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[12504 CANDELARIA RD NE, ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87112](#)

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Sermon Delivered by: Pastor Jesse Harden

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Sermon Recording:

<https://thefoothills.church/sermon/our-message-what-jesus-told-us-to-proclaim/>

As you read through this sermon, may the words of Scripture and the reflections that follow draw you deeper into the love of Christ. Feel free to print this message, share it with others, and return to it often as you meditate on God's truth.

Our Message: What Jesus Told Us to Proclaim



**HOW DO THE PROMISES FULFILLED IN JESUS
MAKE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN GOOD NEWS
FOR US TODAY?**

Summary:

In **Matthew 10:7–8**, Jesus sends his disciples with a message: “The kingdom of heaven has come near.” But what does that actually mean—and why is it good news? In this message, Jesse traces four promises of God fulfilled in Jesus: a King who won’t fail, blessing and belonging for everyone, a return from exile, and the gift of God’s presence. Together, these promises reveal how, in Jesus, **the door has been thrown open** to the healing, freedom, belonging, and life we most deeply long for.

Main Scripture Referenced: [Matthew 10:1-15](#)

Full Transcript:

God, we open ourselves up to your presence that is at work. God, I pray, Lord, for the privilege and the gift of knowing and seeing your presence this morning and hearing this good news. Make it clear, I pray, and make it clear for each person in the ways that they need it to be clear. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Matthew 10:7–8. “As you go,” Jesus says to his disciples, “proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Heal the

sick. Raise the dead. Cleanse those who have leprosy. Drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.”

I want to declare that:

**King Jesus is overthrowing every power
that oppresses, tearing down every wall
that excludes, and welcoming each of
you—all of us—home to the life of his
presence.**

Amen.

Thank you. The Pauls are back.

We haven’t gotten an amen since June 1st. I’m just kidding. I was kidding.

I often think about Sonny. Sonny was a neighbor of mine, lived on the streets in our neighborhood, and Sonny always looked super sharp. He always had a clean-shaven head. He had a clean football jersey, usually of some kind, clean baggy jeans, and his shoes were

always just really on point. He always looked good, and I always would tell him that.

We lost Sonny a couple of years ago to an overdose, and his name is written on one of the crosses that bears the names of those who have lost their life on the street at the Francis House of our church building in the International District.

Over the years, I've thought a lot about Sonny, and I thought about the conversations we got to have with one another as he would periodically kind of show up at the church building or for a church service. He would come in kind of off the hot streets or the cold streets or whatever season it was, and we would have conversations. Some days, he would just have this extra kind of vacant, tired look on his face, with the weight of the world, just tired of his life.

He struggled with depression. He struggled with wanting to be in a better place, but he was having a hard time moving through the trauma he had experienced in his life, and the addictions that had developed, and the violence that he used to cope with all that he had experienced in his life.

I remember one particular day. We were in our building. He came out of the hot outside, needed some water, and he looked—he was one of those days where he just looked just a hazard, right?

Helpless, hurt.

I wanted so badly to proclaim the good news of Jesus over his life, and I couldn't come up with the words because the words that I had been given to proclaim the gospel didn't seem to connect with his life on the street, his struggle. In the concrete intersection of his story, the story of Jesus that I learned to proclaim—the gospel—it felt too theoretical. It felt too detached from what it meant to be Sonny on the streets in the International District, with his past and his suffering and his pain, his addiction, his trauma.

Have you ever felt that way with somebody? And the words that you have to describe what Jesus has done, it just doesn't seem like it has power in someone's life because it doesn't connect with where a person really is.

I want to say today that that never has to be the case, because the good news of Jesus, as Jesus proclaimed it and as the New Testament proclaimed it and the apostles in the Book of Acts proclaimed it, was never theoretical. It was always concrete. It always was rooted in the story of God and what God was doing in the world, and how that story intersects each of our individual stories where we are on the ground and changes everything.

It was a story of God's renewal, restoration, healing, forgiveness, liberation of all things, of all creation, and it was to be proclaimed as being unleashed in people's actual lives, where it mattered, where it counted.

So this good news is really good news for some—really, it's really good news because it really intersects our life, our struggles.

King Jesus is overthrowing every power that oppresses, tearing down every wall that excludes, and he's welcoming each of us home to the life, the abundant life, the flourishing life of his presence.

Last week, we looked at Matthew 9:35 and following. Jesus is moved with compassion. The word I can't pronounce in Greek is actually like a deep compassion that moved him physically, made him sick to his stomach because he hurt so bad as he looked at the crowds, helpless and hurting and harassed.

He responds to the hurt, harassed, and helpless crowds as he sees this, and he's almost looking at the edge of history, I think, seeing all of humanity as the crowds that are harassed and hurting throughout all history.

He looks to the disciples. He says, “Look, the harvest is plentiful. God is at work. People are ready to hear the healing Word of God, the gospel. Pray that God would send laborers into the harvest, right? That you go.”

And today we have instructions, the beginning of instructions, of Jesus telling his disciples, “The world needs the good news, the gospel, that I have come to proclaim, that I embody.”

And what does he tell them to say? He says, “Proclaim the kingdom of God has come near.”

That’s the message. That’s the message. The kingdom of God has come near, which, in short, means God’s promises to Israel were coming true, not just for Israel but for the whole world—every tribe, tongue, and nation.

These promises were coming true in the life, the death, the resurrection, the ascension, and the return of Jesus. The whole story of Jesus fulfills and completes the whole story of Israel, which is the story that transforms the whole entire planet, every single person.

And so, whenever the gospel is declared in the New Testament, they were not inventing a new story. It didn’t start with Jesus. They were telling an ancient story, the ancient story of Israel, the story of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the story of Moses and the Exodus and the prophets, and of exile in Babylon and Assyria.

They told Israel's story. They told the promises God had made to Israel and how God would fulfill those promises, and how these promises were fulfilled in Jesus. That was the gospel. That was the good news. All that God had promised Israel was coming true for Israel and for the whole entire world.

The shorthand for saying this, the way that people would have heard it in the first century, is people in Judea who had heard these stories and had deep expectation of these promises being fulfilled. They were told to their children and their grandchildren, their great-grandchildren. They were waiting for the promises of Israel that God had made to come true.

When they heard, "The kingdom of God has come near," all of that comes rushing in. They're like, "Wow, good news! The kingdom of God is at hand. The promises of God are being fulfilled."

It would have been radical, life-giving good news.

First Corinthians 15. Paul talks about the gospel that they had received, the Corinthians had received. He says a lot in that chapter. It's all centered around resurrection. He says, "For what I received, I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to"—what?—"the Scriptures."

What are the Scriptures? The Hebrew Scriptures, what we would call the Old Testament.

“That he was buried, that he was raised by the third day according to the Scriptures,” according to the story of God, the promises of God.

That’s what the gospel meant. That’s what Jesus understood his life being all about. And that’s the message that he brought: that God had been faithful and that the world was about to change. Everything—their situation, their pain, their suffering, their oppression—about to be reversed. Everything made right. Everything restored. Every relationship reconciled. Healing.

We’re going to look at four promises. We can’t go super deep, but I want to frame what this good news, our message that we proclaim and embody, that we offer people, is, and what we’ve been offered.

“Freely you’ve received; freely give,” Jesus says.

This is what we’ve received.

The first promise to Israel that comes true in Jesus is a king who won’t fail, a forever and final king, a ruler, a leader who leads into life, a loving leader who leads us into flourishing, into a way of love.

In 2 Samuel 7:16—this whole chapter, really—but God speaks to David, and he gives him a promise that runs through much of the Old Testament Scriptures, the Hebrew Scriptures. He says to David, “Your throne shall be established forever.”

And this was a promise that there would be a good king who would rule in good ways, who would lead the people into life and justice and righteousness.

Israel was always meant to be ruled by the way of Yahweh, right? The life of love, living in loving relationship with him and one another, and the world, to serve him, to cultivate the earth, to steward the earth, to be fruitful and multiply.

But they rejected God as king, right? They reject that, and they go after idols. They make themselves autonomous. They rule themselves. And this leads to all the host of problems and pain that the people of Israel face.

So they're looking for this king, this forever king that was promised, who would get Israel back and lead them back.

And then Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey. And in Zechariah, there's a prophecy that this king, this Messiah—which means king; Christ is not Jesus' last name. It's Messiah, which means king—Jesus, the King, the Promised One, he rides in on a donkey.

We know that Roman generals and Roman emperors would ride on a war horse through towns. Jesus is flipping the script, saying, "This is a king, but it's the kind of king you need: a servant king, a humble king, a loving king, but an all-powerful king."

And he rides in on a donkey, and people start saying, “Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!”

They start referring to David and this rule, the Son of David.

And then, when Peter is proclaiming his message at Pentecost, after Jesus has risen from the dead, he’s proclaiming the gospel message. He says, “David is dead and buried. But this Jesus, God raised him up, and he’s on the throne now in the line of David.”

Forever King. The righteous King. The good King. The servant King. The true King on the throne.

So how does this, like, intersect with Sonny on the street? How does this intersect with you and your life in the concrete?

All of us are ruled by something. All of us pay homage and allow our lives to be directed and led by something or someone. We’re ruled by anxiety. We’re ruled by trauma. We’re ruled by bosses and dictators and politicians and kings. We’re ruled by addiction. We’re ruled by cultural pressure, the news cycle, financial fear. Just name it.

We have several lords, several people vying for our allegiance, promising us what every king promises, but none of them can deliver. Only the true King can deliver.

So what this means is that the Davidic promise fulfilled, that there is a true King and his name is Jesus, and he's on the throne right now, relativizes all other claims of authority in your life.

Every other idol or person or system that demands your allegiance, it's subverted.

Jesus is my King, which means that someone caught in cycles they can't break, someone ruled by financial anxiety and addiction and people-pleasing and oppressive governments, oppressive and unjust policies, they can say, "That actually doesn't have authority over me. I follow the true King, and his way is life. His way is love. His way is healing. I'm following him. He's a good King. He's the final and forever King."

And his kingship, when we come underneath his rule, when we confess that he is Lord, it unleashes all the promises that God has made to Israel and to us and to the world, which leads us to the Abrahamic covenant, the promise made to Abraham, which came before David.

But this is a promise that blessing and belonging is for everyone, everywhere.

All right, he promises in Genesis 12:3. God meets with Abraham—you can read the whole story in Genesis 12—"In you," he says to Abraham, "all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

So you've heard this before, I'm sure, but the promises of God and his blessing were never meant to be contained in Israel. Israel is meant to be a conduit of God's blessing. They weren't a—like, it wasn't like he was picking favorites. He was opening a door. Israel became a door for everyone to enter into the blessing and flourishing and healing that God provides.

It's not a private club. It's a doorway.

So we move into Jesus, and Jesus, in the book of Matthew—Matthew starts the gospel, which, it's interesting, the gospel is the whole story of Jesus, right? That's why we call them the Gospels.

Matthew opens his whole gospel by calling him the Son of Abraham. He makes that direct link to Abraham, and everyone in the audience there would be hearing, "Oh, in Jesus, the promises of Abraham, the door to blessing, has been thrown wide open to every people, every tribe, every tongue, every nation."

That no longer would anyone be excluded by ethnicity or by culture or by language or by age or by gender or by anything. That there is no barrier to the blessing that God offers.

This is the promise of Abraham.

And this is really good news for people that feel left out, that feel excluded, that are discriminated against, that are marginalized,

that aren't seen, that aren't heard, that aren't—they don't feel loved. They don't feel included.

Jesus demonstrates this in his life. He says, "Come and eat with me."

Who? All the powerful, privileged, they can come. And the prostitutes, the sinners, the tax collectors. Everyone has a seat at my table.

The promises of Abraham are open. Come and be—be with me.

King Jesus is overthrowing the powers that oppress, tearing down every wall that excludes, and in so doing, he's welcoming you and everyone into the life of his presence.

Promise of return from exile, the third one. Are you with me? Are we good? All right, good. I know this is a lot.

But the promise of return from exile, that's another promise that God repeats and repeats and repeats all throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. This is a promise they clung to because Israel is in captivity a lot.

The exile is shorthand for experiencing the consequences of a life lived outside the rule of God, lived your own way.

And so, what happens when that happens? When you resist the way of God's love, his way, and you distort love, you miss the mark

of love, you bend love to your own self-serving purposes, then everything becomes distorted.

You contribute to the suffering of the world, and the suffering—you are inflicted with pain. You're sinned against. You sin against others. Others sin against you. And there is havoc, chaos, occupation.

And so Israel often experiences the consequences, the discipline of the Lord, the consequences of not living a way of love. And so they are constantly in exile to Babylon, to Assyria, and now, in Jesus' day, to the Romans, the Roman Empire. They're an occupied people, and they long for a return from exile.

They're living in the consequences of a life turned away from their King.

But in Isaiah chapters 53–65, if you ever have a chance, read those chapters through. This is the most clear, condensed description of God just telling his people, promising that they will return. He will return them home. He'll bring them back home. He'll bring them out of exile and all of the consequences and pain and suffering that their life apart from God has caused.

And he'll bring them back home.

And these are the chapters in which we get, "The wolf will lie down with the lamb." Children will play by snake pits and not be harmed,

right? People will live to ripe old ages and live in the houses they built. It's this description of flourishing and justice and righteousness and societies that are life-giving.

And Isaiah 52:7 is—this is where we get, we talked about this passage last week—but that, “How beautiful are the feet of him who brings good news.”

That good news is this message to Zion, Jerusalem, the people of Israel, that your God reigns, that exile is over, that he's going to bring you home.

There's that beautiful passage, “Comfort, oh comfort my people,” right? Exile is over. Beauty for ashes. All of these beautiful phrases.

And so, when Jesus says, “The kingdom of God is at hand,” everyone's like, “Oh, oh, he's going to bring us out of exile. He's going to bring us back home. We're going to be out of the wasteland of the consequences of the sins we've committed and the sins committed against us, the trauma and the pain, and the heal—we're going to receive healing and forgiveness.”

“Repent and believe the good news” means, like, “Follow me. Follow your King out of exile, back home.”

All right. This is really good news because all of us, and this world, is in exile in many ways. Exile of a life lived against the grain of love and all the consequences, all the pain, all the relational dynamics

that causes, that we are living out of the trauma of sins committed against us and out of our woundedness.

We sin against others, and we are in this tangled mess, this exile, this wasteland.

And Jesus says, “Come to me, all who are weary and heavy laden. I will give you rest.”

Come out of this exile and come be with me. Follow me. Learn, he says. Learn from me the rhythms of peace and life.

Which leads to this next promise, the promise of God’s presence, which was encapsulated in this promise of a temple.

The temple in the nation of Israel was the symbol and the actual place, the container of God’s presence. And in the tabernacle, right, they would have a movable kind of temple in the desert as they wandered the desert for 40 years.

And this was the place where heaven and earth overlap. This was the place, the thin place, where you could access God and his presence. And it was contained in this place.

It was an actual place of God’s presence and a symbolic place of God’s presence for the people of Israel, that it meant that God was in their midst. He was going with them.

And of course, the temple is destroyed in the life of Israel, in the nation of Israel, many times, and they're rebuilding it, and it's being—it's taken down. And that's all part of the story.

But Jesus comes along and says there is something even more beautiful than the temple, that the temple is just a sign of. And that's this: that God is going to dwell with you and with all people everywhere, anywhere.

That the presence of God is no longer contained in a temple, in a building, but it is contained in a person, where heaven and earth meet in Jesus, and by his Spirit is unleashed into the people of God.

Right? The presence of God is everywhere, and everyone can experience the healing presence of Jesus, the loving presence of Jesus, the liberating presence of Jesus, the forgiveness—the forgiving presence of Jesus, the guidance of Jesus, the comfort of Jesus by the Spirit.

The presence of God is available to everyone.

When we come under the loving and liberating rule of Jesus, what we have most desperately longed for comes true: a King to lead into the way of love and life.

A family in which to belong. A return out of exile, out of the wasteland of consequences of sin and injustice and dysfunction and trauma.

And that's a return to the presence of our Creator, whose presence heals the deepest places of our heart, heals and comes between the deepest fissures in relationships between people, and ultimately restores, right, that relationship with God and creation that we were made for.

These are the promises that God makes to Israel and fulfills in Jesus and to all the world.

So when we announce, "The kingdom of God is near," we are announcing the gospel, the good news that God is on the move, coming, fulfilling every promise he made.

I don't know about you, but that's really good news. It's really good news, right?

Yes. Amen, man.

That's the news that Sonny needs to hear.

There's a better ruler for his life than his trauma or his gang affiliation or the addiction. King Jesus is good and loving and will lead him into the way of life if he will just follow.

This is really good news for Sonny, who feels excluded and marginalized and alone and lonely, that there is a family composed of all people to which he can belong, regardless of anything he's done or where he's come from or who he is or what he looks like or how much money he has.

He can belong, and he can contribute, and he can serve, and he can be served, and he can live this life of shared love, right? This gospel life, this family of God.

Sonny needs to know that he can come out of exile, that he no longer has to suffer the consequences of all that has been done to him and all that he has done to others, and the mess and the entangled messes and the injustices experienced.

He can come out of exile and come home, and he can know Jesus.

He can know the God who made him and loved him and calls him. And he can be a part of spreading this good news to other people.

I want to ask you, where does this show up in your life? Where do you need—and who in your life?

We've already named some area earlier in the service, that relationship, that situation, that struggle that you have where you don't see God moving.

But the promise, the gospel: the kingdom of God is near. God is on the move. He's a waymaker. He's a miracle worker. He's a promise keeper. And he's on the move. His kingdom is near.

He's a really good God who is King.

He's offering you home and belonging, out of exile and into his presence.

So let me ask you this: Where do the longings and pains of your heart find their fulfillment and healing in Jesus' lordship and the promises of his kingdom?

That's a big mouthful, but where are you hearing the promises of God fulfilled in Jesus intersect your actual life?

Maybe you're allowing other things to lead you that don't lead to life. They lead to destruction.

Jesus says, "Come, follow me as King, and we'll go into life."

Maybe you feel alone, isolated.

Jesus says, "Come be a part of the family of Abraham, the people of God. Experience my presence."

And then, looking outside of yourself into the world, where do you long to see heaven and earth meet?

Right? Where do you see the deep pain of a people, of a world that doesn't have Jesus as King, that needs desperately to know the kingdom of God is at hand?

Not a kingdom of control or coercion or manipulation, but a kingdom of love that invites you into this life.

As we prepare to take communion, I just want to—I want to respond to this good news, this good news of the gospel, in this way.

If you could stand, we will say this together, and you can respond to me.

God promised blessing for the whole world.

And in Jesus, the door is open.

God promised to bring us back into his presence.

And in Jesus, our exile is over.

God promised a King who would never fail.

And in Jesus, the true King reigns.

God promised his presence would dwell among us.

By the Spirit, we carry it with us now.

Amen.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."

Numbers 6:24-26

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