

The Coming King

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[0 : 0 0] If you've got a Bible, you can turn to the Old Testament, to the book of Psalms in the Old Testament. Psalm chapter 2. I'm going to read the entire Psalm.

Psalm chapter 2, and we'll start at verse 1. Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers band together against the Lord and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.

The one enthroned in heaven laughs. The Lord scoffs at them. He rebukes them in His anger and terrifies them in His wrath, saying, I've installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.

I will proclaim the Lord's decree. He said to me, You are my son. Today I have become your father. Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.

You will break them with a rod of iron. You will dash them to pieces like pottery. Therefore, you kings, be wise. Be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear.

[1 : 3 3] Celebrate His rule with trembling. Kiss the son, or He will be angry, and your way will lead to your destruction. For His wrath can flare up in a moment.

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him. This is the word of the Lord. Let's pray. Let's ask for God's help as we study. Our King and our Lord, we come to you wanting to hear your word this morning.

To hear your truth. To have your truth go deep into our hearts. Changing us.

Transforming us. Making us like your son. Help us with this, Lord, we pray. This is not a, again, something we do by our own strength.

This is something that comes by the power of your spirit. So we need you to work. Do that work in us today, we pray. For Christ's sake.

[2 : 3 6] Amen. Amen. We're in a micro-series on the season of Advent leading up to Christmas. Advent is traditionally the four Sundays before Christmas.

Not actually Christmas itself, but the season leading up to Christmas. And we've been talking about one of the key themes in Advent, which is the theme of longing. Advent, traditionally in the church calendar, is a season where people go, you know what, when I look out at the world, when I look deep into myself, when I look at things going on around, it is clear that we are, we're not home.

We're in a broken world. Broken people in a broken world. And so it awakens, it evokes things in us saying, I long for something more than this. I long for a world that's not like this.

I long for a body that's not like this. I long for a heart that's not like this. And so Advent is one tradition of that season where we stop and we long for the things that we need for that future reality.

And those all come to us in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the one that secures that future world. He's the one that secures the new heart for you and for me. And so what we've been doing in this series is we've been going back into the Old Testament and we've been looking at images of Jesus in the Old Testament that fulfill that longing that we have inside.

[3 : 58] These are the same images the original Israelites would have been looking back to as they awaited the very first Christmas and the coming of our Messiah. And so last week we looked at how the Old Testament makes us long for a serpent crusher, one who will beat down the devil's schemes once and for all.

Undo that work that got us expelled from the garden. This week, and you would have seen this in the themes as we opened the service this morning, but this week I want us to see how the Old Testament makes us long for a king.

A king. And to do that we go to one of the most important passages in the Bible about kingship and that is Psalm 2. This is something of a coronation psalm from what we can tell, as in it was probably used in coronation ceremonies.

So a new king would come to Judah and as they were going to anoint him and set him up to take over, they would recite this together in the assembly in some way.

And I think this coronation psalm says four things to us. It tells us four things that we need to know. It tells us about our world. It tells us about our God. It tells us about our king.

[5 : 06] And then it tells us about our response to the king. So our world, our God, our king, and our response. That's where we're going to go this morning. Here's the first one. Our world. Look down the first three verses.

Psalmist writes and says, Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.

So we have an opening scene here. If you want to try and visually picture it, you've got an opening scene of a battlefield, and all the leaders in the other nations are lined up on this side. Whenever I ever read this psalm, I think of a specific movie in mind, but now I realize that I'm getting old, and so this is probably dated, and so maybe some of you have never, ever seen it.

But maybe you've seen Braveheart at some point in your life, even if you're a lot younger. It probably should be part of your kind of cinematic education. But there's always those scenes.

Whenever they have the big battles, there's several of them in the movie, and you get all the armies lined up on the one side, and the other group is lined up on the other side. So you get a chance to stare each other down for a while before all the chaos and the mayhem ensues.

[6 : 16] And this group is lined up here in Psalm 2 on the one side of the battlefield, and they're declaring war on God and on his anointed. Now that phrase there is a reference to the Messiah.

That's what the word Messiah means, the anointed one. So they're declaring war on God and on God's Messiah. A rebellious bunch of people going to war with God.

Now if I'm on the other side, I want to know, I think you'd want this in any battle, why are you angry with me? Why all the armies?

Like this is a bit much here. Why are you busy charging at me? And they tell us in verse 3. This is what the rebellious armies say. They say, let us break their chains and throw off their fetters.

They want to be free. They want to be free from the rule of God. I think it's possible to make a case that a desire to be free from rule seems to be endemic to the human race.

- [7 : 19] If you think back to when you were a kid, where were the instances where there was the most conflict between you and your parents? Wasn't there moments where you felt like your parents were unjustly curtailing your freedom?
- Your rights were being violated? And I feel like that's where my kids get the most irate. It's like, how could you do this? Autonomy or self-rule, that desire is hardwired into us.
- We crave it. We want it. Now why do we want it? Possibly, because I think we think that when we get it, it will bring us the most happiness, the most pleasure, the most fulfillment.
- Even at that small age, at the kid level, I think that's what kids are thinking. We think that the more free we are, the more happiness we'll have, the more content we'll be in life. I was reading an article a number of years ago called The Pleasures of Atheism.
- It was written by a former Roman Catholic, and she talks about these newfound pleasures that she has in her life, having embraced atheism, having walked away from religion.
- [8 : 28] She says this, she says, anyone who has voluntarily left Catholicism and other conservative faiths will no doubt cite lack of freedom to make individual choices as one of their chief reasons for seeking a different path.
- I was no exception. In my personal experience, there was no pleasure in being told that I would have to remain celibate until marriage, even if for some reason I chose never to marry.
- I didn't see the point of having the church decide the circumstances under which I could have sex, whether it be as a single or married person. Since I valued my freedom more than observing the arbitrary and cruel rules of Catholicism, secularism was by far the better choice.
- And so her basic contention there in that article is that one of the great pleasures, she says, pleasures in life is freedom to do what you want. Freedom equals pleasure.
- Now that makes the very notion of a king a very big problem. The notion of a king naturally means there's going to be some sort of constriction of freedom because if the king doesn't rule in some sort of tangible way that he's not really a king, is he?
- [9 : 41] Like that's what makes a king a king. I know we've got some weird figurehead kings today in society who don't rule in any way, but historically, if you were a king, you ruled in some way over people. He has to rule.
- He has to have subjects underneath him who are submitting to him. That's what by definition makes a king. Now in the psalm, it's the rulers of the world who don't want to be ruled by God.
- They don't want to be subjected to God's anointed king. And so really, I think what the psalmist is doing is he's giving us insight into our world, what our world is like. And he's saying, this is what we as people are like when we encounter the notion of God as king.
- This is what we're like when we come up against the idea of God as king. The idea of having God ruling over us, what it does is it brings up a reaction in us, and that reaction is rebellion because we feel that we have to have autonomy to be truly happy.
- And if that autonomy is going to be trampled on in any way, then we've got to fight back. We've got to shake our fist. Now the big question is, well, is that true?
- [10 : 48] Is it true that we have to have autonomy to have happiness? I'm going to try and answer that sermon, that question with the rest of the sermon. But first of all, I just want you to see up front here that the psalm tells us about our world, tells us what we're like, how we respond to the idea of God as king.
- Secondly, though, it tells us about God. So look at verse 4. The one enthroned in heaven laughs. The Lord scoffs at them. He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.

So now what we get to see is, we get to see how God reacts to these people lined up on the other side. And he has two reactions. On the one hand, he's rather amused by what he sees.

And then on the other hand, he's infuriated by what he sees. So he's amused. He laughs in verse 4. He looks at these rulers amassed against him, shaking their fists, and he thinks, look, this is actually so ridiculous.

This is so ridiculous that it's somewhat amusing. He laughs. I think some, sometimes conservative religious folk have struggles with mixing humor with gravely important spiritual matters.

[12 : 05] I've preached occasionally in some churches where, like, if you even attempt to add any little bit of humor, you just get, like, these hardcore blank stares.

And you're like, what have I done? Have I offended everybody? Like, what you, afterwards, people come up and they're like, thank you so much. It was so helpful. And I'm like, but you just dead stared me the whole way through that service. Like, I was terrified to say anything even in, like, a sort of colloquial language.

So I think sometimes religious folks have a difficulty mixing humor with grave spiritual matters. Is there a place for humor in those sorts of discussions? I mean, this is a somber topic, a serious somber topic.

We're talking about rebellion here, rebellion against the creator God. Like, that shouldn't be funny. How come God is laughing? Martin Lloyd-Jones, famous Welsh preacher, not a very funny guy.

Very good preacher, not a very funny guy. In the last century, he wrote a book on preaching that became, like, one of the main textbooks for lots of seminaries around the world that you sort of had to read if you were going to become a preacher.

[13 : 08] He says this, he says, the man who tries to be humorous is an abomination and should never be allowed to enter the pulpit. Now, I can't figure out from that quote if he's against all humor in preaching or if he's just against bad humor in preaching because he says the man who tries to be humorous should never enter the pulpit.

John Stott, it was a contemporary of his in London at the same time, also wrote a very famous book on preaching, very appreciative of Lloyd-Jones, but wrote a book a little bit later and he didn't agree with Lloyd-Jones on this one point, so he wrote this.

He said, humor should definitely not be prohibited in the pulpit. On the contrary, provided that we are laughing at the human condition and therefore at ourselves, humor helps us to see things in proportion.

One of our contemporaries who uses this weapon to great effect is Malcolm Muggeridge. As a former editor of what he dubs an allegedly humorous magazine called Punch, he has good reason to meditate on the meaning of laughter, which next to mystical enlightenment is the most precious gift that comes to us on earth.

More than that, he has come to see laughter as the converse face of mysticism, since the mystic reaches upwards towards God while the humorist recognizes our human inability to find him.

[14 : 28] This paradox he sees illustrated in the great cathedrals of medieval Europe, which have both a steeple climbing into the sky and a gargoyle at the top laughing at the antics of mortal man.

Together they help us to define humor as an expression in terms of the grotesque of the inexorable disparity between human aspiration and human performance.

So he says humor is okay. Humor is okay. Humor is great in the pulpit and by extension even when dealing with serious spiritual matters. If we're using humor to show the disparity between human aspirations and human performance, what we're wanting to do and what we can actually do.

That's the ridiculous nature of the rebels' claim that so amuses God here. Their aspirations so far exceed what they're actually able to do and achieve.

They want to dethrone the creator God of the universe who the Bible says flung the stars into space with the tips of his fingers. their aspirations far exceed what they're able to do.

[15 : 41] So God laughs. He's amused at these antics. But he's not just amused. He's infuriated as well.

So verse 5, he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath. Now why? Why is he angry? Well, I would say that he's angry because he cares. His anger shows that he cares.

You see, if God didn't care, if he wasn't deeply concerned about human autonomy and the damage that human autonomy creates for individuals and for society, if he wasn't deeply concerned about you and me, then he would just sit back and he'd just laugh.

This is cute. But he does care. And so he doesn't just laugh, he gets angry. There are times when anger is completely appropriate.

Robin and I recently watched a TV series called We Were the Lucky Ones. I don't know if anyone's seen that. It traces this large, extended, Polish-Jewish family as they get separated from each other during World War II and get caught up in all the pogroms in Eastern Europe.

[16 : 50] It's largely based on a true story. And it's a beautiful series in some ways, a very difficult series, a beautiful series. and there are many, for me, infuriating moments in that series where the cruelty of humanity is on display in such violent, heartless ways and moments.

So these people would live in this Polish city together, Jews and non-Jews, both Polish, and they would do life together, they would do business together, they would shop at each other's shops. And then, with a change of scenario around the wall, all of a sudden, the one group is hurting the other group into ghettos and at points even massacring them at times.

Not just the Nazis, but actual Polish people as well. And so as you watch the series, there are so many moments of this injustice, gross, gross injustice.

And as you watch these, I think what you find is you find this visceral sense of anger rising up in you. As you see a person who bought bread from that person the week before, now hurting them into a ghetto.

Now why do I get angry when I watch that? Why do you get angry when you watch something like that? Why do we get angry when we see human life disregarded?

[18 : 15] Why do we get angry when justice is disregarded? Why do we get angry when we see blatant corruption and truthfulness is disregarded? Because you care. We care about those things.

You care about those things. We care about justice. We care about integrity. We care about life. We care. If you didn't get angry when you saw those sorts of things, we would say you are apathetic and you are cold hearted.

There is something wrong with you. There is something deficient in you if you're not getting angry in the face of that sort of stuff. Now God is the same. When you strike out on that road of autonomy, God gets angry.

He gets angry because He cares. He gets angry because there are a bunch of different things that you disregard in that moment. You see, when you shake your fist in His face and you say, I want nothing to do with you.

I want to be my own king. He gets angry because you, will you disregard Him first of all as your loving creator? You disregard other people and we'll get to that in a moment and you actually disregard yourself and we'll get to that in a moment.

[19 : 24] But God cares too much not to get angry. That's the second thing I want you to see. Who our God is in response to these people.

Third thing, we see something about God's king here in this psalm. So, what does God do in response to these people? The text says in verse 6 that He installs His king.

He installs His king. And then verse 7 says this, I will proclaim the Lord's decree. He said to me, you are my son. Today I have become your father.

This part of the psalm can get a little bit confusing because you're trying to figure out well who's speaking at this point. What's happened now all of a sudden is that the anointed one, the king is speaking. He's now talking back.

God's anointed Messiah is speaking. And so God's response to the rebel kings is to set up His own king who will rule over all. In fact, He's actually going to crush the opposition.

[20 : 30] If you read further in verse 9, it's a pretty violent rule. He puts down the opposition. Now when you read those words there of the Messiah's response, He says, you are my son.

Today I have become, sorry, this is, yes, those words. You are my son. Today I have become your father. When you read those words, if you've grown up in church, you've heard those words before, you're probably going, I've seen those words somewhere.

Maybe I've seen those words in the New Testament. Maybe this is some sort of a prophecy about Jesus. He is, after all, the Messiah, God's anointed one.

And I want to say that's a good instinct. That's certainly what it is. But when the Old Testament Israelites recited this poem at a coronation, we have some evidence that at these coronation ceremonies they would actually repeat that line twice.

So they'd say the whole coronation psalm, but when they got to that line as the new king was coming, they'd say that line twice. In the expectation that the king that they were now installing might be that king who will rule forever.

[21 : 44] Might be the psalm to king. And they had a good reason to do this. The good reason is in the book of Samuel. 2 Samuel chapter 7. There the prophet Nathan goes to King David.

And he says to David, he says, you know what David? One of your descendants is going to sit on the throne forever. And his reign is going to be glorious. And it's going to go on forever and ever and ever.

He's going to be the Messiah. He's going to be the true son of David. In fact, that prophecy in 2 Samuel 7, verse 14, God says these words, I will be his father and he will be my son.

Same words you find in Psalm 2. And so you can imagine ancient Israelites sitting with this expectation every time they get to a coronation service and they pronounce these words over the king.

Like, is this the one? Is this going to be the guy? Please let this be the one. We've had a really rotten run with kings up until this point. You go to the Old Testament, you read about them, they're pretty shady characters.

[22 : 49] Please let this be the one. And so they say it twice in the hope, in the expectation that the next king is the king, the true son of David. And that great hope for the son of David is all over the Old Testament.

It's the great promise of the Old Testament. It's the promise we read about every single Christmas time when we read Isaiah 6. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders and he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. Here's the important part. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. It's the great promise of the Old Testament, all over the Old Testament, and it's the New Testament that comes along and fulfills this promise.

So here's how Mark's gospel starts in the New Testament. The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, I will send my messenger ahead of you who will prepare your way, a voice of one calling in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight paths for him.

[24 : 09] And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him, confessing their sins.

They were baptized by him in the Jordan River. John wore clothing made of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist and he ate locusts and wild honey. He was a strange character. This was his message.

After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.

Now the next part. At that time, Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove and a voice came from heaven, you are my son whom I love.

With you I am well pleased. People often puzzle about why Jesus is getting baptized and it is a puzzling thing. It's not easy to figure out why he's getting baptized. John is giving a baptism like it says there for the repentance of sins and you are going, well Jesus doesn't have any sins so why is he getting baptized?

[25 : 22] I think there are a few things going on there but one of the things I think that is happening there is I think this is a coronation or at least the beginning of a coronation. Jesus is being told you are my son.

Same words that we get in Psalm 2. Same words we get in 2 Samuel 7. Jesus is the son of David, God's anointed king.

He's the Psalm 2 king. And so what you'd expect now if that's the case and anyone who knew their Old Testament reading that would have known okay this is it, this is the Psalm 2 king.

What you'd expect now if you'd followed Psalm 2 and you knew Psalm 2 is well you expect Jesus to go out and to claim all the nations as his inheritance through violent warfare and conquest.

that's what he does in Psalm 2. He beats all the nations down and he takes them all in and so okay right I'm getting ready where's the big fight? We don't get a fight.

[26 : 21] What we get when we read on in Mark's gospel is we get a Jesus who heals. We get a Jesus who restores. We get a Jesus who teaches peace. We get a Jesus who feeds. We get a Jesus who shepherds confused and broken people.

and he doesn't even just heal Jews God's chosen people he heals Gentiles. He heals Romans Roman soldiers the enemies of God's people the rulers who are lining up on the other side of the field shaking their fists he heals them.

We get a Jesus who says things like turn the other cheek. And so when you read through the gospels having just read that this Jesus is now the Psalm 2 king you go where's the violence?

I was getting my popcorn out ready for a war movie. This is a terrible ancient war movie. Where's the violence? Where's the fight? It's there. The violence comes.

The violence comes in Jesus himself being taken by those rulers and leaders the chief priests the temple rulers Herod Pilate they take him they condemn him to death they strip him naked they beat him they put on a robe they put a robe on him they mock his supposed royalty hail the king of the Jews they put a crown of thorns on his head they crucify him and there he dies and I think that is the completion of the coronation that was started at the baptism.

[27 : 55] You are my son and now you get the crown. You see it's in that instance that as Psalm 2 says God installed his king on Zion his holy mountain.

As Jesus bled there as Jesus died there he crushed all rebellion in that moment. As he bled and he died there he took all the insults all the rebellious sinful self-worshipping sins of humanity upon himself and he paid the punishment for it thereby removing the guilt from us.

God's righteous anger that we read about there in Psalm 2 that's poured out on Jesus so that it will not be poured out on you or me. You see God installs his king not to obliterate but to save to show rebellious you and me how dear we are to him.

What you've really really got in this picture is at the cross you've got the true son of David standing on the battlefield facing all of those rebellious armies and he's saying to them I love you.

I love you. I know you're shaking your fists at me. I know you're sharpening your weapons and you're coming for me but I love you. You haven't wanted me. You haven't pursued me.

[29 : 24] You've turned away from my ways. You've disregarded my laws. You've shaken your fist in my face but I love you. That's the king of Psalm 2. That's the true son of David.

Now finally how do we respond? What's in verse 10? The way you respond the psalmist says is you kiss the son that is you pay homage to the king.

Kiss the son. Submit your lives to the son. Submit your lives to Jesus. Let his death be your death. Let him rule over you forevermore. Now you say well why would I do that?

Because at the very end of the psalm verse 12 it says blessed are all who take refuge in him. Blessed in some ways is really the Old Testament equivalent of happy.

not a surface sort of fleeting happiness but a deep seated contentment and joy. Happy are all who have him rule over them is what the psalmist is saying.

[30 : 50] You see we pursue autonomy as we started off this sermon. We pursue autonomy because we think it's going to make us blessed. We think it's going to make us happy. If we're free from all rule well then we'll be happy.

We'll be fulfilled. Life will be complete. That's what we think and the psalmist says no. No, no, no, no, no, no. You will only actually have those things when you find your refuge in Christ. When you kiss the sun.

Autonomy is an illusion friends. It actually doesn't exist. Because if you don't submit to Jesus Christ you're going to submit to something else. You have to submit to something else.

You probably are right now in a functional way submitting to something else. You might submit to progress in your career. You might submit to the pursuit of a relationship or the desire for a relationship.

You might submit yourself to the quest for human approval. Any number of things can master you and will master you in this life. And listen, when those things do master you they will place limits on you.

[32 : 00] Boundaries. They will constrict your freedom in multiple different ways. You don't believe me? Pursue your career. Go after that.

Make that your big thing. Pursue it with everything you've got. Let success in career be that thing that is your highest aspiration in life and watch all of the limits come into your life all of a sudden.

Notice how slowly intimacy with your family gets limited. Notice how you won't be able to be the father or the husband that you want to be or the mother or the wife that you want to be. Notice the limits that enter your social relationships.

Notice the limits that enter your ability to look after your body. Pursue something like that and limits pop up all over the place. Rules and constrictions pop up all over the place.

You guys know this because right now you are living with multiple limits in your life because of the multiple things that you're following and you're having to make trade-offs all the time. And so I want to say autonomy is an illusion.

[33 : 05] Timothy Keller in his book *The Reason for God* says freedom is not the absence of restraint and limitation but rather it's a matter of finding the restriction or limitation that is most liberating to who you already are.

Let me try and explain this in a kind of weird way with some poetry. I know Graham is the literary expert but I'm going to show you that I read stuff too. Maybe you've heard of Lord Byron kind of a famous poet.

I did romanticism at university many many years ago but Lord Byron is regarded as one of the greatest English poets of all time. One of the most prominent figures in the literary movement known as romanticism and his poems are characterized by like super passionate intensity emotional depth they make you feel and feel deeply and I know in one sense all poetry is trying to do that but he's like really trying to do that more than others.

Byron though in his personal life he was a rule breaker complete rule breaker. He went against all sorts of social norms and even against stated official civil law. He broke rules and the movement that he was part of as well romanticism well that was a movement that was often regarded as discarding the stricter rules of the enlightenment and yet for Byron even in his breaking free from the norms there's a surprising nod of the head to regulation.

So I'll give you an example of this there's a poem he wrote in 1816 entitled *When We Two Part* and he depicts in this poem the inner angst of an illicit romantic relationship breaking up.

[34 : 42] So this is an illegal romance it's breaking the law it's against the law in fact it's likely based on an affair that he himself had with an aristocratic woman a married woman and then she later on had an affair with somebody else and broke his heart the two characters were embroiled in this illegal relationship this clandestine relationship this passionate yet lawless attachment and then they broke up and so the speaker in the poem what he does is he's left to now deal with his profound feelings of loss having lost this relationship and so the last stanza goes like this in secret we met in silence I grieve that thy heart could forget thy spirit deceive if I should meet thee after long years how should I greet thee with silence and tears so there's a whole lot of incredible deep emotion being conveyed there in that even if it's a dodgy relationship there's emotion there written by a man who threw off all the rules written about a relationship that broke all of the rules written as part of a literary movement that discarded all of the rules and yet how does Byron convey the depth of feeling to us how does he make us feel the silence how does he make us feel the tears how does he make us feel the grief well he constrains himself he constrains himself to the rules of poetry the rules of rhyme and meter so that poem in particular is strictly structured according to the very most basic rules of poetry and without that literary constraint we don't get to feel the emotion we don't get the sense of the grief we don't get the longing we don't get the loss we don't feel any of that when the rules are in place the deep emotion breaks out you see that when the limitation of poetry is present the feelings are free to flow into hearts and imaginations see friends rules don't necessarily curtail freedom that's a silly idea it's logically impossible rules don't necessarily curtail freedom sometimes rules enhance freedom the choice that you and I have in this world is not to choose between constraint and freedom that is not the option that is on the table between before us this morning the options before us are different kinds of restraints different kinds of limitations what is the limitation we should submit to that will bring us the most freedom that's the question really the question is who or what should be our king well how about a king who demands absolute allegiance he says submit to me submit everything to me do not leave anything behind bring your entire life and submit it to me and yet when you his unworthy subject fail to do that he submits himself to death on a cross to cover over your failures how about a king with the strictest moral requirements for obedience that you will ever ever encounter a king who says these words be perfect because your heavenly father is perfect and yet when you fail to obey your heavenly father he bows low in the garden sweating drops of blood and on your behalf

he cries out to the father not my will but yours be done how about a king that demands that you love your neighbor as yourself that you love your enemies that you turn the other cheek and yet when you fail to offer even the most basic kindness to others around you he looks down at you from the cross those crucifying him you and me really and he says father forgive them for they know not what they do that is love and that is freedom when you submit yourself to the king of loving sacrifice and forgiveness that is when you are going to be free every other offer of freedom out there is an illusion it is a lie it will trap you it will constrain you it will oppress you and it won't just hurt you it will hurt people around you it will not give its life for you it will not shed its blood for you but the king of psalm too will and he has kiss the son and you will be more free than you can possibly know or understand let's pray father and our king we want to be free this morning won't you make us free people not through throwing off all constraint but through bringing ourselves by repentance and faith under the lordship of

Jesus Christ the king of psalm too help us to see that's where freedom is we look at rules we look at commands in the bible we look at the ethics of the bible and go that doesn't look like freedom but it is lord that is freedom help us to dispel the lies that will say that that isn't freedom Christ's way is freedom help us to know the forgiveness that comes in Jesus and the freedom that comes from knowing your sins are taken away they will not be held against you lord i pray for any person who might be here this morning who's never known that freedom in Jesus who's never repented of their sin and trusted in the king of psalm too i pray that you would bring them to a place of repentance and faith this morning have that mercy upon them lord and father may you make us a church that preaches freedom and that demonstrates freedom as we submit to the true king the true son of david our lord jesus christ amen tayo and that we we