the via



Flaminia and is now in the Vatican Museum. It is contemporary with the Gospel of Mark, but it depicts a cultural story. When you come in a little closer to Augustus, you see him looking with a heroic gaze, wearing a military breastplate. Up very close, you can see that the breastplate is telling a cultural story. At the top of the breastplate is the personification of the heavens and the sun and Apollo in a chariot, coursing across the top. At the bottom of the breastplate is the goddess of the earth, lifting up a cornucopia, a horn of plenty, so the scene on the breastplate of the military armor has the heavens and the earth on

the top and the bottom. The sides of the breastplate personify the four corners of the empire and conquered peoples. The center image depicts the return of the Roman military standard with an eagle on the top. It's the return of the Roman military standard by the Parthian king, and it is a gesture signifying surrender. It is the



story of the world – a story of the world that says: “We bring peace to the world.” It's a story of the world that says: “The world is better off when we run it.” It's a story of the world that says: “Success comes through military accomplishment.” It's the story of the world that says: “Success happens when we are at the center and everyone else serves us.” It's a cultural story

of the world that the gospel collides with. With the advent of Roman power and the spread of Roman rule, it was the way for the provinces to join in with the new wave of political and cultural power. It was a way to access that power. It's kind of like the reason people all over the world learn English, because English is a way of participating in a globalized culture. The spread of this cultural story caused the provinces to outdo one another in attempts to honor Caesar and then to receive the benefits of that. One of the most striking examples is a calendar inscription from Priene. This is contemporary with the Gospel of Mark. A Greek high priest of a pagan temple named Apollonius issued at his command an inscription to be made to reset the calendar in the provinces. He reset the calendar and made September 23 the beginning of the new year, the new era. The inscription, which is in Berlin today, explains why. There are three reasons: First, it says that Providence has ordered all things, is interested in our life, and has set everything in the most perfect order by giving us Augustus as a savior. Second, since Caesar, by his appearance, his epiphany, has surpassed all previous benefactors, he has not left to posterity any hope of surpassing what he has done. Third, and this is the critical line for us this morning, the birthday of the god, or the divine Augustus, was the beginning of the gospel. Who was the beginning of the gospel? It is the exact phrase of Mark 1:1.

Beloved, we don't live in the first century, but we live in the 21st century, and we live in the midst of cultural stories that the gospel collides with. It's profound, isn't it, to think that Mark's Gospel is a summary of Peter's preaching in Rome – the beginning of the gospel. The gospel is a noun and a verb. The gospel is about Jesus as King. The gospel is part of a larger story – the story of the world, of a God who intends to rule and reign over it and have that rule reflected in righteousness by those who bear His image. The gospel knocks into counterfeit or other kingdom stories. Whether that's a story of "I'm a good person," whether that's a story of "I'm super important," or whether that's a story of "my people, my nation, my group," that's what's really happening. Let's go to the top of the pyramid.

Step Five: *The gospel is about the end of the world and the beginning of a new one.*

I have prayed in advance of this message that in this final point, the peak of our pyramid, God would help me, even now, to explain this and proclaim it clearly. I find many Christians to be unaware of this central and towering point. The gospel is about the end of the world and the beginning of a new one. What does that mean? Mark's Gospel says that in those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee. He came to be baptized by John in the Jordan River. And when Jesus was baptized, He came up out of the water, and immediately Jesus saw the heavens split open and the Spirit of God came down in a dovelike manner upon Him, and God spoke audibly from heaven: "This is My beloved Son; You are My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." The heavens split open and God came down. Do you see it? This is the answer to Isaiah's prayer

in Isaiah 64: “Oh Lord, rend the heavens and come down again to save.” Jesus saw the heavens split open, and I want you to see as clearly as you know your own self. God just came. Do you see this? The heavens split open, the Spirit came down, and Jesus has been identified as the Beloved Son. Something dramatic is happening.

The Spirit drives Jesus out into the wilderness, where He confronts Satan, that great enemy of our souls, our adversary, the deceiver, the one who will try to steal, kill and destroy. Jesus goes out to do battle with him in the wilderness and triumphs. Before Jesus says anything publicly, He defeats the dragon in the wilderness.

Full of the Spirit, with the devil defeated, Jesus now proclaims the gospel. And what’s the gospel? We said it's a noun, and it's a verb. We said it's about Jesus the King. It’s part of a larger story. It collides with all other kingdom stories. And now Jesus announces that it's about the end of the world and the beginning of a new one. In Mark 1:15, Jesus says:

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.”

This language, “the time is fulfilled,” is absolutely breathtaking. It's one of the lines in the New Testament that makes me weep with joy when I read it because God had told us that this was coming. He promised that the exile would be disciplined and that there would be a future end that would be glorious. He said, “I've scattered you, and I will regather you.” He said there would be a sequence of kingdoms and finally the kingdom of God.

I have read the language and the literature of the time between Malachi and Matthew. I’ve read the synagogue liturgy, and I’ve participated in that as a guest. I've heard the longing for the arrival of the kingdom, and I want to tell you that no one has said what Jesus says here. As the first one ever, Jesus says, “the kingdom is here.” The verb “fulfill” is actually a perfect. The time has been fulfilled. The interval between waiting and fulfillment is at hand, and the kingdom is here. This is what the Bible refers to as “the latter days” or “the end times.” Sometimes people ask me about the end times, and I know that this phrase is used in contemporary Christianity in a narrow sense to mean the end of world history. I want to use that phrase this morning in a broader sense that we find in the Bible. I know that we’re used to using the language of end times as meaning the end of the world, but the language of the end times, the latter days, is actually an Old Testament category. Deuteronomy talks about the end times. In Deuteronomy 4:30, we read:

“When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey His voice.”

The end times has to do with the restoration of Israel. In Hosea 3:5, we read:

“Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to His goodness in the latter days.”

In Isaiah 2:2-3, we read that the latter days are good news for all the nations of the world.

“It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say: ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us His ways and that we may walk in His paths.’”

In Zechariah 14, we read:

“And the LORD will be king over all the earth. On that day the LORD will be one and His name one.”

In Daniel 2:44-45, Daniel said:

“And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.”

The God of heaven will set up a kingdom, a sovereignty of reign that will never be destroyed. It will never pass away. It will demolish the power structures of this world. It will rise up as that stone, cut without human hands. It will become a mountain that fills the earth.

Jesus is identified in the New Testament as the stone, a precious stone, rejected by men, but which has become the cornerstone. This is the opening statement of the New Testament. There is a lot here, isn't there? The truth is we're just getting started, and in the weeks ahead, we will listen carefully to Jesus as He talks to us about the reality of His kingdom and its nature. It doesn't come all at once, but it grows. The kingdom, Jesus will say, is like a mustard seed. It's growing. It's like a net, catching all. There is much to learn about the kingdom, and we will explore that in the weeks to come.

This morning, I want you to hear, like those first hearers, Jesus' declaration that “the time is fulfilled; the kingdom is here.” According to Jesus, this requires two things of us. What is required?

Number one: We must repent. We have to turn away from sin, turn away from self, turn away

from societal stories that the gospel hits. We have to turn away from autonomy and idolatry, and we have to separate or abstain from other input. That's why I am abstaining from social media and news for the Lenten season this year, and I just want to confess that it has been hard. Abstaining from social media has been easy, but abstaining from news is been harder. Maybe you, too, have felt that there isn't a lot of good news in the news. I want to step back from the news, because I want to get my ear retuned and my heart recalibrated to the news. This is the news, the good news. This is the headline. The headline narrative is that the kingdom has arrived, and we are brought into that. We turn away from other things. I want to challenge you to give something up, so that you can invest in recalibrating your mind and heart and affections to the good news. Immerse yourself in the Gospels with reading or listening. I invite you to join us in our *Bible Journey* sessions. We're in the New Testament, and you can just jump in right now. Repent. That's the first thing.

Number two: We must believe. It's not enough just to turn away, is it? It's not enough in the wedding ceremony for the bridegroom to say, "Forsaking all others." He has to say, "And holding only unto you." I love that vow. It is forsaking others in order to embrace in the marriage covenant. Jesus says, "Believe." We turn away from other things in order to believe in Jesus. "Believe," "trust," and "faith" are all English translations of the same term in the original text. To believe, to trust, to have faith means not just to know something, as in "I believe that tomorrow will be sunny and warm." It means to entrust myself to Jesus Christ. It means that I believe that Jesus is who He said He was – the coming king, the sovereign Lord. I believe that His kingdom is at hand, that He is your king, and that He is King of the world. The great hymn "Fairest Lord Jesus" begins: "Fairest Lord Jesus, ruler of all nations." He is powerful and trustworthy, so we need not be afraid if we have entrusted ourselves to Jesus. You see, in the Bible, the end of the world is a good thing. I know this is a little bit hard to understand because we don't use the language in that way. We think, "Oh, it's the end of the world; it's terrible." But in the Bible, the end of the world is great. It means God's reign comes. Over time the statue falls because the mountain rises and fills the earth, and you and I are called to be part of it and in it. We trust in Jesus. He is your king, king of the world. He is personally involved in your own life, guiding you and blessing you. He is responsive to prayer.

I listened this week to an interview with Andrew Brunson, the American pastor who was imprisoned for two years in a foreign country on behalf of his faith. It was a very moving interview, revealing how God used the deep discouragement and despair and anxiety of his imprisonment to strengthen his faith and confidence in the Lord and to see how he was able to bear witness to his faith in Christ before a foreign kangaroo court. He said at the end of the interview that he realized that his suffering was for God's kingdom purpose. It had an effect on his own life, but he said, "You know, what I believe really happened was that God used my

imprisonment to galvanize global prayer for this nation and that there would soon be a revival.” My wife was one of the thousands of people who was given by the Holy Spirit an immense burden to pray for Andrew Brunson. She didn't know him. She didn't really know his story. We had no direct connection to his ministry in any way. And yet the Holy Spirit would wake her up in the middle of the night, and she would intercede for his life and his faith. Then I heard him say the effect. They'd never met, but they are part of the kingdom that Jesus Christ is running. He is at work in the world. He is personally involved in your own life. He is at work in the world, advancing His kingdom every day.

This past week I had the joy of interviewing two delightful godly people, Drs. Tom and Donna Petter. They just published a commentary on Ezra-Nehemiah. They serve with Youth with a Mission. They teach the Bible. They love the church, and they're just fun. She's of Italian descent; Tom is Swiss. Those are different cultures. I interviewed them about the work of the kingdom in the world, as they saw it. We are premiering that tonight at 7 o'clock, and I invite you to listen. It's a great conversation that will fill your heart with confidence in what the Lord is doing.

Jesus is also working in and through His kingdom predominantly through you. He's working through you in the life of this church. Just this last week, the Lord showed me a few scenes of what He's doing through you. He's doing so much through you. I learned just this week of a workplace Bible study being started in the early morning and coworkers who said they would be willing to come to that. I learned this week of a relative of someone in our church who is being drawn to Christ, and this person in our church said, “I'll start a Bible study with you, just one on one, so you can get to know Christ.” I learned of relational healing that happened with profound gestures and offers of reconciliation. I see just a fraction of what Jesus is doing through you, because He meant it when He said “the time has been fulfilled; the kingdom is at hand.”

Your pyramid, or your triangle—I asked you to draw that because I wanted you to see this mountain. I wanted you to see the mountain of the gospel. It's a noun. It's a verb. It's about Jesus the King. The gospel is part of a larger story of God's coming kingdom. It will collide with all other kingdom stories. It is the good news about the end of this world, as we've known it, and the beginning of a new one.

Brothers and sisters, we are called to be kingdom people. We are ambassadors of a real King, of a real kingdom, and we need to discover or rediscover more of who this King is, how He runs His kingdom, and what He expects of us as His people in this world. It's going to be an exciting journey. I invite you to join me and others here on this journey through the Gospels. We're

going to go through the Gospels in the next two months, and I want you to immerse in it. Listen to the Gospels on the Dwell app. Read them in the morning. Just hurl yourselves into the Gospels and leave the *New York Times* aside for two months. Just hurl yourselves into the Gospels and quiet down other culture voices or voices within and say, “Jesus, can I just listen to You for two months? I just want to hear You afresh, who You are, what You are doing.” This season of the year allows us to do that.

This morning, by faith and with hope, we want to end our time together with a celebration. It’s a celebration Jesus gave us at the end of His ministry. We just looked at His opening sentence, so some of us might think we’re getting ahead of ourselves here, yet Jesus announces to His disciples that the time is fulfilled, the kingdom has come and is at hand. On the night on which He was betrayed, Jesus took bread in the midst of the Passover meal, which had its symbolism fixed on God’s rescue, God’s intervention, His coming down to save. Jesus broke the bread and said, “This is My body given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.” The second Exodus is at hand. God’s purpose to redeem and save is here, according to Jesus. He then took the cup and lifted it in the presence of His disciples, and He told them something they had not heard since Jeremiah promised it 600 years before. “There’s going to be a new covenant. God’s going to bring you back and provide forgiveness of sins, and you will all know Me.” Jesus lifted the cup, and He said, “This cup, this is it. This is the New Covenant in My blood which is poured out for you.”

You may have come in this morning, or joined us online, knowing nothing of Jesus, and this is a great Sunday to be here. If you have known Jesus, remember Him and let His kingdom sink into your heart and mind. Let us prepare our hearts to partake together. Let’s pray.

Lord Jesus, we extol You and praise You. We come to Your table, Lord, the table of the King, and we ask, Lord, that You would feed us and sustain us and remind us of Your triumph.

In Jesus’ Name, Amen.