

The Beginning of the End (21:1-11)

If you've got a bible nearby, go with me to **Matthew 21**. Today, we **resume a multiple-year study** through the book of Matthew in the bible. If you're relatively *new* to our church, you may not know, but we've been studying through the book of Matthew, on and off, since August of 2020. A couple times a year, we take three or four chapters at a time, and teach our way through it, verse-by-verse. And **today**, we begin what, God-willing, will be our next-to-*last installment* in the series. Over the next few months we'll cover chapters 21-25, and then probably around the beginning of next year, chapters 26-28, and then we'll be done. We'll never teach from the book of Matthew ever again. Actually we probably will. But we probably *won't* ever teach *all the way through* Matthew again.

But **because it's been a while** since we've been *in* Matthew, here's what I thought we'd do to start off. I want to *begin* by resetting us on the **big idea at work in Matthew** as a whole. And once we've done *that*, I'll try and connect that to *this section* of Matthew, and specifically to the passage we're going to cover this morning. Because I think all of that will help us make some sense of what, really, is a somewhat bizarre passage about the disciples stealing a donkey for Jesus. That make sense?

Okay. Let's start here. If you were *around* back in August 2020, you might remember us saying that the **overall theme** of the gospel of Matthew—is something Jesus calls **the kingdom of God** (sometimes called “the kingdom of *heaven*,” or simply “the kingdom.”). And we said that we could define the kingdom like this: **God's way of doing things**. When Jesus talks about the kingdom, that's what he's talking *about*: the times, and places, and situations in the world where what God wants to happen, always *happens*.

So **when people treat each other** like *God would have* people to treat each other, *that is* the kingdom of God. When people use their money and resources and wealth the way *God would have* them use those things, *that is* the kingdom of God. When people think about and practice their *sexuality* the way *God would have* them to think about and practice it, *that is* the kingdom of God. And we could go on with examples for days. But **when we encounter God's way of doing things in the world, that is the kingdom of God at work before our eyes.**

And **that kingdom is the thing that Jesus talked about** more than anything else. He showed up on the scene and started saying things like “the kingdom of heaven is at hand” and “the kingdom of God has come near.” He spent time teaching people how to live life *in* that kingdom and using stories called parables to help people envision what that kingdom was like. He even told his disciples to *pray* things like “God, your *kingdom*

come on earth as it is in heaven.” The kingdom of God was *the focus* of Jesus’ life, Jesus’ ministry, and Jesus’ teaching. Evidently, **a central reason that Jesus arrived on planet earth was to bring the kingdom of God to bear, in greater and greater measure.**

Now, that **might sound simple enough, but** there’s also a bit of **a problem.** The problem is that **there are also other “kingdoms” at play in the world, too.** Quite a *few* of them, in fact. **There are times and places where things aren’t as God wants them to be, but rather are as certain people want them to be.** So even if you don’t *call* it this, **you** have a kingdom: you have a way of doing things, a way you think things *should* be done. **I** have a kingdom: I have a way that *I* think things should be done. The **Republican party** has a kingdom. The **Democratic party** has a kingdom. **Baby Boomers** have a kingdom: it’s called *Facebook*. **Millenials** have a kingdom: a kingdom where everybody gets a participation trophy. **Gen Z’ers** have a Tik-Tok-*infested* kingdom.

But here’s **my point:** nearly everybody, and every *group* of people out there, has a *kingdom*, so to speak: a way that *they* think things in the world *should* be done. **And it was very much the same way in Jesus’ day and age.** In the first century, there were many different “kingdoms” out there. The *Jewish* people had a kingdom. The Roman Empire had a kingdom. The *Pharisees*. The *Sadducees*. The *Zealots*. And the list goes on. There were competing visions in the ancient world about what the world could and *should* look like.

Now, here’s **how all of that connects to our passage** for today, and to this section of Matthew as a whole. **Beginning here in chapter 21, it’s going to become increasingly obvious that the kingdom of God is on a direct collision course with all of those other kingdoms.** A collision course that will lead Jesus straight to the cross. We’re in the final week of Jesus’ life on earth; the beginning of the end. And Jesus’ kingdom going to start *clashing* directly with all the other kingdoms that exist. **All the sparks start to fly.** Because **Jesus is going to begin insisting, with greater and greater clarity, that he has not arrived on the scene in order to negotiate with all the other kingdoms of the world.** He hasn’t come to *compromise* with them. He’s come to insist that *God’s* kingdom is greater and better and more *enduring* than every other kingdom there is—both *then*, and *today*.

And I would argue there’s **no clearer demonstration** of all that than the passage we’re covering this morning. We’ll see that as we work through it. So with your bibles cued up to **Matthew 21**, let’s take a look and see what all we can learn from it. Pick it up with me in v. 1:

1 As they approached *Jerusalem*—

Okay **stop**. We didn't make it very far, but that's okay. Because there's **something you need to understand** about what Matthew just *said*, in order to understand the *rest* of what happens in this story. We know from the timeline in the gospels that **Jesus and disciples were actually heading to Jerusalem for a particular reason. It was the week of the Passover, and they were traveling to Jerusalem to celebrate.** **The Passover, if you're unfamiliar**, commemorated a moment in the Jewish people's history where God delivered them from the cruel oppression of the Egyptian empire. They had been enslaved in Egypt under Pharaoh for hundreds of years, and *Passover* was when God miraculously brought them out into freedom. Think of it as their *Fourth of July*, in some sense.

So **every year, as the Passover approached**, hundreds of thousands of Jewish people would **travel** from wherever they lived across the ancient world, to the city of Jerusalem (the capital city) to celebrate the holiday. **Historians estimate that the city's population would swell from around 50,000 to over two million people during this particular week.** But it **wasn't just about the number** of people in the city, it was **also the mindset** these people were *in*. Because in *present* day, at the time of Jesus, the nation of Israel was once *again* being oppressed, but by a *different* cruel empire: the empire of *Rome*. And *Rome* kept a very close eye on Jerusalem the week of Passover. So the tensions were *high* in the city on this particular week of the year.

Picture it like this. Imagine with me for a second that a foreign nation conquered America. Let's say it's *Canada: let's say Canada conquers the U.S.* Now Canadians are far too nice and pleasant of a group of people to ever do something like that, but just for purposes of illustration, imagine that it happens. And let's say that for about seventy years, they are ruling and reigning over—and oppressing—Americans everywhere. They're controlling us, imprisoning us for no reason...they're taxing us heavily, and not even giving us *any* of their delightful free healthcare in return. They're intimidating us constantly with threats and a heavy military presence everywhere we go. *Handmaid's Tale*, but with Canadians. The Canadians have become our no-longer-nice-and-pleasant, *cruel*, overlords for *decades* on end. You there?

Okay, **now also imagine that every year**, on the week leading up to the Fourth of July, hundreds of thousands of Americans descend on Washington, D.C. to celebrate *what used to be* Independence Day in our nation's capital. To commemorate the day in our nation's *history* where we declared our *independence* from cruel empires like what Canada now represents. Do you **think things would be a little tense** in D.C. that week? Do you think people would be on edge, just a little? Do you think there would be an

increased Canadian military presence in the city during that week, to keep an eye on things and make sure nobody *tries* anything?

Okay. If you can imagine all of that, I think you have a pretty decent picture in your mind of what *Jerusalem*, the week of *Passover*, would've felt like. Jerusalem during this particular week is a *powder keg*. It is a riot, rebellion, and/or insurrection waiting to happen.

So now that we have the setting of this passage in mind, look back with me in v. 1:

1 As they (Jesus and his disciples) approached **Jerusalem** (to celebrate the Passover) and came to **Bethphage** on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent **two** disciples, **2** saying to them, "Go to the village **ahead** of you, and at once you will find a **donkey** tied there, with her **colt** by her. **Untie** them and bring them to **me**. **3** If anyone says anything to you (such as "excuse me good sirs—why are you stealing my property?"), say that the **Lord** needs them, and he will **send** them **right away**."

Okay, stop right there with me for a second. What a *bizarre* instruction for Jesus to give, right? Jesus sends two of his disciples ahead of him, with specific instructions to take someone's donkey and bring it back to him. This *could've* been something Jesus had *prearranged* with the owner of the donkeys. But even *then*, if you're the disciples, aren't you a little bit nervous about *picking the right donkey*? Lots of people had donkeys in Jerusalem. That would be like Jesus saying to us today, "go into Knoxville, where you'll find a pickup truck in a parking lot." We're going to need a few more identifying details, Jesus. But that's all they're given: "find a donkey, untie it, and bring it to me." Those are their instructions from Jesus.

And it's here that Matthew does what he has become *notorious* for at this point, which is to point out to his audience that what happens in the story has a *connection* to Old Testament prophecy. Look with me at v. 4:

4 This took place, Matthew says, to **fulfill** what was **spoken** through the **prophet**: **5** "Say to Daughter Zion, 'See, your **king** comes to you, gentle and riding on a **donkey**, and on a **colt**, the **foal** of a donkey.'" So... **6** The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. **7** They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on.

So verse 5 there is a quote from the book of Zechariah in the Old Testament, in chapter 9. It was a passage that pointed forward to a *future* king of Israel, the Messiah, who

would enter into the city riding on a donkey.¹ Matthew is making sure his audience knows that this is **a very intentional decision** by Jesus. It wasn't just that his *legs* were tired from walking, and the closest animal available to ride was a donkey. Jesus *sought out* the donkey *specifically* and *chose* to ride *it* into the city, just as the Old Testament *said* the Messiah would do. In other words, **this is Jesus making an undeniable claim to be the Messiah: the long-awaited, liberating king of God's people.**

And all of that is **significant for a couple reasons**. One, because **up until this moment in the story, Jesus has not been very public** with that information about himself.² While he *has*, on a few occasions, *privately* confirmed his identity to *some* people, he has largely *avoided* telling the general public. **But today, it appears, all that changes.** Here comes Jesus, trotting down the streets of Jerusalem on a *donkey*. Just like the Prophets said the Messiah would. **Jesus was making a statement that would've been unmistakable to the majority of Jewish people witnessing it: I am the Messiah, and I have arrived to establish my kingdom.**

But this is **also significant because of when and where** it happens: on the week of *Passover*. The day when hundreds of thousands of Jewish people descend on Jerusalem, to remember a day when God himself delivered them from the hand of oppression. They are all *desperate* and *hungry* for a king to come and deliver them once again, to bring about the *peace* that they so desperately need. And *that* is when Jesus chooses to situate himself on a donkey, and enter into the city...in a claim to *be that* king. This is all *intentional*. And **evidently, the crowds recognize Jesus' actions for precisely what they are.** Pick it back up with me in v. 8:

8 A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

This is the **ancient version of rolling out a red carpet for royalty to walk on.** The idea is that Jesus, the king, is far too *important*, too *significant* for even the animal he *rides on* to touch common ground—so the crowds create a “carpet” for him, made out of whatever they have nearby: tree branches, their own jackets and outer cloaks. People are recognizing Jesus' status: that he *is* the long-awaited king of Israel, who has arrived to liberate his people. **Which is reinforced by** what we read next, in v. 9:

9 The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed (so at this point, apparently quite a few people have *joined* Jesus' processional: some of them walking in front of Jesus, and some of them walking behind him. So the line starts

¹ For full context, read Zechariah 9:9-10.

² For examples, see Matthew 2:12, Matthew 16:20.

to blur between a *parade* and a *protest*. People even start *shouting*—second half of v. 9...) ~~shouted~~, “**Hosanna to the Son of David!**” “Hosanna” essentially means, “God, save us. Save us now.” “Son of David” was a well-known *title* referring to the Messiah. “**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**” A quote from Psalm 118. “**Hosanna in the highest heaven!**” Save us, the crowds are saying, *from Roman oppression*.

Things are **getting quite rowdy** in Jerusalem upon Jesus entering the city. Which Matthew *depicts* for us, in v. 10:

10 When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole **city** was **stirred** and asked, “Who is this?” **11** The crowds answered, “This is **Jesus**, the prophet from **Nazareth in Galilee.**”

So when v. 10 says that “the whole city was **‘stirred’**”—the NIV almost *softens* what Matthew is saying there. The word *stirred* in the *Greek* is the verb *seió*, which means to *shake*. **It’s where we get the English word seismic—as in, the word used to describe an earthquake.** In fact, Matthew is going to use the same word *again* in chapter 27 when describing a *literal* earthquake.³ So **when v. 10 says that the whole city of Jerusalem was “stirred,” it means that Jesus’ arrival made the whole city start to erupt.** It means what started as *tension* began to boil over into something more.

People are leading and following Jesus through the city streets yelling things like “Hosanna” (“God, save us”) and declaring that he is the Messiah. From all appearances, it’s finally *happening* for the Jewish people. The day they’ve all waited for. Jesus is introducing himself publicly as the conquering king predicted by the prophets, and the people are *joining* him in his victorious processional. It’s finally time for him to liberate them from Roman oppression. **He’s going to bring about the judgment of God on anyone and everyone who stands opposed to them: vanquish their enemies and set up his kingdom.** This is the moment *all* of that begins. That’s why they’re all yelling and joining him in the parade: **they’re thinking that this is the beginning of the end of the Roman Empire.**

But in all their excitement, they seem to have overlooked one key detail about what is happening before them. What type of *animal* is Jesus riding on? A *donkey*. Now, to most of the people in the crowd, that just means that Jesus is *indeed* the Messiah, right? Zechariah 9 *said* that the Messiah would arrive on a donkey, and here *Jesus is riding* on one. They likely didn’t think anything more *of* it. But here’s the thing about a *donkey*: I

³ Matthew 27:51

don't know if you've ever seen one up close, but a donkey is not a very *victorious*-looking animal. It's not very *impressive* or *imposing*. Quite the *opposite*, in fact. **Nobody rides a donkey into battle. Nobody rides a donkey into a war. And yet, here is Jesus, who they believe to be their conquering king, riding into the city on a donkey. Do you see the irony?** Most donkeys aren't even that big, so I'm envisioning Jesus' feet almost dragging the ground as he's riding. It would've been a very odd sight.

This irony is **made even more evident when you realize** that *this* processional wasn't the *only* one happening in Jerusalem that week. **The Roman governor at the time, a guy named Pontius Pilate, also would've made his entrance into the city, possibly on the very same day that Jesus made his entrance.** Pilate *lived* about sixty miles to the northwest of the city. But on the week of the Passover, he had to make the trip to Jerusalem, because *his job* was to make sure that no rebellions or insurrections could materialize among the Jewish people on this very volatile week. His job was to "keep the peace," so to speak—but to do it through *intimidation*.

So sometime around the beginning of the week of Passover, **Pilate would've also entered** the city of Jerusalem, as a part of his *own* processional. Except *his* would've looked strikingly *different* from that of Jesus. He would've been riding on an impressive *stallion*—a *war* horse. He would've been flanked by the Roman military on either side, decked out in full military garb, each of them brandishing swords on their waists. This is the ancient equivalent of nations today marching their nuclear bombs down a city street. The point is *intimidation*. As Pilate entered the city, it would've evoked *fear* in every Jewish person there for the Passover. The message was clear to them: *do not test the Roman Empire, because we have more soldiers and weapons than you do.*

So **knowing that** information, **do you see the contrast** Matthew is painting for us? **That** week in Jerusalem, there were two very different processions, two very different "kings" entering the city. **Pilate from the West; Jesus from the East. Pilate on a warhorse, Jesus on a donkey. Pilate with his rich, armored soldiers; Jesus with poor, empty-handed disciples. Pilate with his empire of power, where the one with the most strength wins; Jesus with his kingdom of God, where the weak are strong and the last are first. Can you picture it? Can you see the statement Jesus was making? Do you see why the city was "shaken" by his appearance?**

So **at least one message is very clear** from Jesus: "Rome's kingdom is not my kingdom. I stand *opposed* to most everything Rome is about. Everything it stands for. No one who pledges their allegiance to Rome can *belong* to the kingdom of God, because these two kingdoms are actually diametrically *opposed* to each other." Jesus is saying that his kingdom is not here to make friends with *any* of the kingdoms of this world. *His* kingdom

demands *ultimate* allegiance, over and above any other worldly kingdom. That's the *first* message we glean from Jesus' arrival.

The **second message, though**, is just as important—even if it is a bit more subtle. **While Jesus' kingdom is a threat to all the kingdoms of this world, it isn't a threat in the ways most Jewish people were thinking at the time.** And I think *this* is the message that the crowds that day largely *overlooked*. Jesus came into the city on a *donkey*, not a war horse. He came in *peace*, not in *intimidation*. He came preaching *love* for your enemies, not *violence against* them. So make no mistake about it: **Jesus' kingdom is a direct threat to all the other kingdoms of the world. But not because it competes with them. Not because it declares all-out physical war against them. Not because it overpowers it or intimidates them. It's a threat precisely because it calls all of those methods into question.** It exposes them for the sham that they are. It wages war against them, but in completely *different* ways.

Jesus challenges every worldly kingdom that there is. But he challenges them by *undermining* them. By *subverting* them, and exposing them. If I were to summarize the *meaning* of this passage in Matthew 21, I might put it like this: **Jesus' arrival tells us he is king. How he arrives tells us what kind of king.** A *humble* king. A *working class* king. A *gentle* and *lowly* king. A *peaceful* king. **Jesus is a king, but he's a king unlike any other the world has ever witnessed.** He's the king that Israel *needed*, and that we need as well.

So with that, let's **shift now and answer an important question:** *what does any of this have to do with us today?* While all of that may be *interesting*, what does it *mean* for us? Well to answer that, let me **take us back briefly to the crowds** lining the city streets that day. Do you remember what they were *shouting* as Jesus entered the city? One word: *hosanna*. A Hebrew phrase meaning, *God, save us*. Which, to *them*, at the *time*, meant "save us...from *Rome*." Save us from the *external problem* of Roman oppression that is causing and intensifying all of our *other* problems right now. We need salvation from *that*, Jesus. Save us from *that*.

And I've got to wonder if **part of the reason Jesus didn't stop them** from what they were saying and doing is because *the request in itself wasn't wrong*. Jesus was in fact a savior, and he did in fact come to *save them*. ...But not from *Rome*. He came to save them from a problem far more *pervasive*, and far more *universal* than Rome. He came to save them from the very power and influence of *evil itself*. He came to save them from *sin*: the presence of evil in the human heart. That is the evil underneath all the other evils in our world. The *problem* underneath all the other *problems*, Rome *included*.

So listen: **this is a passage about** how *sometimes*, there is a disconnect between the types of things we want Jesus to save us from, and the types of things he actually *came* to save us from. **Between the type of savior we want him to be, and the type of savior he actually *is*.** I've noticed the longer I follow Jesus that *sometimes*, those aren't the same thing. And at times, we all too quickly assume that they are.

Maybe the thing you want Jesus to save you from is your **job**. Every day, you wake up *dreading* the place you work, the people you have to work *with*. And in your mind, if God was good, and if God cared for you the way he claims to, he would bring you *out* of that situation. He'd provide a better job for you, in place of the one you have. But hear me out: **what if God doesn't want to save you from your job?** What if *instead*, he wants to save you from the operating assumption that your job is the biggest *problem* in your life? What if he wants to teach you something *through* it, or wants to open your eyes to needs in the people around you in the *midst* of it?

Maybe the thing you want Jesus to save you from is **singleness**. You want him to rescue you from that bane of existence where it seems like *everyone else has* someone, and *you don't*. But **what if he doesn't want to save you from singleness?** Or bare minimum, doesn't want to save you from singleness *right now*? What if *he* wants to save you from the functional belief that romance or marriage would fix things for you? What if he wants to show you something about his *sufficiency* and *goodness* during a trying season of singleness?

Maybe you want Jesus to save you from the **problems in your marriage**. You want him to fix the constant conflict, constant tension, constant frustration with your spouse. That's your prayer right now: *God, take these marriage problems away*. But **what if he doesn't want to save you from the problems in your marriage?** What if he wants to set *you* free from the things in *you* that are *contributing* to and *intensifying* the problems in your marriage? What if he wants to bring you *through* the problems in your marriage, and out the other side as a healthier person, rather than *around* them?

Maybe you're here at City Church because of your **kids**. You brought your family back to church because you think that'll help make sure your kids are "raised *right*." Maybe having them in church will save you from some of the chaos arising from kids making bad choices as they get older. But roll with me here: **what if God isn't wanting to save you from that?** What if *he* has you in church because he wants to grow and mature *you* as a parent? What if *he* has you here to deepen your faith and maturity as a follower of Jesus, so that *you* can become the one showing your kids how to follow him and make good decisions?

I'll tell you **one I'm learning** lately myself. I think *I* often want Jesus to save *me* from exhaustion. I just want him to provide *relief* from the frantic pace of life that I'm running at, and the effects it's having on my physical and emotional health. But what if *God* wants to save me from something *deeper* than that? What if he actually wants to liberate me from the unhealthy rhythms and misplaced priorities in my life that make my life more exhausting than it has to be? What if he wants to help me combat the lie that my worth comes from my *activity* and *achievement*, and therefore grant me a *soul-level* rest in the middle of a hectic season of life?

All of these are **just suggestions**. I think *you*, with the help of the Holy Spirit and your community, will have to do the work to figure out what it might be for you. **But I wonder if sometimes, we just assume that the things we want saving from are the things Jesus wants to save us from.** And I wonder if by doing that, sometimes, we end up misunderstanding who Jesus actually *is*. I wonder if we don't *misinterpret* the type of savior he is, and therefore the types of *things* he came to save us from. **I wonder sometimes if we end up convincing ourselves that Jesus will do things for us that he actually never promised to do.** And I wonder if sometimes those *expectations* of Jesus put us in a very similar place to the crowds that day in Jerusalem. **A place where we're marching with Jesus down the city streets, eagerly expecting him to save us from situations that he actually has no intentions of saving us from.** Marching him towards a battle he has no intentions of fighting—or at least not in the ways we're expecting.

Now, **just to be abundantly clear** here: sometimes Jesus *does* save us from external circumstances in our lives. After all, that's what he did with the Israelites in Egypt. I know people for whom God has, almost *miraculously*, saved them from things they *wanted* saving from. **He provided a better job. He provided a spouse. He fixed their marriage problems. He protected their kids from bad choices.** *Sometimes*, he does that. *Sometimes* he works in those sorts of ways.

But **at the same time**, I'll tell you **something I've noticed** about Jesus: **he likes to solve the actual problems, far more than he likes to solve the superficial ones.** I love that at one point in the gospels, Jesus actually compares himself to a doctor. That's who Jesus is: he's a *good* doctor.⁴ He's not going to settle for just giving us Advil for back pain when we're dying of infection. That's not the kind of savior Jesus is. He's going to insist on dealing with the *actual* problems, not the surface manifestations of them.

⁴ Matthew 9:12

And **praise God that he does** that, right? **Praise God that Jesus isn't just the type of savior we want him to be, but rather the type of savior we need him to be. All the people in the crowd that day thought Jesus was headed to face off with Rome. Praise God he was actually headed to the cross.** Praise God he was en route to do something about sin and evil *itself*—and not just *their* current *circumstances*. And praise God he does the same thing for us.

But **that realization—no doubt—was a difficult realization** for them. It involved them reframing how they thought about Jesus and how they understood his purposes as the Messiah. And if I were to guess, it will be difficult for some of us, too. So as we wrap up and **transition into a time of response this morning...** I just want to invite you to ask the Holy Spirit something with me. **The band's gonna come up.** If you want, you can go ahead and put away your bibles, your notes, your journal, whatever else. Feel free to bow your heads, close your eyes, if that's helpful. Because I'm going to invite all of us to do some direct dealing with God himself for a bit as we close.

Here's how I'm gonna ask you to do it: **I want you to think about the thing that you feel like is making your life most difficult right now.** Whatever that is for you. Maybe it's **singleness**, like we mentioned earlier. Maybe it's your **financial situation**: you don't feel like you have everything you need, or everything you want. Maybe it's a **broken relationship** with a friend or a family member: something's gone haywire there and you don't know how to make it right. Maybe it's your **marriage**, your relationship with your **kids**—could be any number of things. But **what is the thing you feel like is wreaking the most havoc on your life, from your perspective, right now?** What is the thing you most feel like you need saving from?

Then, with that thing in mind, I want you to ask the Holy Spirit a single, simple question. Here it is: **God, what do you want to save me from? What am I missing?** Where am I looking to you to save me *from* something, that you're actually wanting to bring me *through*? Where am I expecting you to change my *circumstances*, and instead, you're wanting to do something *in me, through* those circumstances? Where am I thinking that my problems are *external*, and you want to be more *helpful* than I'm allowing you to be? And from *there*, God: how do you want save me from *all* of the things I need saving from, and not just the surface things? Where do we *need* to let Jesus be the type of savior *he* came to be, and not just the kind of savior *we want* him to be? I'm just gonna give you some space to process all that, and then I'll close us out in a moment...

