

HOW TO WELCOME JESUS INTO YOUR LIFE

By Andy Manning

Matthew 21:1-11

I. INTRODUCTION

- a. Today is the Sunday before Easter. It is traditionally known as Palm Sunday, and you will understand why after this sermon. Palm Sunday is the day when we remember the event known as the Triumphal Entry.
- b. Scholars estimate that the date was Sunday, March 29, AD 33.
- c. Jesus had spent the past three years mostly ministering in northern Israel, the region called Galilee. Now, it was time for Him to die. So, He headed to Jerusalem one last time.
- d. On His way, He stopped in Bethany, about two miles east of Jerusalem, to visit Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead. Many people came to Bethany to see Jesus and Lazarus. That was Saturday (Jn 12:1).
- e. The next day, Sunday, Jesus went to Jerusalem (Jn 12:12).
- f. Palm Sunday was the first day of the last week of Jesus' earthly life. The following Thursday He will be arrested, and then on Friday He will be crucified, and then on Sunday He will rise from the dead.

II. TEXT: Matthew 21:1-11

1 When they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage at the Mount of Olives, Jesus then sent two disciples, 2 telling them, "Go into the village ahead of you. At once you will find a donkey tied there with her colt. Untie them and bring them to me. 3 If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them at once."

4 This took place so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled:

5 Tell Daughter Zion,
"See, your King is coming to you,
gentle, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt,
the foal of a donkey."

6 The disciples went and did just as Jesus directed them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt; then they laid their clothes on them, and he sat on them. 8 A very large crowd spread their clothes on the road; others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them on the road. 9 Then the crowds who went ahead of him and those who followed shouted:

Hosannato the Son of David!
Blessed is he who comes in the name
of the Lord!
Hosannain the highest heaven!

- 10 When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in an uproar, saying, "Who is this?"
11 The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

III. THE STORY

- a. I want you to notice four things about this story (Four Insights).

i. The Messiah's Authority.

1. The story begins on the top of the Mount of Olives, just east of Jerusalem. Jesus tells sent two of his disciples to get a donkey and her colt. Jesus said, "When you enter the city, you'll see a donkey and her colt. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone asks you, tell them the Lord needs them."
2. His authority is revealed in several ways:
 - a. Over His disciples. He had the right to give them orders and send them on errands.
 - b. Over the people in the village. He had the right to their property.
 - c. Over the animals. They were His to use as He wished.
3. This is a reminder that Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords.
 - a. **Matthew 28:18** Jesus came near and said to them, "All authority ahs been given to me in heaven and on earth."
 - b. **Romans 11:36** "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen."
4. Everything exists for Jesus. Everyone belongs to Jesus. He has the right to tell us what to do, when to do it, and how to do it.
5. All other authorities have limits. I am in charge of my children, but not your children. A business owner is the boss of his own company, but not every company. The police have authority within the city or parish limits, but not beyond. The president of the United States has authority in America, but not beyond. Even the devil, who is called the god of the world, has limited authority. He can only do what he does with God's permission. But Christ has all authority in heaven and on earth.

ii. The Bible's Truthfulness.

1. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
2. This is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Matthew quotes the prophet Zechariah 9:9, who said that the Messiah – the coming king of the Jews – would come riding on the foal of a donkey.
3. **Matthew 21:4-5** "This took place so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: Tell Daughter Zion, 'See your King is coming to you, gentle, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey,'"
4. Zechariah gave this prophecy over five hundred years before this occurred.

5. This is a reminder that we can trust the Bible. The Bible is God's word. And since it is God's word, it is truth without any mixture of error.
6. The Bible has never been disproven. It has not errors. No inconsistencies. No contradictions. No falsehoods. What it says about God is true. What it says about morality is true. What it says about love is true. What it says about family is true. What it says about money is true. What it says about sex is true. What it says about eternal life is true. What it says about Jesus is true.

iii. The Disciples' Obedience.

1. Jesus sent two of His disciples to get a donkey and its colt. Notice their response.
2. **Matthew 21:6** "The disciples went and did just as Jesus directed them."
3. See that their obedience was...
 - a. Exact. They went and did "just" as Jesus directed them. They did no more, no less. They followed His instructions exactly. Our obedience should be the same. We should follow Christ's word exactly. We shouldn't add anything to His word. We shouldn't take anything away. We shouldn't ignore any part of it. We should do exactly as it says.
 - b. Risky. Their obedience could have cost them. Jesus was asking them to take someone else's property, without even asking. Normally that would be called theft. They could have been severely punished. But they risked their safety, their freedom, their reputation, to be obedient to Jesus.
4. As Christians we must be obedient to God's word. This is what it means to be a Christian – to obey Christ. Faith is dead without obedience. Praise and worship are offensive without obedience. Tithes and offerings are worthless without obedience. Bible study is pointless without obedience. Acts of charity and compassion are empty without obedience.

iv. The Crowd's Welcome

1. A crowd gathered to welcome Jesus as He was approaching Jerusalem.
2. What do we know about this crowd?
 - a. Thousands of Jews from around the world were visiting Jerusalem from Passover Festival.
 - b. Many of these pilgrims were disciples of Jesus (Lk 19:37).
 - c. Many of them witnessed the miracle of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead just two miles away in Bethany; and others had heard about it. Jn 12:17-18
 - d. When these disciples heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they went out to meet Him.

- e. We know this was a very large crowd (Mt 12:8; Jn 12:12).
3. Their welcome consisted of five things. This is the way to welcome Jesus into your life. This is the way to have a healthy relationship with Jesus.

a. Surrender.

- i. The crowd spread their clothes and palm branches on the road, to make a royal red carpet for Jesus (Mt 21:8). This is why it is called Palm Sunday.
- ii. This was a gesture of surrender and submission. It was a statement. They were acknowledging that they belonged to Jesus; they were under His authority; they submitted to His rule; and whatever they owned was His.
- iii. One **commentator** wrote, “Some flung their robes to the ground as a gesture of reverence, indicating their willingness for him to have everything—even to trample their property if he so desired.”
- iv. By spreading their cloaks on the ground, the people were treating Jesus like a king. They were inviting Him to be their king. They were in effect saying, “You are more important than us; You are in charge of us; and everything we have is at Your disposal.” They were treating Jesus like the king.
- v. The first way to welcome Jesus into your life is to surrender to Him as King.
- vi. Many people only see Jesus as a Savior. But Jesus is more than a Savior. He is a King.
- vii. Jesus did not merely come to earth to save you from the penalty of sin, but from the practice of sin.
- viii. **2 Corinthians 5:15** “And he died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for the one who died for them and was raised.”
- ix. Christ died for you, so that you would live for Him, not just believe in Him.
- x. Being a Christian is not just about believing in Jesus. It is about obeying Christ; living for Him; serving Him; being fully surrendered to Him.
- xi. **Luke 9:23** “If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me.”
- xii. A true disciple of Jesus denies himself – he does God’s will rather than his own. And he takes up his cross – he does God’s will not matter the cost. Total surrender.
- xiii. Have you surrendered your life to Jesus?

xiv. Have you laid your clothes on the ground and said, "All that I am, and all that I have is Yours, Jesus."

b. Desire.

- i. As Jesus was riding into Jerusalem, the people cried out to Him, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Mt 21:9
- ii. "Hosanna" means "save us now." The Son of David is a title for the Messiah.
- iii. Jesus' disciples were shouting out for Him to save them now.
- iv. These people were not surrendering to Jesus reluctantly, out of compulsion, or out of fear. They were surrendering out of desire. They deeply desired for Jesus to come into their lives and save them. They desired Him so much that they were shouting loudly in public, "Save us now!"
- v. To welcome Jesus into your life you must deeply desire Him.
- vi. This is what it means to love Him. To love Jesus is to desire Him, treasure Him, and esteem Him above all else.
- vii. **Matthew 10:37** "The one who loves a father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; the one who loves a son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."
- viii. Do you desire Jesus? Do you desire Him more than anything else in the world? To know Him more. To be closer to Him. To be more like Him, more pleasing to Him. To be saved by Him.

c. Faith.

- i. The third way the crowd welcomed Jesus is with faith. Their faith is seen in two ways:
 1. They believed that Jesus could save them. Mt 21:9 "Hosanna to the Son of David!"
 2. They believed that Jesus was the Messiah. Mt 21:9 "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Lk 19:38 "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord."
- ii. To welcome Jesus into your life, you must have faith in Him. You must believe that He is who He says He is, and that He will do what He says He will do.
- iii. You must believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. That He died on the cross for your sins and rose again.
- iv. You must have confidence that His death on the cross is sufficient to pay for your sins.

- v. You must have confidence that Jesus has the power to save you.
- vi. Faith is the foundation of your relationship with God.
 - 1. Without faith, you will not surrender to Jesus.
 - 2. Without faith, you will not desire Jesus.
 - 3. Without faith, you will not serve Jesus.
 - 4. Without faith, you will not sacrifice your life for Jesus.
 - 5. Without faith, you will not be willing to stand up for Jesus; or to stand alone for Jesus.
 - 6. Without faith, you will not deny yourself for Jesus, or resist temptation for Jesus.
- vii. Do you have faith in Jesus Christ? Do you truly believe in Him?

d. Praise.

- i. The fourth way the crowd welcomed Jesus is with praise.
- ii. **Matthew 21:9** “Then the crowds who went ahead of him and those who followed shouted: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!”
- iii. **Luke 19:37-38** “37 Now he came near the path down the Mount of Olives, and the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles they had seen: 38 Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heaven!”
- iv. These people were not just praising Jesus. They were praising Jesus joyfully with a loud voice. They were praising Jesus with passion; with energy; with enthusiasm; with exuberance.
- v. To welcome Jesus into your life, you need to praise Him with passion.
- vi. Why should we praise Jesus?
 - 1. We are commanded to praise Him. **Psalms 30:4** “Sing to the LORD, you his faithful ones, and praise his holy name.”
 - 2. He is worthy of our highest praise. **Revelation 5:12** “They said with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!”
 - a. He is the image of the invisible God.

- b. He is the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
- c. He is the creator and sustainer of the universe.
- d. He is the Savior of the world.
- e. He is totally sinless and perfectly righteous.
- f. He died for us while we were yet sinners.
- g. He loves us.
- h. He rose from the dead.
- i. He is in heaven, interceding for us.
- j. He is preparing a place for us in heaven.
- k. He is coming back for us one day.
- l. He is the Alpha and Omega, the one who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty. Rev 1:8

vii. How should we praise Jesus?

- 1. Ps 34:1 – continually/at all times.
- 2. Ps 111:1 – with your whole heart.
- 3. Ps 146:2 – all your life.
- 4. Ps 30:4 – in songs.
- 5. Ps 22:22 – in the assembly of God’s people.
- 6. Ps 30:12 – forever.
- 7. Ps 33:2 – with musical instruments.
- 8. Ps 35:28 – all day long.
- 9. Ps 63:5 – with joyful lips.
- 10. Ps 66:1 – shout joyfully to God!
- 11. Ps 66:2 – make His praise glorious.
- 12. Ps 69:30 – with thanksgiving.
- 13. Ps 105:2 – tell about his wondrous works.
- 14. Ps 108:1 – with the whole of your being.
- 15. Ps 109:30 – fervently.
- 16. Ps 113:3 – from the rising of the sun to its setting.
- 17. Ps 119:7 – with an upright heart.
- 18. Ps 145:2 – every day.
- 19. Ps 149:1 – with a new song.
- 20. Ps 149:3 – with dancing.

viii. When we gather as a church, do you praise Jesus? Do you really praise Him?

e. Service.

- i. The last way that the crowd welcomed Jesus is by serving Him. They told others about Him. When Jesus

entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in an uproar. People were asking, "Who is this?" The crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

- ii. That's we must do for Jesus. If you are a Christian, you are called to serve Him by telling others about Him.
- iii. We must tell others...
 1. That they are sinners in need of a Savior.
 2. That God loves them and sent Jesus to die for their sins.
 3. That they must repent and believe in Jesus to be saved.
- iv. Remember. You are a Christian today because a Christian was faithful to share the good news with you. Will you pay it forward? Will you pass it on? Will you to your part to serve the Lord?

IV. CONCLUSION

- a. Five things to welcome Jesus into your life: Surrender; desire; faith; praise; and service. Five things to have a healthy relationship with Jesus.
- b. How is your relationship with Jesus? For some of you, that relationship may be nonexistent. For others of you, that relationship may be very distant.
- c. Jesus is not riding a donkey into Jerusalem anymore; but he is knocking on the door of your heart right now. He still loves you. And He wants to have a closer relationship with You.
- d. If you are not sure that you are a Christian, then take this opportunity to invite Jesus into your life. If you are a Christian but you have not been walking close to Jesus, then take this opportunity to rededicate your life to Christ. To reconnect with Christ.