

## HIGHER AIM

## Making a Commitment

*Matthew 21:1–11; Zechariah 9:9*

# INTRODUCTION

## NOTES

Easter is the one day throughout all Christendom when millions will come to worship the Lord. Next to it is Palm Sunday, an often underrated Christian holiday. This is the day when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. Many events happened during the week leading up to Easter. We could talk about the upper room, the Garden of Gethsemane, Peter's denial, or Pilate turning Jesus over to be flogged. But as I prayed through different passages for this message, I was drawn to Matthew 21. There is no better case study about making a commitment to Jesus than Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. When we come to the Word of God, we are invited to make a commitment. Either we will be committed to Christ, or we will not be committed to Christ. There is no in-between.

## KEY POINTS

## 1. The Problem with Sound Commitment

In our flesh, we have difficulty making commitments, and we have difficulty keeping those commitments. Think about diets. The first three letters of the word “diet” are D-I-E, and that doesn’t sound exciting! We try diets like Keto or Mediterranean, but we often don’t stick with them. We start with good intentions, but our commitment is weak.

The same thing happens with New Year's resolutions. We might commit to going to the gym, but within a month, that commitment is gone. In relationships, too, people often fall out of love and treat marriage like a revolving door. Scripture gives us examples as well: Moses struck the rock instead of speaking to it, David committed adultery with Bathsheba, Peter denied Jesus three times, John Mark abandoned Paul, and Demas loved the world. The crowd on Palm Sunday laid their cloaks before Jesus, but within days they were crying, "Crucify Him." Their commitment was shallow.

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## 2. The Pitfall to Shallow Commitments

This passage teaches us that there are two basic pitfalls to shallow commitments:

- **The Passion of the Moment:** The people were caught up in the excitement of the crowd. They were drawn by the thrill of a miracle worker coming to town. But emotional enthusiasm is not the same as lasting commitment.
- **The Power of the Masses:** When one person laid down a cloak, others followed. When one shouted “Hosanna,” others joined in. The influence of the crowd is powerful, but the majority is often wrong. Today, we see this same influence when culture convinces us that sin is acceptable. The power of the masses and the passion of the moment lead to no real commitment.

### 3. The Pattern for Solid Commitment

## How do you make a solid commitment?

- **Get the Facts:** In Matthew 21:10-11, the crowds said Jesus was a prophet. But Jesus was much more than a prophet. He declared Himself to be God. Until you embrace that Jesus is God incarnate, you cannot make a real commitment to Him.
- **Count the Cost:** Jesus said, “Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Me.” Discipleship is not “cheap grace.” It requires repentance, faith, and surrender. Until we embrace why Jesus died on the cross, there is no forgiveness and no lasting commitment.
- **Pay the Price:** Jesus said, “Take up your cross and follow Me.” Halfway Christianity is not Christianity at all. Many of us have one foot on Christ and one foot in the world, and that is why we lack His power. Commitment means resting fully on Christ and Christ alone.

Commitment to Christ will change you and the direction of your life. Otherwise, you will just go in circles. If you desire heaven and the power of God in your life, you must make a commitment to Jesus Christ, saying “No” to self and “Yes” to Him.

## NOTES

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### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. Why do people often struggle to keep commitments, both in everyday life and in their walk with Christ?
2. What are some modern examples of “the passion of the moment” or “the power of the masses” leading to shallow commitments?
3. What does it mean for you personally to “count the cost” and “pay the price” in following Jesus?

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