

**Overview:**

Would you recognize Him? We begin this Sunday with what has been labeled Holy Week or Passion Week. This includes everything from the Triumphant Entry to the Resurrection. One key aspect for you to consider this Holy Week is recognizing Jesus as the Messiah. This makes the difference between it being Holy Week and just a regular week of the year.

Let's go back 2000 years to the day of the triumphant entry. Imagine that you lived in first century Jerusalem. The Jewish people during this time wanted nothing more than to be liberated from Roman rule. You hear of a rumor of a mighty prophet heading to town. If there was ever a time of hope for liberation it was now. You head out toward the Mount of Olives and see a huge crowd lining the street. People are taking off their cloaks and putting them on the road. They are cutting down palm branches for this mighty prophet to ride in on. You get caught up in the moment and decide to join them.

It happens; you see what all the commotion is about. There is a man riding on a foal heading your way. You think to yourself: "This is what I came out here to see? Where is his army? Where are his soldiers? He will certainly need more than a donkey to throw off these oppressive Romans." It is hard to not get caught up in the excitement. You start yelling with everyone else: "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

Would you recognize Him? You wanted a King to come in and save the nation, but Jesus came in to save your soul. Would you still shout "Hosanna" when He is not living up to your expectations? Jesus cares more about your spiritual health than your physical health. He is more concerned with your relationship with Him than your checking account balance. Do you still recognize Jesus as the Son of David, the Savior of the World when He doesn't do what you want? The first century Jewish people did not recognize Him. The same people shouting "Hosanna" will be shouting "Crucify" a few days later. Would you recognize Him?

**Bible Study:** Matthew 21:1-11

1. Discuss some memories you have of Palm Sunday. Did you have any family traditions?
2. Read Matthew 21:1-11. The laying down of a cloak was a sign of submission. The palm branch was a symbol of nationalism. Discuss some of the dangers of putting a political twist on your religious beliefs.
3. The crowd shouted "Hosanna" which is a Hebrew word meaning "save". Basically they are saying "Save us son of a king." How do you respond when Jesus doesn't meet your expectations, even if your expectations were completely wrong?
4. Holy Week is also known as Passion Week. The word Passion comes from the Latin term "Passio" which means suffer. Jesus came as a suffering servant and a triumphant king. In different seasons of your life how do you relate to these two contrasting images of Jesus?
5. What are some activities you can do this next week to stay focused on the true meaning of Easter?
6. The crowd recognized Jesus as a prophet from Nazareth in Galilee. They didn't fully acknowledge Him as the Messiah. A prophet would still be honored during that time. What is the difference between honoring Jesus and recognizing Him as the Messiah? How do people today honor Jesus, but not recognize Him as the Messiah? See Him as a King, but only on Sunday or Easter?
7. Discuss a possible Easter tradition you can start with your LifeGroup.