

**Title:** The Final Week: Palm Sunday **Text:** Matthew 21:1-11 **Big Idea:** Palm Sunday reveals the kind of King Jesus is.

## **Setting the Scene**

As we begin this series, we slow down and focus on the final week of Jesus' life. Israel was living under Roman occupation. The people longed for freedom and hoped for a king like David who would overthrow their oppressors. When Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey, the crowd welcomed Him with royal language. They laid down cloaks, shouted "Hosanna," meaning "Save us," and quoted Psalm 118. They were right to call Him King. But they misunderstood the kind of kingdom He came to establish.

### **1. Jesus Will Not Be Coopted**

The crowd wanted political deliverance. The disciples were already thinking about positions of authority. Yet Jesus did not bend to public pressure or personal ambition. He moved steadily toward the Cross. We often attempt to shape Jesus around our own agendas. We may pray for healing, success, or restoration, but resist surrender in other areas of our lives. We prefer a Savior who supports our plans rather than a Lord who reshapes them. Palm Sunday reminds us that Jesus cannot be coopted. He is King on His terms.

### **2. Jesus Will Not Be Rushed**

The people wanted immediate change. Overthrow Rome now. Establish the kingdom now. But Jesus' mission unfolded according to the Father's timeline. We struggle in similar ways. We grow weary of praying for the same requests. We want answers quickly. Yet God often works through long obedience and steady faithfulness. Palm Sunday calls us to trust His timing. Even when the answer feels delayed, He is not absent. His purposes are unfolding in ways we may not yet see.

### **3. Jesus Rules Through Sacrifice and Service**

Jesus' choice of a donkey was intentional. It signaled humility, not domination. Within days He would wash His disciples' feet and ultimately lay down His life. The kingdom of God advances not through force, but through sacrificial love. This challenges our instincts. We often believe strength comes through control or power. Jesus shows that true authority is expressed through service and self giving love. If we follow Him, we adopt the same posture in our homes, workplaces, and relationships.

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## **Summary**

Palm Sunday shows us a King who will not be redirected from His mission, will not be rushed by public pressure, and will not rule by force.

The question for us is whether we will follow Him in that same way.

## **Devotion 1: A King Who Will Not Be Redirected**

**Scripture:** Matthew 21:8-9

**Reflection:** The crowd welcomed Jesus as King, but they expected Him to meet their political and national hopes. They cried out “Hosanna,” meaning “Save us,” yet they defined what salvation should look like. Jesus refused to be redirected. He did not bend to public pressure or popular expectation. He stayed on mission toward the Cross. We can subtly attempt the same thing. We pray with conditions. We ask for blessings while guarding certain areas of our lives. We want relief, but not always repentance. We want peace, but not always surrender. Palm Sunday reminds us that Jesus is not a tool to accomplish our plans. He is Lord.

**Challenge:** Ask yourself: where am I trying to shape Jesus around my agenda? Bring that area to Him honestly and surrender control.

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## **Devotion 2: A King Who Will Not Be Rushed / Scripture: Matthew 21:10-11**

**Reflection:** Jerusalem was stirred. The crowd expected immediate change. They believed this was the moment everything would shift. Yet Jesus’ kingdom would unfold slowly, through suffering, death, resurrection, and centuries of faithful witness. We struggle with timing. We grow tired of praying for the same healing, the same restoration, the same breakthrough. We want resolution now. Palm Sunday shows that God’s purposes are not hurried. Jesus moved deliberately toward the Cross because He trusted the Father’s timeline. Waiting does not mean God is absent. It often means He is working in deeper ways than we can see.

**Challenge:** Name the prayer you are tired of praying. Today, ask God not only for an answer, but for trust in His timing.

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## **Devotion 3: A King Who Rules Through Sacrifice / Scripture: Matthew 21:5 & Philippians 2:5-8**

**Reflection:** Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, not a war horse. It was a deliberate picture of humility. Within days He would wash feet and lay down His life. The kingdom of God would be established through sacrifice, not force. Our instincts tell us that strength comes through control and dominance. Jesus shows a different way. Real change comes through service, patience, and self giving love. The Cross reveals that what looks like weakness can be the very power of God.

**Challenge:** Where is God calling you to serve instead of control? Identify one relationship or situation where you can choose sacrificial love this week.