



Who Is This?

Text: Mark 21:1-11

Business Administrator Michael Sullivan

1. Sully mentioned that while in France doing street evangelism he probably heard as many different answers to the question, “Who is Jesus?” as there were people whom he asked. Think about different conversations you have had or have witnessed.
 - a. What are some of the various answers to this question that you have heard over the years?
 - b. How would you personally answer that question if someone were to ask you right now?
 - c. If your personal answer has changed in various seasons of your life, share those with the group. How would you have answered as a child, a teenager, a young adult, a new parent, a new believer, etc.?
2. Read Matthew 21:1-11 & Zechariah 9:1-10.
 - a. According to Matt. 21:4, why was it necessary to procure the colt & donkey?
 - b. Zechariah 9:1-7 gives us a list of Israel’s enemies that God will judge. We will focus on v. 8-10. What is prophesied in v. 8 concerning God’s actions on behalf of His people? To what does “my house” refer?
 - c. In v. 9, what are God’s people commanded to do? What characteristics are we given of this king over whom the people should rejoice? How will this king come to the people according to v. 9? What does God promise He will do in v. 10?
 - d. Picture yourself again as the devout Jew who was watching the events in Matthew 21:1-11 unfold, a Jew who knew well the prophecy found in Zechariah 9. What would you be expecting this King to do? What would you do if you were part of the crowd?
3. Jesus says that this episode in His life occurred specifically to fulfill prophecy. Read the following Messianic prophecies and share what each one reveals about who Jesus is and the nature of the Kingdom.
 - a. 2 Samuel 7:12-14
 - b. Isaiah 9:6-7
 - c. Jeremiah 23:5
 - d. Ezekiel 34:23

4. Read the following passages and describe the implications of Jesus' lordship expressed in each passage. How are you living out these implications of Jesus' lordship? Or are they not evident in your life? Where would you like to grow, and how can the group encourage you in this effort?

- a. Luke 6:46-49
- b. Luke 9:18-27
- c. Matthew 28:18-20
- d. John 13:12-17
- e. Acts 2:22-41
- f. Acts 10:34-43
- g. Romans 10:1-17

Challenge: You learned this week that many of Jesus' worshipers in Matthew 21:1-11 had a misconception about who He was and what He came to do. Think for a moment about your own life. Here's some questions to get you started.

- In what ways do you have misconceptions about Jesus?
- Do you think that there are sins you have committed for which He just can't forgive you?
- Do you think He is obligated to bless you in certain and specific ways because of your obedience?
- Do you think (or act like) Jesus' command to make disciples is for other people but not for you?
- Do you deny the power of the resurrection directed toward you (Ephesians 1:19-20) by living a life unaffected by the gospel?

Ask God to reveal to you your misconceptions about Jesus and write down what He shows you. Share with the group next week what He revealed to you.

Prayer: "Dear God, I come to You in the name of Jesus Christ, and I ask You to help me to be really serious about Jesus Christ being Lord of my life, so that I may live for and with Him day by day. Let my love for You grow more and more so that Your claims on my life will be a joy rather than a duty. I ask You to stir me, and liberate me, to be able to be the man/woman of God You have called me to be. Help me to clearly listen to You, Lord Jesus, so that I may distinctly discern Your divine will and purposes. I really do want to be an effective and fruitful minister of the gospel in my day and generation. In Jesus' name, I pray these things. Amen."

STUDY DEEPER

Make The Most of Holy Week

In one sense, there's nothing special about "Holy Week." Just another sequence of eight days each spring — nothing is intrinsically holy about this Sunday to Sunday that moves around the calendar each year.

We have no mandate from Jesus or his apostles to mark these days for particular observance. Paul, for one, would be quite happy for us to partake, or not. "One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind" (Romans 14:5).

Clearly, the celebration should not be pressed upon the conscience of others. "Let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath" (Colossians 2:16).

Opportunity, Not Obligation

Celebrating Holy Week is not an obligation, but it is an opportunity. It is a chance to walk with the church, throughout time and throughout the world, as she walks with her Bridegroom through the most important week in the history of the world. It is a chance to focus our minds on, and seek to intensify our affections for, the most important and timeless of realities.

While not mandating the observance, or even suggesting it, the New Testament does give us indirect reason, if we're looking for it. The final eight of Matthew's 28 chapters are given to this one week, along with the last six of Mark's sixteen and the final six of Luke's 24.

Most significant, though, is John. Ten of the Gospel's 21 chapters — essentially half — deal with the final week of our Lord's life, his betrayal, his trials, his crucifixion, and his triumphant resurrection. Even Acts, which then narrates the life of the early church, returns to the events of Holy Week with frequency (see, for instance, Acts 1:15–19; 2:22–36; 3:11–26; 4:8–12, 24–28, among others).

Indeed, it could even be said that all the Old Testament anticipates this week, and the rest of the New Testament reflects it in theology and practical living.

Seize the Week

Without any arm-twisting or conscience-pressing, I would encourage you to consider how you might make the most of this week. These are some of the darkest and brightest days in the history of the world, and they are rich with soul-sustaining food and life-clarifying vision.

In the chaos of our increasingly fast-paced and hectic society, Holy Week is a reminder to pause and ponder, to carefully mark each day and not let this greatest of all weeks fly by us like every other.

Perhaps pick a time each day – alone or with family or housemates – to slow down and savor what was happening during the Passion week some two thousands years ago. Consider reading through a Holy Week devotional – or even better, one (or a couple) of the Passion narratives from the Gospels:

■Matthew 21–28

■Mark 11–16

■Luke 19–24

■John 12–21

Block out several minutes. Find a comfortable place to sit. Seek to quiet your soul, and pray that God would meet you in the events and significance of this week. And spend a few moments in prayer after you read and turn the truth Godward in adoration of Christ. Receive this week with thanksgiving, and make it holy by the word of God and prayer (1 Timothy 4:5).

You may want to make it memorable with candles or some other special flair. If your church, or another in town, does a Maundy Thursday or Good Friday service, that presents another opportunity.

A Prayer for Passion Week

If you'd like a specific biblical text to serve as a prayer charter for this week, here's what I'm asking for myself and my family: that God would make the prayer of Ephesians 3:16–19 increasingly true of us this Holy Week – that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith – that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Jesus's step-by-step journey to Golgotha is a glowing revelation of the extent of his love. He loved us "to the uttermost" (John 13:1) in going all the way to the cross for us, with every bruise, every puncture, and throb and stab of pain. And it is during Holy Week that we see most profoundly how deep the Father's love for us. "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

May God make this to be for you a week of being newly grounded in the love of Christ, so plainly on display from the resolve of Palm Sunday, to the ultimate sacrifice of Good Friday, to the triumph of Easter Sunday. And may you freshly know the love of Christ, in all its breadth and length and height and depth – and wonder upon wonder, be filled with all the fullness of God.

<http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/make-the-most-of-holy-week>