

Text of a message delivered by Grant Harris at Windsor Park Baptist Church on Sunday 30th August 2026.
The written text may vary from the spoken/video version due to time and flexibility.



When the King Arrives, Our Response Matters: Luke 19:11-44

As we conclude this section of Luke's Gospel, we arrive with Jesus at the gates of Jerusalem and are confronted with the question that we've seen through every passage we've explored: *Do we recognise who Jesus really is?* Luke 19 reminds us that Jesus comes as King on His terms, not ours, and that our response to Him matters. While we live in the "until He comes" years, we are called to steward what He has entrusted to us, recognising the King who came, who weeps for those who miss Him, and who one day will come again in glory.

The Arrivals Gate

Like many of you, I've spent a lot of time waiting for people to come out of the arrival's doors at Auckland Airport, and whenever I'm waiting there, there are always different levels of anticipation. When I've been waiting for my luggage, my expectations can be low — there have been times when my luggage decided it needed a few more days in wherever I was coming from. If I've been waiting for someone I haven't seen in ages, there's the expectation of good times to come, and if I'm waiting for one of my grandkids from Sydney, everyone else who comes through the arrival's door is just getting in the way.

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If you stand and observe, everyone is looking at the same door, but they're not all waiting for the same person. Every time those doors open, some people light up, some start waving, and some rush forward with arms outstretched as everyone else just carries on looking at their phone.

The person arriving determines the response.

As I've been thinking about Luke Chapter 19 Verses 11-44 over the last few weeks, it struck me that this whole passage is a bit like that. At the end of this passage, Jesus arrives in Jerusalem. Something significant is happening, but everybody responds differently. Some celebrate. Some worship. Some resist. Some reject. And Jesus Himself, weeps. The same King arrives, and there is a huge diversity of responses.

Today we come to the end of the third block of our Luke series that we've called **King & Kingdom Come**. We'll return to it at the beginning of 2027 as we move towards Easter, but today it's worth pausing to notice where we've been in the last 6 weeks of this series.

We've watched Jesus tell the parable of the shrewd manager and ask us what we should do with what isn't really ours. We've sat with the rich man and Lazarus and felt the weight of a reversal no one saw coming. We've watched blind Bartimaeus see Jesus clearly from the roadside while religious insiders, with a front-row seat, missed Him entirely. Different stories, same question underneath every one of them: ***Do we recognise who is standing in front of us?***

In Luke Chapter 19, as Jesus finally arrives at Jerusalem, the question hasn't changed, in fact it becomes more urgent. **When the King arrives, how will we respond?** Because when the King does arrive, and He will come again, our response matters.

The King Is Coming — But Not Yet

One of the things we've seen throughout the Gospel is that Luke refuses to let us keep Jesus at a safe distance. He won't let us reduce Jesus to being *just* a nice teacher, or *just* a miracle worker, or *just* a moral example, or *just* a religious figure. Again and again, we've seen Jesus do things

only the promised King could do: He forgives sins. He heals. He restores outsiders. He challenges the powerful. He shows authority over sickness, storms, demons, and even death. Luke has been quietly building this case the whole way through ... **Jesus is King**, and not just a King, not just an influential leader ... He is the promised King. The rightful King. The King whose Kingdom has broken into the world. And Luke Chapter 19 is where that reality becomes impossible to miss.

Let's notice how this section begins. Luke tells us in Verse 11 that Jesus told the parable he tells because the people thought the Kingdom of God was going to appear before them. They're excited and expectant as they approach Jerusalem; they think something dramatic is about to happen right there and then. Bells and whistles, trumpets and fanfare. The overthrow of the government. A leadership coup perhaps.

What Jesus says is that they've got the destination right, but they've got the timing wrong, and they've also got the nature of the Kingdom of God wrong. So, Jesus tells a story. In Verse 12 He says, ***"A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. The following words are ones that we often miss ... "Put this money to work," he said, 'until I come back.'"***

Until I come back. Those four words explain the age we live in.

The King has gone away. But His Kingdom purposes don't stop, because the King will return. In the meantime, His servants have work to do. They're not told to sit and wait for heaven or stare into the sky. They're not told to speculate about dates and times. On the contrary, they're told, ***"Put this to work until I come back,"*** effectively, *"live for the King while you wait for His return, because when the King returns, there's a reckoning."* Two of the servants are commended for the work they achieved while the King was away, but one servant buries what he was given and does nothing with it and is rebuked for it. And the people who hated the King, well, it's not the greatest ending for them.

Luke isn't just telling us just to be busy. He's telling us that faithfulness while the King is away actually matters, and, sadly, so does refusal. We aren't living today in a neutral waiting room; we're living in a Kingdom with a King who is coming back to ask what we did with what He left in our hands.

This is where we live. Jesus has come. Jesus has risen. Jesus is King. And one day Jesus will return. Right now, we're living in the **“until I come back”** years.

- The Kingdom is here, but not yet fully here.
- The King reigns, but His reign hasn't yet been fully revealed.

The question is, what are we doing with what the King has entrusted to us? Our time. Our influence. Our relationships. Our resources. Our gifts?

And perhaps for us as Windsor Park there's a bigger question. What has the King entrusted to us **together**? A church community; buildings; an ECE centre; a mental health organisation; community ministries; an online congregation; opportunities to serve thousands of people who live within a few kilometres of our building. The question isn't simply what has God entrusted to **me**, it's also what has God entrusted to **us**.

Sometimes we imagine that faithfulness means doing something spectacular. But Jesus isn't asking us to be impressive, He's asking us to be faithful, and faithfulness happens in ordinary places. It's choosing integrity when nobody's watching, or loving someone who's difficult to love, or forgiving when you'd rather hold a grudge, or giving generously, or praying when you don't feel like it, or serving when nobody notices, or raising children and grandchildren to know Jesus, or being the same person on Monday that you are on Sunday. Whatever it is, putting what the King has given us to work until He comes.

And then Jesus moves from the story to the reality. The King is arriving.

The King Arrives on His Terms

In Verse 28 we move from parable to reality, ***“After Jesus has said this, he went ahead, going up to Jerusalem.”*** Everything about His entry is deliberate. He arranges for the colt in Verse 30. The disciples bring it. Cloaks are laid on the road in Verse 36 and in Verse 37 the crowd begins praising God, crying out in Verse 38, ***“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”***

For once, the crowd has got it exactly right. Jesus is King. The problem though is that while they've got the right King, they've got the wrong idea about what kind of King He is.

- They wanted a King who will overthrow Rome, but Jesus came to overthrow sin and death.
- They wanted political liberation, but Jesus came to bring a deeper liberation.
- They wanted immediate victory, but Jesus is heading toward a cross.
- They wanted a crown, but Jesus is about to wear thorns.
- The crowd is looking for a throne, but Jesus is moving toward Calvary.

This is one of the greatest challenges of discipleship. We don't just have to decide whether Jesus is King, we have to decide whether we're willing to have Jesus as King on His terms.

I was thinking about this during the week, and it reminded me of how I use GPS navigation. When the GPS says, *“turn left,”* there are only two options - turn left, or don't turn left. But apparently, I've developed a third option: explain to the GPS why it's wrong. *“No, no, no — I know a better way. Trust me.”* Five minutes later the GPS is politely saying, *“Recalculating.”* Ten minutes later, it's still recalculating. Twenty minutes later Jo is wondering why we're now in a completely different suburb from where we were supposed to be.

The problem is that I didn't think the GPS was wrong, the problem was that I thought I knew better. And if I'm honest, there have been seasons in my life where I've done exactly that with

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God. Not walked away from Him. Not stopped believing in Him. Not stopped listening to Him. Just quietly told Him that I know better about the direction that my life should take. And I wonder if that's sometimes how we approach Jesus. We don't necessarily reject Him. We just keep suggesting alternative routes, *"Jesus, I know what You're saying, but I think my plan is better."*

The crowd wanted a King who would follow their route, but Jesus arrived and said, *"Actually, we're going this way."* Jesus doesn't arrive asking for our approval. He arrives as King. The question isn't, *"Would we like Jesus to be our King?"* The question is, *"What will we do now that we know He's King?"*

When the Stones Cry Out

The Pharisees say to Jesus in Verse 39, ***"Teacher, rebuke your disciples."*** In other words, *"Jesus, this is getting a little out of hand."* And Jesus replies in Verse 40, ***"I tell you, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."***

It's a strange and almost unsettling line, and it's worth sitting in it for a moment. Jesus isn't being poetic for effect, He's saying that this moment is so significant that if every human voice fell silent, creation itself would testify. History is reaching its climax. The promised Messiah is entering Jerusalem, and the truth of who He is doesn't depend on anyone's willingness to say it out loud.

Here's the wonderful thing underneath that. Jesus doesn't become King because we acknowledge Him. He is King whether we acknowledge Him or not. But when we truly see Him for who He is, worship becomes the natural response. When we really see Jesus, praise makes sense.

The King Weeps

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And then in Verse 41 Luke gives us one of the most extraordinary scenes in the Gospel. ***“As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it.”*** Jesus weeps. One of only three times where Jesus is recorded as weeping. At a moment when the crowd is celebrating, the disciples are worshipping, the Pharisees are complaining, we find Jesus crying, not because He's surprised - He knows exactly what's about to happen. He knows the city will reject Him. He knows many of the voices shouting today will be silent by Friday. He knows the cross is only days away. And still He weeps as He says in Verse 42, ***“If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace — but now it is hidden from your eyes.”***

Can you hear the heartbreak in that? For generations Jerusalem had been waiting for God to act. Praying for it. Longing for it. Reading promises about it. Singing songs about it. Telling their children about it. And when God does act in His son, Jesus, most of the people discovered that they wanted a different kind of Messiah than the one who had been sent.

And Jesus doesn't just weep in general sorrow. He tells them exactly what's coming in Verses 43-44, ***“The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognise the time of God's coming to you.”*** Those words were not a metaphor because within a generation, that's precisely what happened. The tragedy Jesus weeps over isn't only personal rejection, it's a whole city walking, with its eyes wide open, toward a devastation it could have avoided — if only they had seen who was standing in front of them.

I think Jesus' words, ***“You did not recognise the time of God's coming to you”*** are some of the most sobering words in Luke's Gospel, because the issue wasn't a lack of information. They'd seen the miracles, they'd heard the teaching, they knew the Scriptures, they knew the promises. They were surrounded by evidence. **And still they missed the King.**

Throughout Luke, the Kingdom has been right in front of people. The blind man saw it. Zacchaeus saw it. Tax collectors saw it. Sinners saw it. Yet many religious people couldn't. The

tragedy of Jerusalem wasn't that God was absent. The tragedy was that God was present and they couldn't recognise Him.

And if I'm honest, that's what I find most unsettling about this passage. Not that people rejected Jesus — we expect that. What's unsettling is that many of the people who missed Him were the people who knew the Scriptures best, who attended worship most faithfully, and who thought they understood exactly what God was doing. Which means this passage isn't about *“those people out there”* as much as it's about **us**. It's about whether we can become so familiar with the things of God that we stop recognising the voice of the Spirit of God.

The Danger of Being Familiar with Jesus

There is a lot of truth to the notion that we can become too familiar with obvious beauty. Jo and I live in Long Bay and walk the beach regularly (in summer), and if we get bored with that beach we can go to Torbay, or Browns Bay, or Rothesay Bay, or Murrays Bay, or Mairangi Bay, or Campbells Bay, or Castor Bay, or Milford, and on it goes all the way down to Devonport! Sometimes I only realise how incredibly beautiful our area is when one of our friends or family come for a visit from Palmerston North and on our walk they say, *‘Wow, this place is incredible!’* It is, right, but we can walk the same beach every day and stop noticing what's right in front of us. We become familiar. And familiarity can blind us.

The same thing can happen spiritually. We can know the songs, and we can know the stories. We can talk Christianese, we can quote the Bible, and we can know when to stand and when to sit. Some of you can even know what the preacher is going to say before they say it. And yet, we can still miss the King.

- We can know about Jesus **without knowing Jesus**.
- We can admire Jesus **without obeying Jesus**.
- We can worship Jesus **without surrendering to Jesus**.
- And we can sit in church every week and **still miss the King standing in front of us**.

And perhaps that's why Jesus weeps. Because He isn't looking for religious spectators. He's looking for people who recognise the King, who trust the King, and who follow the King. **People who put what He's entrusted to them to work until He comes.**

And so I'd suggest that the warning of this passage isn't simply for Jerusalem. I wonder whether it's for churches like ours. Could God be at work among us and we fail to notice Him? Could God be inviting us into something deeper but we've become too familiar to recognise His voice? Could Jesus be standing closer than we realise?

In these events in Luke Chapter 19, the tragedy wasn't that God failed to show up, the tragedy was that God showed up, and they wanted a different kind of King. May that never be true of us.

So How Do We Respond?

I think the three movements of this passage belong together.

- The **parable** asks, *'What will we do while the King's away?'*
- The **triumphal entry** asks, *'Will we recognise Jesus for who He really is?'*
- And **Jesus' tears** ask, *'What happens when we fail to recognise Him?'*

And all three come back to the same point. **When the King arrives, our response matters.** Because every person at the arrivals gate has to decide how they'll respond when the doors open and Jesus walks through.

Faith

For some of you, the response may be faith. Perhaps you've been around church for years. You know about Jesus. You respect Jesus. You admire Jesus. But you've never actually surrendered your life to Him. Today the invitation is simple: recognise Him. The King has come. Will you follow Him? If that's you, don't leave today the same way you arrived — come and talk to me or one of the team afterward.

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Repentance

For others, the response may be repentance. Perhaps there are parts of life where you've welcomed Jesus as Saviour but resisted Him as King. You want His forgiveness but not His leadership, you want His grace but not His authority, or perhaps you want His blessing but not His direction. And Jesus gently but firmly says, *'I am King.'* So, what's the area of your life where Jesus is Saviour, but not quite King. Your finances? A relationship? Your future? A decision you're trying to control? A hurt you're holding onto? A dream you're afraid to surrender? What would it look like this week to place that one thing back under the rule of the King?

Renewed Faithfulness

And for many of us, the response is renewed faithfulness. We're living in the ***"until He comes"*** years. The King has entrusted something to us — we need to put it to work. Let's not waste the ***"until He comes"*** years. So ask yourself honestly this week, *"What has He put in our hands right now — a relationship, a skill, a season, a role at Windsor Park — that's sitting buried rather than working? What's one step you could take this week to put it back to work?"*

The King Who Weeps for Us

As we pause our journey through Luke and return to it next year, Luke leaves us standing at the gates of Jerusalem. Let's remind ourselves of the picture - the crowd is shouting, the disciples are worshipping, the Pharisees are objecting, the King is arriving. And Jesus is weeping.

- The King who has every right to judge the city first weeps for the city.
- The King who knows He will be rejected still loves the people of the city.
- The King who knows the cross is coming keeps walking toward it.
- The King who knows many will miss Him keeps moving toward them.

I sometimes wonder what Jesus weeps over today. Does He weep over cities that have forgotten Him? Over broken families? Over young people searching for meaning? Over loneliness? Over churches that have become comfortable? Over people who are so close to Him, yet still miss

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Him? If Jesus wept over Jerusalem, perhaps His tears tell us something about His heart for our world today.

Before He would wear a crown of glory, Jesus would wear a crown of thorns. Before He would be exalted, Jesus would be crucified, and before He would reign visibly, Jesus would give His life for the very people who rejected Him. **That is the heart of our King.**

Imagine standing at the arrivals gate. The doors open. And the King walks through. Not the King we've designed. Not the King who simply agrees with us. **The King who comes on His terms.** The King who entrusted something to us while He was away. The King who weeps over those who miss Him. The King who one day will come again in glory. The question Luke leaves us with is simple, **Will we recognise Him?** And having recognised Him, **will we follow Him?**

Amen.

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Reflecting on Sunday 23rd August 2026:

Last week Mikayla Classen looked at Luke 18:9-43. From that passage and her message, how over the last week have you relied on your own strength instead of receiving God's grace, and how might you allow God's grace to grow in your life?

These questions help you think more about this message. We hope they might be a conduit for conversation and reflection, encouraging us to wrestle with how this message might practically work itself out in our lives.

1. What can make us spiritually familiar with Jesus while becoming less attentive to Him?
2. Jesus is King, but He doesn't always lead us in the direction we would choose. Where might you currently be saying, *"Jesus, I know what You're saying, but I think my way is better"*?
3. The parable asks what we are doing with what the King has entrusted to us *"until I come back."* What has God entrusted to you in this season, and are you actively putting it to work or burying it?
4. Jesus wept over people who failed to recognise Him. What does His response teach us about the heart of the King, and how might it change the way we see people around us who don't yet recognise Jesus?

If you'd like to chat with someone about your spiritual journey or anything else going on in your life, please contact us at care@windsorpark.org.nz; **we're better together** and **no perfect people are allowed**.

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Below are some further resources that may take the message further and deeper and enable you to explore other viewpoints on the same theme. We also encourage you to engage with the preacher if there are further questions you have or if you'd like clarification on anything. Email info@windsorpark.org.nz and we'll direct your query to the appropriate person.

1. Look at the **Bible Project** podcast, **Decoding the Parables**, and in particular Chapter 5 of the podcast, **The Parable of the Minas** here, <https://bibleproject.com/podcasts/decoding-parables/>. It explores why Jesus tells the story immediately before entering Jerusalem and, importantly, challenges some of the common ways we interpret the minas as simply being about "using your talents."
2. Here's an article called, Jesus wept – why did Jesus weep, that introduces us to the three times that Jesus is seen weeping in the New Testament. <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-wept.html>
3. Pastor R.C. Sproul recently preached a message called, '**Jesus Weeps Over Jerusalem.**' Here's a link to the audio and/or written version: <https://learn.ligonier.org/sermons/jesus-weep-over-jerusalem>. It's always good to hear different voices as we learn to discern what God might be saying to us.