

Palm Sunday 2025

Visitation Day - John 12:12-19

In John Chapter 12 we're dealing with the final week of Jesus Christ on the earth.

A) There are 21 chapters in John, so almost half of John is dedicated to the final week of Jesus' life on earth.

If you were to look at Matthew, two-fifths of the gospel of Matthew is devoted to that final week.

A) Three-fifths of the gospel of Mark is devoted to that final week.

B) In the gospel of Luke, one-third is devoted to the final week, and in John, just about one-half.

C) That just lets you understand the kind of importance that gospel writers placed on what is called Passion Week.

D) The week that we are entering into starting today. Palm Sunday

We're going to begin in Chapter 12 beginning in Verse 12.

12 The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna!

'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!"

14 Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: 15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion;

Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt." 16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.

17 Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. 18 For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign. 19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!" - Pray

Good – Better – Best

A) Fly a lot – Been to 30 different countries – lots of miles

B) Long overseas flights – it is a blessing when you get bumped up.

C) Premium Economy Good – Bumped up to Business Class – Better

1) Bumped up to 1st Class – Best –

Better food – they serve you drinks as soon as you are seated

A) Kentucky – Saturday men's conference – Flying back for our Saturday night service -

B) Guy next to me spilled his whiskey on me

Show up to church – smelling like Whiskey?

When it comes to how a person approaches the Person of Jesus there is an approach to Jesus that is: Good – Better – Best

A) We are going to see that played out in our text today.

So this is traditionally called Palm Sunday.

A) It celebrates this event that we are reading, the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

B) On the Jewish calendar it was the 10th day of Nisan, not the car, the month.

C) The month of Nisan in the Jewish calendar on the 10th day of the month was the day when Jewish families would select their Passover lamb

1) And on the 14th the day of Nisan they would sacrifice for the Passover.

D) Interesting thing to consider that the day the Jewish people would select their lamb for Passover

1) is the very day that Jesus rides into Jerusalem where on the back of a donkey – final Passover lamb

E) That day was the 10th of Nisan or April 6th AD 32 on the world calendar

In our study today I want us to consider three lessons of observations that we can take from this event in our text.

Lessons from Palm Sunday

#1 Jesus is more appealing than religion.

A) Jesus Christ, the person, is more appealing to people than religion. It was then, it's the same today.

B) Look at Verse 12. "The next day a great multitude had come to the feast.

When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they took branches of palm trees, went out to meet Him, and cried out Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel."

C) So there is this crowd of people that is gathered there in Jerusalem – why are they there?

It's a crowd of religious people, therefore, here in Jerusalem for a religious festival, the festival of Passover.

A) There were three mandatory feasts that every Jewish person was required to attend in Jerusalem

B) If you lived within a certain distance from Jerusalem

C) Passover- in the spring, Pentecost – also in the Spring – 50 days or 7 weeks after Passover
1) Tabernacles in the fall

Passover was the biggie – The day they celebrated their deliverance from Egypt after 400 yrs of Slavery
A) It was a high and Holy day for the people of Israel

B) But every year it was the same thing. Every year they took the same routes up to Jerusalem.
1) Every year they went through the same rituals.

C) Every year they made the same prescribed prayers.
1) And, frankly, for a whole lot of people, it had just gotten old.

D) They were clamoring for something more than what their religion was offering.

Then Jesus shows up on the scene:

A) Miracles – raised people from the dead - incredible teachings – very relatable

B) He is growing in popularity – people are gravitating to him – wondering is this –
1) the Messiah we have been waiting for

C) They find out Jesus was coming to town, and they all gravitated to Him.

D) They lined up on both sides of the road leading into Jerusalem -

1) And they spontaneously start shouting, Hosanna, save now. Deliver us now

E) Give us what our religion cannot give us, because Jesus is more appealing than religion

You know, Jesus was a breath of fresh air in a climate of stagnant, stale, religious experience.

A) One of my favorite verses of scripture is in Mark Chapter 12.

B) It's a simple verse. It just says, "and the common people heard him gladly."

1) The everyday folk heard him gladly.

C) In that chapter Jesus gives parable after parable, story after story, and then has a confrontation with the religious elite,

1) and the common people we're hearing and seeing it all. And they listened to Him gladly.

D) Jesus was to them much more appealing than even their hollowed religion itself.

So there was a clash between the old religious system and What Jesus was teaching.

A) He was relatable, he didn't come across pious or self-righteous like the religious leaders of the day.

B) He was called the friend of sinners –

C) The Religious elite in Israel were the opposite of that.

D) In Matthew 15 Jesus would quote Isaiah about these religious leaders

These people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. In vain do they worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

E) So there was this clash between Jesus as a person and the religion that people were practicing.

So when Jesus shows up at the beginning of the Passover feast the people are excited –

A) Is this the one we have been waiting for.

B) And so too today Jesus is much more appealing than Religion – here is why

1) I will give you four reasons

C)1st Religion emphasizes the outward, Jesus emphasizes The inward.

D)He always emphasizes the inward. He said, why are you thinking evil in your hearts?

1)Or from the abundance of the heart the mouth speak.

Jesus is always more concerned with what was going on the inside of a person

A)than how a person looked on the outside.

B)Religion is about the outward, Jesus was always about the inward.

C)Here's the second difference.

1)Religion is often about what you can't do. Jesus is about what you can do.

Religion is about prohibition, thou shalt not.

A)It seems like Jesus' approach was, Just come as you are, and watch what I can do through your life.

B)That's the big difference.

C)I know some people, their whole spiritual experience is one of negatives. Well, I don't do this, and I don't do that, and I don't do the other thing.

D)Old saying I don't smoke, and I don't chew, and I don't go with girls that do.

1)And I say, what whoop-de-do. What do you do?

E)I mean, if you're just talking about what you don't do, but there's nothing in your life that shows what you're doing,

1)that's the big difference. Not freedom – Stifling

There's a third difference. Religion puts up barriers, Jesus pulls down barriers.

A)If you and I were in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago, and we went up to worship at the temple,

B)we couldn't go anywhere we wanted to go.

C)There were different courts

➤ Outer Court of the Gentiles

➤ Court of the women – Jewish women

If you were a Jewish male, could go further. – Court for Jewish men

A)As far as the point of Sacrifice

B)But only the Priest could go into the temple itself –

C)and only the High Priest could go into the Holy of Holies

1)One day out of the year – Atonement

D)So there were a lot of Barriers in their religion

But then when Jesus died on the Cross – It is Finished

A)Veil was Rent – Open House

B)Invited to come Boldly into God's presence

C)How different is Jesus who said, Come unto me all of you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

1)So willing to include people. Inclusive vs Exclusive

And fourth, Every religion typically says you have to work your way to God –

A)Through routines, rituals, a standard to achieve

B)Things you have to do, prayers you have to say, et cetera, et cetera.

1)That is the religion of human achievement

C)Jesus says I am the way to God. – Uses terminology like – I am the way the truth and the life

D)I am the door – Come through me – Access through me

E)Religion says you must do. God says I have done for you.

1)It is finished.

F)Now you've just received as a free gift what I have done,

1)and there will be a transformation in the process

So Jesus is more appealing than religion.

A)So the people gather around Him, and they shout Hosanna. = Save Now !!

B)The crowd clamors around Him so much so, did you hear what the Pharisees said in Verse 19? "You see that you're accomplishing nothing. Look the whole world has gone after Him."

C) Jesus was their biggest nightmare, because what they have discovered is that people are more attracted to Jesus than their religious system.

And now there's competition.

A) Jesus was that tipping point that drove people to a personal relationship with God through Him

B) rather than through that ritualistic system.

C) He was a threat that needed to be done away with

Lessons from Palm Sunday

#1 Jesus is more appealing than Religion

#2 Scripture is more reliable than Opinion

A) There were a lot of opinions out there concerning who Jesus was.

B) If you were with us last week I mentioned how Jesus took his disciples into the area of Caesarea Philippi –

1) ask who do men say that I am

C) John the Baptist raised from the dead- Elijah – Jeremiah

C) We read here in John's gospel Ch.9 – this man is not from God – because he didn't keep the Sabbath

1) Others said he was a prophet

D) In John 10 some were saying he had a Demon – and still others were saying he was a crazy lunatic

E) So the opinions were all over the place concerning Jesus

But the Scriptures were pointing to exactly who he was – Notice V.14 again "Then Jesus, when he had found a young donkey, sat on it as it is written, fear not daughter of Zion behold your King is coming sitting on a donkey's colt."

A) This was a prophecy given by the prophet Zechariah about how the Messiah would reveal himself

B) Written 500 yrs before the birth of Jesus – show up riding on a donkey's colt

C) Then in Psalm 118 the psalmist wrote that the people would be crying out Hosanna blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord

D) There are over 300 OT prophecies that Jesus fulfilled in his first coming

1) Virgin Birth – Born in Bethlehem – from Galilee – how he would be received –

2) the type of death he would die – on and on

So it doesn't really matter what the opinion of the people was and or is about Jesus

A) The Scriptures reveal to us – Exactly who he was and is – We have the proof of Fulfilled prophecy.

B) In fact this event was the fulfillment of one of the most fascinating prophecies in the entire Bible

C) In Daniel 9- Daniel prophesied that from the going forth of the command to go and rebuild Jerusalem

1) It would be 483 yrs until the Messiah showed up.

Well on March 14th 445 BC King Artaxerxes gave the command that the Jews could return to Jerusalem and rebuild their city

A) Clock starts ticking – you could start counting – using the Babylonian Calendar which is 360 day calendar

B) Take 483 yrs equates to 173,880 days – and that takes you to April 6th AD 32 which is the very day Jesus rides into Jerusalem

C) Incredible Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel to the very day.

D) Scholars have researched this – astounding Fulfillment – of Prophecy

1) Sir Robert Anderson – Detective for Scotland Yard

2) The Coming Prince – lays out the time line and math – remarkable

Now we read in Luke 19 that prior to his triumphal entry that he went up on the MT of Olives and looking over the city of Jerusalem

A) V.41 - He began to weep over this city. – Crying hard – Why?

B) V.42 tells us why? "If you had known, even you, especially," watch this, "in this your day the things that make for your peace. But now they are hidden from your eyes for the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you, and close you in on every side, and level you and your children within you to the ground. And they will not leave in you one stone

upon another because you did not know the time of your visitation."

C)He is weeping because he sees what is coming - He predicts their fall, their destruction.

D)Somebody's going to level this to the ground and destroy the city and the people in it.

E)That happened, by the way, in 70AD. Years later it happened

But notice what Jesus said in Verse 44, "because you did not know the time of your visitation."

A)What on earth is He talking about? When he says, your day, Verse 42, this is the time of your visitation.

B)What Jesus is saying is if they would have been paying attention to what the Prophet Daniel said – 1)they could have known this Day – Jesus Triumphant entry was the day – that Daniel spoke of

C)This was their day of Visitation.

D)In that Prophecy from Daniel – Daniel even prophesied that at the end of that week – 1)the Messiah would be cut off – Killed - Not for himself – for others

E)This was the mystery that the Jewish people missed in Jesus day and most still miss today –

Two comings of Messiah

A)First coming – Lamb – give his life a ransom – Save – redeem

B)Then there would be a 2nd coming – Set up his kingdom

C)So Scripture is way more reliable than people's opinion

D)That is why we give so much place to the Study of God's word here

1)Opinions don't matter – Man's ideas don't matter

E)We want to know what God says. – How that applies to our lives

Lessons from Palm Sunday

#1 Jesus is more appealing than Religion

#2 Scripture is more reliable than Opinion

#3 Following is more important than inspection.

Following Jesus is more important than inspection or observation.

A)Now in this little paragraph we're considering, there are four different groups of people that John mentions here who are there that day.

B)And he shows the response of these four groups of people.

C)The first group are the disciples. These are the guys who've been following Jesus for 3 ½ years.

D)They're really followers of His. They're learners. 1)Verse 16, "His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered."

The second group were the eyewitnesses who were there when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

A)They're mentioned in Verse 17. They saw the miracle with their own eyes. "Therefore, the people who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness."

B)Bore witness means they saw it. They observed it. They inspected it. They're checking this out.

The third group of people are those who heard from the eyewitnesses who were there when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

A)They weren't there themselves but they heard their testimony. That's Verse 18.

"For this reason, the people also met Him because they heard that He had done this sign."

B)And then the fourth group that is mentioned is in Verse 19. Those are the religious folks, the Pharisees. "Therefore, they said among themselves, you see that you're accomplishing nothing. Look the world has gone after Him."

C)So four different groups of people, all four groups were observing the same event.

1)They were all inspecting the same event, but there was only one group that was really following Jesus.

Actually, though you have four groups, you really have only two categories.

A)You have followers and you have observers.

B)Some admirers, but they're all observing. They're watching.

1)Watching Jesus is good. Admiring Jesus is better. Following Jesus is best.

C)The best is to be a disciple. What does that mean?

The word disciple, mathetes, means a learner. It means a student.

A)It's a technical term for the followers of Jesus,

B)In the Jewish world, a disciple was somebody who sought out a rabbi, a teacher.

1)And when they found a teacher, they wanted to learn from, they followed him around, watched what he did.

C)And they were called, these disciples, dedicated to a lifetime of work and service.

That's a disciple. Someone who is ALL IN – Not half-hearted

A)SO There ARE observers. There ARE disciples, followers.

B)Jesus said, Matthew 16, if anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself.

1)It doesn't mean deny things for himself.

C)OK, it's lent . - I'm not going to chew gum. OR EATThat's not what it means.

D)It means you actually deny yourself. You take yourself off the throne.

1)You quit living for you and you live for him.

E)A disciple is somebody who invites Jesus into their life – not once – but every day!

If anyone wants to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.

A)Die to yourself – Being surrendered to his Kingship – His person – His Plan –

B)His will for your life – Lord I am going to follow you and be all in.

C)Not an observer – Not just a believer – I want to be sold out for you 100%- A Disciple

I was watching a clip of Jonathan Roumie – who plays Jesus on the Chosen - on the View yesterday.

A)The ladies that host the View are incredibly Liberal – but it seems they all watch the Chosen

B)They all seem to admire Jesus – Observers – some even profess to be believers

C)Greg Laurie – Every Disciple is a believer – but not all believers are disciples

D)Jesus wants us to be Disciples – 100% sold out

So as we close today – Need to answer the question-

A)Are you an observer? Good – step in the right direction

B)Believer – Better –

C)Or are you a Disciple – BEST

This is the day of your day of Visitation!

A)Observer to a believer

B)Believer to a Disciple

C)Pray