

John (Week 28)
“The King’s Entry”
John 12:12-19 (NIV)

We’re in a series in the book of John that started in the beginning of the year and will go pretty much to the end of the year, so if you just got here you still made it with a lot of time left

I’d argue you came at the perfect time because we’re entering Jesus’ last week, which started a sermon or two ago, and this is where things really ramp up

See every author for every book of the Bible wrote it with a purpose and John’s purpose, which is our series verse, is found in John 20:31

“But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

John 20:31 NIV

If you missed last week, JoMaris gave a great sermon discussing these ideas of Worth and Worship

She mentioned how false worship uses Jesus, but Jesus is not a means to an end

Whatever you worship you will sacrifice for and true worship treasures Jesus

Spending time with Him, sitting with Him, it's all just as valuable as serving Him

This all comes from her passage which covers when Mary, the sister of Lazarus who Jesus rose from the dead, took perfume which costed a years wages and used the entire thing to anoint Jesus as she wiped it with her hair

JoMaris also emphasized that your worship leads to witness just as Mary’s worship did

Mary wasn't expecting any recognition or any reward, she just wanted to worship, and God used it to spread the word even to us, 2000 years later.

A really hard hitting line she jabbed us with was “Your worship points to your God”

So now we’ll pick up where she left off, Chapter 12 verse 12

“The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Blessed is the king of Israel!” Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written: “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.” At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him. Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!””

John 12:12-19 NIV

Point one for your notes

1. The King on a Donkey

So as we get into this text i wanna kinda paint the picture for you on what's going on

Verse 12:

“The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.”

John 12:12 NIV

What is this festival? It's passover

How do we know? Because last week's text started with

“Six days before the Passover...” and today's text starts with “The next day...”

So the Jews at this time would all meet up at Jerusalem for a time of celebration of what God has done and remembering how He freed them from Egypt all those years ago

They would go to the temple on passover day and sacrifice a lamb at a certain time in remembrance of the Passover lambs that were sacrificed to save them in Egypt

So as everyone was preparing their lambs for the sacrifice, the Lamb of God, Jesus, was preparing for His sacrifice too

If you remember last week, the preparations had already begun because when Mary anointed Jesus with her perfume, He said "...It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial" John 12:7 NIV

Back to Passover, in Jesus' time, this celebration was a big deal

People travelled miles and miles from wherever they were at, to Jerusalem and it became **THE** thing for the week

Im talking, New York during the recent Knicks championship kinda celebrating

The day the Knicks won I was in Long Island visiting family to watch the game, and on the way home we had to stop for gas.

So we cut through a side street through the houses and there was a dude, with a giant knicks flag, walking all by himself, at like 12 something in the morning, just waving it around on the street

I screamed GO KNICKS and he screamed it back and in that moment, it felt like this random stranger who was probably drunk to be honest, was my best friend

And this is what passover time was like

Everyone was excited and ready to get together and celebrate

But to make this passover an even bigger deal, Jesus was there

See if you didn't know, there's a period of time between the last book of the old testament Malachi, and the first book of the new testament Matthew that spanned around 400 years

This means there has been no major word from a prophet, and no direct communication from God, for the people of God in 400 years

That's a really long time to not hear from God and maybe some of you are feeling like it's been 400 years since you've heard from God, 400 years since you felt like God has answered a prayer but let me tell you that Jesus is arriving at the scene soon...just hold on

The last thing recorded in the Old Testament is Malachi chapter 4, which is just a few verses, but these verses inspire the biggest hope

it says

““Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the Lord Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves. Then you will trample on the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I act,” says the Lord Almighty. “Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. “See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.””

Malachi 4:1-6 NIV

There's this promise that a day would come in which God would set everything right and it would come through a man who is like Elijah

This is one of the reasons why in the Gospels you see people thinking that Jesus might be Elijah

So it's been 400 years since there's been a word from God, it's passover time which is already hype, and now this Jesus has been doing really Elijah-like things.

i've heard He healed the blind and told a guy who couldn't walk to get up and he did, I heard about Lazarus dying but then Jesus came and brought him back to life, i heard He fed 5000+ people with a couple loaves of bread and some fish, He's been preaching these messages that are really good, some of them kinda stung but overall pretty good, maybe guys, just maybe, He might be the guy we've been waiting for

The guy my great great great great grandpa told my great great great great grandpa told my great great great grandpa, told my great grandpa, told my grandpa, told my dad, told me about

Maybe this is him!!

The one who would bring us freedom and healing and victory and justice!!

Imagine the excitement as Jesus arrives at the scene, just as it was during the knicks parade, when every eye was on the float carrying the team, every eye turned to Jesus one by one as they saw Him enter Jerusalem on a donkey

Let's look at this grand entry Jesus had, starting in verse 13

“They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Blessed is the king of Israel!” Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written: “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.””

John 12:13-15 NIV

Before we move forward i wanna preface, this event of the triumphal entry of Jesus is recorded in all four Gospel accounts, Matthew Mark Luke and John, and each one highlights certain details and gives you different aspects of what happened

One of those details is *how* Jesus got the donkey, we wont go into it but just to make this clear for anyone who doesn't know, Jesus didn't just find a random donkey, sit on it and

say “Ha! prophecy complete!”. There’s more to this part of the event which you can find in Matthew Mark and Luke.

To sum it up in one sentence, Jesus sent his disciples to go and get the donkey for their arrival

But this whole entrance has so much symbolism weaved in so i'll highlight some big ones

First is the donkey

Fun fact:

Did you know that most donkeys have a cross pattern on their backs?

Now we wont overspiritualize things but i like to think that when Jesus was creating donkeys, He put that in their design as a little nod to what happened that day

But Jesus riding a donkey carried meaning

During this time, the kind of animal a King mounted sent a message

If the king was on his horse, it meant he was coming for war

If the king was on his donkey, it meant that he came in peace and was travelling as normal

We’ll put a pin in that and come back to it later

Another symbolic act, the waving of palm branches

We don't have time to get into all of it but palm branches were used as a symbol of victory, royal honor, and triumph, and were used in worship and celebration by the Israelites

So in doing this, they were worshipping and declaring that Jesus brings victory

In their words they say Hosanna, which is a plea for salvation

It means save now, save please, please save us

It's a cry for deliverance, and as they worship and declare the victory, they shout out to Jesus to save them

What they wanted was salvation from Rome which is temporary, but Jesus stated His message without even having to say a word by his own entrance on a donkey

What they were praising in that moment was a king who would save them from Rome which has temporary impact, not realizing that this very king would instead save them from sin which has eternal impact

That brings us to point two:

2. Genuinely Wrong Praise

See the thing about this crowd is that their praise WAS genuine

They really did mean it

They fully meant it because they fully expected the scripture in Malachi to bend to *their* desires and really thought Jesus would free them by military means

How many of us have expected God's Word to change to fit *our* standard? When in reality, it's **US** that need to change to fit *His*

They named Jesus King not because of Who He Is, but because of what He could do for them

It's easy to make fun of this crowd because we know the full story and hindsight is 20/20, but im sure we've all been in this situation before

When i was younger, i was FULLY convinced that the word island was pronounced IS-LAND

It just made sense

My mom and I had a debate about it in the car one time and she's like no buddy, it's island, and I'm like mom, I'm telling you it's IS-LAND, it gotta be! The word is self-defining, it **IS**-LAND. It just makes sense (I'm sure I didn't use the word self-defining as a kid but you get the point)

And I really believed it, it fully made sense in my brain, i was 100% genuine when i said it, but i was genuinely wrong

You can believe or say something so genuinely but also be so genuinely wrong

I gotta throw shots because Alyse threw shots when she preached, but if you're a Mets fan, you're genuinely wrong

Im sorry to say it but the truth is the truth no matter how you feel about it

It's Yankees all the way

So these people, like mets fans, were genuine in their praise, but they were genuinely wrong

Their labelling of Jesus as king was based on their own ideas rather than Who Jesus really IS

Everyone has a king so who or what is yours

You can call that sub point 2

Everyone serves someone or something as king so who or what is yours

Attention?

The ladies, or the guys?

Drugs?

Tv?

A celebrity?

Yourself?

Instagram?

Money?

Or is it Jesus?

Hey a big one today is money

So let me tell you the truth:

God won't always bring you to places with money, and money won't always bring you to places with God

You can chase the bag like a game of tag and it'll continue to run away as you chase it all your life, or you can draw near to God, and as you do He will draw near to you

Do you recognize Jesus for who He really is?

Are you waving your palm branches in the air because He is God and He loves you, or because of something else that is genuine, but genuinely wrong?

I said earlier that the other Gospel accounts give other details of this event and Luke gives a detail that really hits deep

Luke 19:41-44:

“As he (that being Jesus) approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They

will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.'" Luke 19:41-44 NIV

Man, that hits hard

As He enters, Jesus prophesies Jerusalem's soon to come destruction, which did come to pass by the way

Just imagine, as the crowds shout praises to Jesus and lay palm branches as he walks, some people waiving them in the air, Jesus looks out to the city and weeps, because every word He hears is empty of anything true, every shout is for the wrong reason, every word of praise is misplaced, and every palm waving in the air would soon be a fist shaking as these same people shout "crucify Him!" a few days from now

"But why didn't He just tell them"

You must've missed every verse in John up to this point

Jesus DID tell them, Jesus has already explained himself in every way, He already showed He's God, He already said He's God, He already explained His mission, and YET, they still don't get it, and I'd argue, still don't *want to* get it

Because "if we do this Jesus' way, we'll probably still be under Rome, and I'd rather it go my way so yeah yeah Jesus, 'kingdom of heaven' sure man, just crush Rome"

Jesus, God in a bod, was right in front of them, but as He said, they "did not recognize the time of God's coming" (v. 44)

Recognition comes from time spent, and repetition

Your body works together with your five senses, what you see, hear, smell, taste, touch, to store patterns which determine recognition

If i were to recognize my wife Elizabeth, my brain wouldnt instantly output, “hey, that’s Elizabeth”, it would analyze the patterns, okay, my eyes send a signal, this is a VERY beautiful woman, my nose says yup, i could recognize that perfume even in the middle of a bath and body works, and so on, and then it puts all of those patterns together and says yeah, that’s Elizabeth

If a random person was outside my window calling my name, they could be screaming it at the top of their lungs if they wanted, I wouldn't be able to recognize their voice because I haven't spent enough time with them and i havent repeated this time spent enough for me to know who this is

Contrast that with Elizabeth

I know her voice so well even in my sleep I'll recognize her, even with noise cancelling headphones I'll recognize her, in the loudest crowd I will know her voice, so lemme ask you do you know God’s?

If you do, are you living like it?

You can come here and put the Christian outfit on but i wanna know how you really living

You know I've had people tell me before, I never knew you were Christian, you're so quiet (you guys who know me at church are probably shocked to hear it but it’s true. Contrary to popular belief, it *is* possible for me to be a quiet guy)

But that checked me real quick

Because that means my life doesnt reflect Jesus enough

Jesus said to His disciples in Matthew 5:14-16

““You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives

light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:14-16 NIV

So for me to hear “i didnt even know you were Christian” was a wake up call and I hope this is yours today too

If you really know His voice, live like it

Jesus said in John 10:27: “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me” John 10:27 NIV

Let’s pick up in verse 16 of our chapter

“At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him. Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!””

John 12:16-19 NIV

Point 3

3. The King Will Mount His Horse

So John gives us some insight that Jesus’ disciples came to an understanding of everything that had happened after Jesus died, resurrected, and ascended to Heaven

But in the meantime, the word is spreading about Jesus’ miracle in bringing Lazarus back to life and many people came to meet Jesus because of it

The pharisees even mention it, they said “the whole world is coming to Jesus”

Amen pharisees, you got one thing right

There's more to this conversation between Jesus and the pharisees that you can find in the other Gospel accounts, but they were right

Eventually, many people from places around the world would come to know Jesus and that mission is still being carried out today

Our goal as Christians should sound pretty similar to our church mission, which is for everyone, no matter their race background past mistakes or anything else, would come to know God, find freedom, discover their purpose, and make a difference

I wanna show you something really cool

So Jesus enters Jerusalem on a donkey, in humility and coming in peace

We know Jesus ascended to Heaven, and we know He's coming back

So what do you think His entrance will be like this time?

Would you believe me if I told you I knew?

Let me show you, turn to the back of your Bible and look at Revelation 19 starting in verse 4

It says:

"The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: "Amen, Hallelujah!" Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both great and small!" Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!..

Skip down a few verses and John who wrote Revelation and the Book of John says

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: king of kings and Lord of Lords."

Revelation 19:4-7;11-16 NIV

I want you to see this

Jesus came lowly and humbly in peace when His mission was to die and resurrect for us

It's not that He lacked power, it's that He chose to humble himself

Philippians 2:6-8

"[Jesus] Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!"

Philippians 2:6-8 NIV

Matthew 26:53-54 Jesus says:

"Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

Matthew 26:53-54 NIV

Jesus had a mission to die and rise again, but now that that mission is complete, what's His mission now?

That in the meantime He will be with us, right He promised to be with us

Matthew 28:20 “..And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Matthew 28:20 NIV

But His mission is to come back for His people and finish things once and for all

He is coming to take His people back with Him and to end satan’s games and send him to hell with all of his demons

Look at the description in Revelation:

Starting with a white horse; this ain’t no donkey no more

“With justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns”

He’s dressed in a robe dipped in blood

The armies of heaven are following him, also riding on white horses

He has a sword and is bringing the wrath of God

Jesus will return in power and is coming to fight for His people and end the reign of sin and death once and for all

For those of us who are saved, this is so cool man

Just imagine that, this is one of the coolest sections of the Bible

But for those of us who don't have an active relationship with Jesus, this should be an alarm going off

It's like a game of red light green light, where will you be standing when Jesus stops counting?

Could you stand with me as we come to a close?

I wanna talk to those of us who may not have an active relationship with Jesus

Those of us who have walked away, those of us who have rejected Him, those of us who don't care, those of us who don't know

See, during Jesus' ministry on Earth, He defied every expectation you could ever have, and one of them was the way in which He brought peace

We went over it earlier, the crowd was mistaking Jesus' form of bringing peace

They thought he came with a sword but He came with arms stretched out

They thought He carried metal armor and weapons but He carried a wooden cross

He didn't have to do this, He had all power and authority to end it at any moment, He could've just started over all the way back when Adam and Eve first sinned but guess what?

God couldn't love you if He restarted

If He just tossed Adam and Eve there would be no you and me, and what drove Jesus to carry that cross, to endure those lashings, to take the pain of nails through His body, was you, and was me

Colossians 1:19-23

"For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel..."

Colossians 1:19-23 NIV

This is the Gospel

This is the good news that i now tell you

God loved you so much that He died for even just the opportunity every one of us would get to be with Him, knowing that some would still reject it

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” John 15:13
NIV

John 15:13

Not only does God want to call you a son, or a daughter, He wants to be your friend