Going Public with The Truth

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 18 January 2026

Preacher: Nick Louw

[0:00] In life, there are some things which are best kept to yourself. How someone irritates you, your salary, secrets that someone else has told you in confidence,! and unsolicited parenting advice to the young mother with a crying baby in ShopRite.

Keep it to yourself. But there are also things you shouldn't keep to yourself. Telling someone that their car lights have been left on so that their battery doesn't run down.
Telling your neighbour that they left their gate open. Telling the tourist who's coming to Cape Town who's wanting to go out and see the city at night, telling him which areas to avoid for his own safety.
And so there are some things in life that we should tell people and there are some things that we shouldn't. Wisdom is knowing the difference.
Let me ask you this morning, which one of those two categories does what you believe about Jesus fit in? The world will tell you that that is firmly in the first category, things you should keep to yourself out in society.
[1:20] Because it's a matter of your personal belief and people keep that to themselves. You don't bring that out into public unless someone explicitly asks you.

So that's what the world will tell you over and over again. Keep that to yourself. And so let's have a look at Matthew 21 and see what we discover.
Now we come, as Dylan said, to a very important part in Matthew's Gospel.
It's a turning point. It's the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem. And the whole Gospel has actually been building up to this point. Now we've been reading and preaching through Matthew for like probably two years now.
And as we've been going through, this is really the point that Matthew has wanted us to anticipate. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus hasn't entered Jerusalem yet.
[2:29] Now we know that he has gone into Jerusalem in the past, but Matthew has made this his final entry into Jerusalem. The first time we see him entering the city in Matthew's Gospel.

It's a very important point in the Gospel. But as Jesus approaches, some very interesting things happen that we must take note of. So have a look from verse 1. As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples 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. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away. Okay, so the first question we should be asking is, Why does Jesus need a donkey?
Alright, now yes, a donkey was a normal form of transport in those days. Now there's a colt as well, and the donkey, which is the colt's mother.
And so Jesus asks for both of them, but why does he need them? Think about it. If you've been following Matthew, he's just walked over 100 kilometers on foot from Galilee to Jerusalem.
[3:45] He's outside Jerusalem, and now, now he wants a donkey. I mean, he's just walked. Why does he need a donkey the last few hundred meters? Well, we find out in the next two verses.

Verse 4 and 5. This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet. And then he quotes from prophet Zechariah, written hundreds of years before this. 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.
And so that is exactly what Jesus wrote, exactly to the letter what Zechariah spoke of. So the point is, Jesus is deliberately intending to fulfill this prophecy.
That's why he sets this up. That's why he makes sure that there's a donkey and a colt, not just a donkey, available for him to ride on in the last few hundred meters on his way into Jerusalem.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-09 16:08:42

Now, some people read this, and they think, oh, this was a miraculous fulfillment, that Jesus miraculously, supernaturally knew that the donkey would be there, and then this person just gave it up like some kind of Jedi mind trick.
[4:56] He's just, oh, yeah, have my... But actually, more likely, Jesus had prearranged this. This isn't supernatural at all. Jesus knew people in those towns, and he prearranged for this to happen.

And Jesus set it up beforehand that this colt and donkey would be available for him to ride. He deliberately intended to fulfill the prophecy.
That's the point. He set it up that way. Now, that doesn't make the fulfillment of this prophecy any less valid, that he deliberately fulfilled it, knowing that's what the prophecy said.
In fact, there are plenty of prophecies we've already seen in Matthew that were fulfilled outside of Jesus' control already, like where he was born. He didn't... the baby didn't get to decide that.
The virgin birth, the flight into Egypt away from Herod's persecution, that was all outside of the control of Jesus after he was born, and yet they were fulfilled.
[5:53] The fact that he goes out of his way to deliberately fulfill this prophecy tells us something important, which I think we need to get this morning.

It tells us that as he's coming into Jerusalem, Jesus wants people in the city to know who he really is. He doesn't want them to be in any doubt as to who he is.
And that's why he deliberately fulfills this prophecy. So, who is that? Who is that that as he's coming to the city, he wants people to know who he is? Well, it's the one who the prophet Zechariah spoke about.
And so, to see who it is that Jesus wants these people to know he is, listen to Zechariah 9. I'll go back to the source and read Zechariah 9 from verse 9.
Again, remember this was written hundreds of years before Jesus came. But, it's the kind of culmination of what many prophecies in the Old Testament had been building up to throughout the history of Israel.
[7:02] And it says this, Rejoice greatly, daughter Zion. That's another name for Jerusalem. Shout, daughter Jerusalem. See, your king comes to you.

Righteous and victorious. Lowly and riding on a donkey. On a colt. The foal of a donkey. I will take away the chariots from Ephraim. And the war horses from Jerusalem.
And the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea.
From the river to the ends of the earth. That is who Jesus wanted Jerusalem to know who he is.
You see, this prophecy is about the long-awaited kingdom of God coming to earth. It's such an important prophecy in the Bible that God, and there's many others like it, that God has this kingdom planned.
[8:05] That he is going to rule. His rule is going to come down to this earth. And it's going to be established in this world, in our world, through a human ruler. God's rule is going to be established through a human ruler.

And this is actually everything the world has always needed. God's rule to come down and to take over. And this is what God has been planning right from the beginning.
Right since Genesis, you start to see prophecies about God's kingdom coming. God's rule coming down into our world. And the prophets spoke about it. And as we've been reading through Matthew, all the prophecies have pointed to Jesus.
And Matthew has made it clear that all these prophecies have been pointing to and being fulfilled in Jesus. But now, here in Matthew 21, for the first time, Jesus himself is deliberately wanting everyone to know who he is.
This is the first time. This is actually a big change from what's happened before. Do you remember how before, in Matthew, he was telling his disciples, Don't tell anyone who I am.
[9:12] Remember? He's saying, when they were realizing, Whoa, this is the Messiah. This is the one who's fulfilling the prophecies. He says, Shh. Keep it quiet. Keep it quiet. So, for example, in chapter 16, verse 20, I'll just go back there.

He says, Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah. But now, four chapters, five chapters later, as he's entering Jerusalem, in this critical moment, that changes. What was secret must now be made public. What was the disciples' personal belief must now be a public truth.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-09 16:08:42

Jesus wants people to know exactly who he is now. Because people need to know exactly who Jesus is now.
Then and today, people need to know that God's appointed king has arrived. There has been a regime change.
[10:22] I don't know if you've been following the news in Iran. But the last few weeks, there have been serious protests and riots in Iran.

Iran, the current evil regime, the people of Iran have got fed up with. And they are trying to, they're seeking to overthrow the government and establish a new regime.
And it's a big thing. So, other countries are wanting to help them. Now, if they succeed, and we won't, we don't know yet what's going to happen. We follow the news.
We pray for the people of Iran. But if they succeed, and the regime, current regime, is overthrown, and there is a new government established in Iran, everybody in Iran will need to know that.
Right? But when the regime changes in a country, everybody needs to know, because it affects all of them. Well, it's the same in our world with the king that God has sent from heaven to rule us.
[11:29] Everybody needs to know. And Jesus wants to make it clear. The tragedy, the tragedy, is that there are people walking around in our world, on our streets, who still don't know that.

You have friends who don't know that. I have friends who don't know that yet. And here we see Jesus wants them to know that.
Jesus wants the people walking around in Plumstead to know that. He wants your friends to know this. He wants everybody to know this, because everybody needs to know what has happened. It needs to be a public truth, no longer a private truth.
You know, if I had any other faith, if I wasn't a Christian, and I had any other religion, I could keep it to myself. Most people would want me to.
But what I believe about Jesus, what we've been reminded of over the last few weeks from this pulpit, that He is the Lord of all, not just the Lord of us, but the Lord of all, is a belief that if I really believe, it cannot stay hidden.
[12:47] I need to make a plan to tell the people that God has put in my life what I know about Jesus. Now, the world will make sure that that is not easy. The world will make sure that that is not comfortable to do, to have those conversations.

But I do not want my friend, who doesn't yet know who Jesus is, to one day be standing before Him in all His glory when He returns, and for my friend to turn around and look at me, and say, why did you never tell me?
And why would I not want to tell Him? Because it is good news. It is in fact the best news He could ever hear, and that's because the next thing we see in this chapter about this King is that the King has come in peace.
The King has come in peace. You see, there is something very significant about the donkey that Jesus rode. When you read that Jesus rode a donkey into the city, what does it say to you?
Well, it doesn't just tell us that He was coming humbly, and it doesn't just tell us something about Jesus, that He is humble. It also teaches us a very important lesson about how He plans to bring His rule into this world, and into the city, as He is riding into it.
[14:22] So, what many people don't know when they read this, is riding a donkey was actually a perfectly acceptable form of transport for a king in the ancient world. It was a normal, probably the most efficient, cost-effective, and reliable form of transport in the ancient world.

And so many kings did ride donkeys. We read of King David riding a donkey. We read of King Solomon riding a donkey in the Old Testament. But, they would only ride donkeys in times of peace. When there was a war going on, they would ride a horse. But, in peacetime, it was perfectly acceptable for kings to ride donkeys around. And so, a king riding a donkey into a city is a way that the king would show the city, I have come to make peace, not war.
The best example we have in the Bible is actually what we read earlier in 2 Samuel. After Absalom's rebellion, so there was this rebellion of King Absalom against King David, his father. And, there was a war, a civil war. David was exiled, but now the rebellion has been crushed. Absalom has been killed. David is now coming back to Jerusalem. What's going to happen?
[15:34] It's a very tense scene, actually, because many people in the city were on Absalom's side. They were supporting King Absalom. And so, now King Absalom's been defeated.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-09 16:08:42

David's coming back with his men. What's he going to do? Everybody's expecting he's going to bring some justice, and he's going to kill them. But, instead, what we read in 2 Samuel is David rides in on a donkey.
We're told that in 2 Samuel 16, if you doubt that. He was given a donkey. He rides in deliberately on a donkey. And instead of punishing these people who supported Absalom, he comes in and he forgives them.
Even his own men are like, why? You should kill these people. He says, no, there's no killing in Jerusalem today. I'm here to forgive. And he not only forgives them, he gives many of them roles in his new government.
Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey hundreds of years later, he is saying the same thing. Not just how he comes to Jerusalem, but how he comes into our world, to you and I.
[16:39] Jesus comes into this world, and he establishes his rule in this world, not through conquest, not through forcing people to obey him, but through forgiving them.

It's very different. It's completely different to how every other king establishes his rule in the world, through force and through conquest, through taking over Greenland, or through capturing the Venezuelan president.
I'm not referring to any president in particular. Anyway, you see how it works, right? Today, look at Putin, taking over, trying to take over Ukraine. That's how kings establish their power and rule.
Jesus is different, and that's why so many people miss that he's the king, because the way he establishes his rule is completely different to any other king the world has known. He doesn't come to establish with conquest, but with forgiveness.
It's a very strange way to establish a kingdom, isn't it? And yet that's how Jesus comes, and that's why he rides this donkey into Jerusalem, to show us how he brings his rule into this world.
[17:49] And you know what? It's just as well that he did, because we are all those in the city who are the ones who need forgiveness.

We are all the ones who have rebelled against this king who is coming. We have all sinned. We have all rejected the rule of God in our lives. We are by nature rebels.
We are by nature on the wrong side of this king. You know you have. I know I have. Don't try to hide it. The Bible makes it clear that we have rejected the rule of God in our lives.
By nature we've rebelled, and now the king comes, and so it's just as well he comes in a donkey to show us, I have come as your king, but I have come in peace, not to condemn you, but to forgive you.
That's how Jesus comes into our world. That's how he comes to establish his rule. And that's why he doesn't force his rule on you. That's why you might still be not living under his rule, because he didn't come to force his rule on you.
[18:57] But, when you embrace his forgiveness, when you really get it, when you confess, you come clean, and you confess your sins, and you believe that Jesus is who he says he is, and you receive his forgiveness, that is also when you willingly come under his rule.

Joyfully, willingly, not by force, not by compulsion, but you, you joyfully come under the rule of this king, because you realize that he can rule my life much better than I ever could.
And by the way, that's how you know someone has received forgiveness from this king. Genuinely, that they genuinely believe. A lot of people can say, I believe in Jesus.
They can come to church. How do you really know? Well, are they living under the rule of this king or not? That's what it comes down to. That's how you know someone has received forgiveness from this king, because they've received it in such a way that they've come under his rule.
They are living under his rule. Because that is how this king wins hearts and minds. That is how he establishes his rule in countries and in societies and in communities and in lives.
[20:07] That is how he is growing his kingdom today. And as you look over history, I can tell you story after story of the toughest, most violent people.

Muslim terrorists. pagan tribal leaders who have fallen on their knees because of this message of forgiveness that is in the gospel.
That people have willingly and joyfully submitted to the rule of this king because they realize the forgiveness that their hearts have been telling them they so desperately need is available in him.
That's how Jesus establishes his rule and he is continuing to do that as we take this gospel of forgiveness out there. But the sad truth is and the final thing I want us to see this morning about the

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-09 16:08:42

coming of this king is that not everyone wants this king.
Have a look again as he finally gets into the city in verse 10. After all the build up, after Matthew's 20 chapters of build up and after this celebration outside the city, as he walks in, crossing the boundary of the city gate, it's a bit of an anticlimax.
[21:36] Verse 10. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, Who is this? Huh?

Who's this? There's a bit of an irony. There's an intentional irony here, actually. Because we didn't read earlier the passage before. We last read that last year.
But the thing that's just happened, if you page back and you look at the end of chapter 20, the thing that's just happened is that as Jesus was on the road towards Jerusalem, two blind men saw him and shouted out to him and what they called him was actually very significant.
Have a look. Chapter 20, verse 30. Two blind men were sitting on the roadside and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us.
The crowd rebuked them, told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us. Jesus stopped and called them and then he heals them. But the irony here is that they're using the royal title of Jesus as he's coming to the city.
[22:44] Very few people have used the title of Jesus yet and yet they're blind and yet they see who Jesus is without being able to see physically. They've already realized who Jesus is, the Son of David.

So the irony is now he comes into the royal city and they don't see that. The two passages are in contrast with each other. But it's not just ignorance, I think, that causes them not to see who Jesus is.
It's not just ignorance. Notice in verse 10 of 21, as he comes into the city, when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred. It's an interesting word.
They were stirred up or they were shaken, depending on your translation. It wasn't just, oh, I haven't heard of them, I don't know. They did something wrong.
They were disturbed, right? Does it remind you of anything that we've seen in Matthew before? Now I'm taking you back. Right back to Jesus' birth narratives when he was a baby.
[23:51] Right back in Matthew chapter 2. Do you remember the reaction in Jerusalem when Jesus was born and the wise men came and said, hey, we're looking for the king that was born and the star showed us?

Well, let me read it to you again. This is Matthew 2 from verse 1. After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?
We saw his star, when it rose, and have come to worship him. Look at verse 3. When King Herod heard this, he was disturbed and all Jerusalem with him.
This is not the first time Jerusalem has been stirred and disturbed by the announcement of a king. You see, the reason that they were disturbed here when they heard about the king was that they didn't want a new king.
They didn't want a new king. Having a new king in your world, in your life, threatens, a new authority threatens how you're currently living. It means there needs to be changes.
[25:01] And here too, in Matthew 21, exactly the same thing happens. As Jesus is entering the city, people are not happy with that. They're not happy that this king, or who people are claiming as a king, has arrived.

They didn't want a king. And we see this confirmed in the next few chapters. It's just a hint here at the end of today's passage. But over the next few weeks, we're going to see the immense amount of hostility and rejection Jesus received once he entered the city.
Because the people in there, in the city, they were threatened by the new regime. They didn't want it. So again, in Iran, if you've been following the news, you'll realize that there has been a lot of violence.
Thousands of people have been killed by the security forces of the Islamic Revolutionary Republic. Because, well, the reason is because as these people are wanting a new regime, there are also people who are comfortable in the old regime.
They benefit from the old regime. They don't want a new regime, and so they lash out in violence. Exactly what happens in Jerusalem as Jesus comes in. And it's the same today. And it's why many

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-09 16:08:42

people still refuse to recognize the king that has arrived.
[26:30] Despite all that we might show them, despite all that we might tell them, despite all that people might discover as they come on a course like discover Jesus and they see who he really is, they still, and I've seen it, through years and years of pastoral ministry, people still go, no, who is this?

I don't know. And then they walk away. Despite the evidence. Why? Because they don't want a new king. It's the same as the people in Jerusalem. They don't want to yield control of their lives to someone else.
They don't want the authority of the king God has sent ruling over them. And that is why just as back then you'll still have these two groups of people today.
The two groups of people, the crowds outside and the city people inside, that we see in this story, you'll still have them today. You still have those who are in the city and prefer the old regime and don't want a king ruling over them.
And they'll pretend just not to know who he is. They don't want to hear it. And then also though, you will have those who have seen who Jesus really is.
[27:39] And you know what they've done? You know how you know that they've seen who Jesus really is? They've joined the crowd on the road and they've proclaimed Jesus as king and they are laying their cloaks down. Do you realize, do you remember that that's what they were doing?

They were laying their cloaks down. They were showing, what I have is yours. You are my king. It doesn't matter if I lose this cloak. And having a cloak back then, that was a very valuable part of your inventory.
Like it was one of the most valuable things people owned. And yet they were putting their cloaks down in public allegiance and obedience to this king. And those are the two groups then and there are still the two groups now.
Which one of those groups do you belong to? Have you seen who Jesus really is? Have you seen who Jesus really is?
I'm not asking you have you come to church for a number of years or do you call yourself a Christian? I'm asking you do you see Jesus as the rightful king of this world and your life?
[28:38] And are you living as if that's true? Are you daily seeking what he wants? Are you laying down your cloak daily before him and saying all that I am all that I have belongs to you every day and saying what can I do for you today my king?

Because those are the people who have received forgiveness from this king they have come under his rule and that is what they do that is how they live. They lay their cloaks down. And if you've not done that if your day as you wake up and you think about how you're going to use your day ahead of you if that still belongs to you if your life and your plans and what you want from this life still belong to you well then you have not yet seen Jesus as the king that he wants you to see him as.
And I encourage you if that is the case come to discover Jesus when we meet in February and we work through a gospel together so many people have come to this course and they've through seeing who Jesus is and having an open mind they have seen and they have joined those on the road publicly proclaiming him as their king.
But if you have if you are one of those people if you have and you do recognize Jesus as king of your life and king of this world then I encourage you to take your cue from the people in this story who realized who Jesus was and were unashamed to make it public don't be ashamed to rejoice publicly in this truth of who your king is and who the world's king is don't be ashamed to rejoice publicly in it on social media post posts about Jesus being king and don't care what your friends think about you over dinner when you invite your friends don't keep it secret because it's if Jesus is your king this is who you are and they have a right to know this about you right at social gatherings don't listen to what the world says when it says keep that to yourself make it known who you belong to and why and let's do that in our community this year as a church let's not keep what we believe here in these walls on a Sunday morning to ourselves let's make public what we know about Jesus in a way that stirs up our city our community those in our lives so that they too will ask who is this and we can tell them let's pray oh lord we thank you that you've put this passage in in our bibles we thank you lord Jesus that you set up and you chose to have that donkey and that cult available to you so that you could ride them into Jerusalem so that we can know and that those people then could know who you really are help us lord to believe that and lord as we come to believe who you really are thank you that you are a king who came in peace you're a king who came to forgive your

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-09 16:08:42

enemies who we were lord we we praise you and thank you that you are a king of forgiveness a king of grace a king of peace a good and gracious king as we sang earlier lord may it not just be words we sing may it be words we believe and we tell others about lord help us to live lives where you are the king help us to lay our cloaks down at your feet to give our lives to you lord because you are the rightful king who has come to bring god's kingdom and so lord would you help us this year as a church not to keep that secret not to keep it to ourselves but to find ways to think of strategies that we can make this truth known to those out there who still do not know what they need to know about you lord help us to put aside our desire just to be comfortable and to avoid things that make us uncomfortable and help us to be unashamed about the king we serve in jesus name we pray amen as a church

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-09 16:08:42