

Matthew 21:1-11

Palm Sunday Basic Christian Living (Making Jesus Your King)

Introduction: For weeks now we've been looking at just some of the basic practices of being a Christian. From Knowing and living out the Gospel, to our identity and activity as the church, our relationship and responsibility to the scriptures, our conduct, our prayer life, etc. At the same time today is a special day in the Christian calendar. Today we celebrate the event that took place as described in our passage where Jesus makes his way into Jerusalem and is hailed as the long awaited Messianic King. I started thinking about our series in light of this passage and this time of year; a massive part of what it means to be a christian to practice basic christian Living is that you understand and live the truth that Jesus is King and Lord over your life. In fact, you can't know Jesus, he can't change your life, unless you know him as King. You cannot experience the flourishing of God's kingdom without the King.*

1. Jesus is King

1. Jerusalem was, "the city of the great king", the center of Israel's religious life and messianic expectations. The people throw their coats on the road, like a royal red carpet, and wave palm branches and shout "Save Now Son of David" "blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" The waving of palm branches was symbolic of victory over one's enemies.
2. The people recognize Jesus as THE TRUE KING - the son of David. The longed for king of Israel, who all the scripture pointed to and anticipated; the one who would set God's people free from tyranny and would put everything in the world to right and usher in God's kingdom reign of peace. The people are recognizing Jesus as the fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9
3. **"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." -Zechariah 9:9**
 1. **And in response they quote from Psalm 118:25-26: "Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success! Blessed is**

he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord." -Psalm 118:25-26

4. An interesting fact about this event, besides the fact that all four Gospel writer's recording it, is that this is the one time when Jesus does not discourage public recognition of his true identity (many times Jesus tells those that he has healed to tell no one, Jesus discouraged the multitude in John 6 when they were going to make him king). In this situation Jesus receives all the praise and recognition from the crowds. He fully embraces this identity. Luke records that when the religious leaders heard and saw this they told Jesus to tell the people otherwise or to silence them. Jesus responded, **"I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."** - **Luke 19:39-40**
5. What is that about? The prophets and specifically here Isaiah foretold that when the True King finally came the creation would erupt with praise and recognition of his kingship and in praise of his rule -
 1. **"For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall make a name for the Lord, an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."** -Isaiah 55:12-13
 2. **Daniel describes the true king in these terms - "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed."** - **Daniel 7:13-14**
6. This is a picture of the true king finally come to set everything right.
7. Jesus is clearly recognized, and embraces this identity, as the long awaited messianic king, the true king.
 1. Some of us, especially with our American idealism, think that the best form of government is democracy. Dictatorship, Monarchy, the world has been there and done that. Winston Churchill is

attributed with saying something to the effect that “Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others.” Which might be so, but God’s ideal, God’s plan for the world is to set his King on the throne of the world. But look at the kind of King God has for the world, not the king we deserve, but a gracious, humble, benevolent king, who rules in righteousness and justice.. the king of who brings shalom.

2. **Jesus is the Lowly, Humble King**

1. **“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” -Zechariah 9:9**
2. Jesus is clearly hailed as the king coming into Jerusalem, but it is so vital that we understand the kind of King that Jesus is; he’s the king who rides into on a baby donkey; not a war horse. He’s not the triumphant king bringing judgment, overthrowing the powers that be; but he is the humble, lowly king who brings salvation, through his one great act of total humility - the cross. The whole scene is a picture of his lowliness and humility.
3. “I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between Him and every person in the world there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and I have founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ founded His empire upon love; and at this hour millions of men would die for him.” -Napoleon Bonaparte
4. You must serve Jesus as King because he’s the only king that won’t oppress you, that won’t crush you. Because he alone is the humble king, the servant king, the shepherd king that your soul longs for, the one who will bring you into the flourishing life of the kingdom of God.
5. Jesus says again and again in the gospels that he came **“not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.” In John 10, Jesus calls himself the good shepherd - He says, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”**
6. Jesus is different than any other king, different than any other master or Lord. Jesus wants to rule your life not in order to make you a

Jesus zombie, to destroy your fun, curb your freedom, or free spirit or any other negative thing like that; Jesus wants to rule your life in order that you might experience the life of flourishing God created you for, life in all it's fulness.

3. Jesus is the King for You

1. You see all of our problems in life stem from this one problem - we worship things, people, power sex, money, success, we make them master and Lord over our lives; we worship the creation rather than the creator, and they are a weight to us, they oppress us, they can't satisfy. We've given power and authority of our lives to things that have no power to save us, change us, or truly protect us. They're fine servants but they are terribly weak and yet oppressive masters. You see, your career, your great lover, your family..if you live for these things and fail they cannot ultimately forgive you or die for your sins. Jesus is totally different kind of king and Lord.
2. In fact he's the king that left his throne of glory and stepped down into time and history, who became weak for you, vulnerable, killable, all so that we could experience the flourishing that God intends for humanity - so that we can be partakers and citizens of the Kingdom of God.
3. We might think, 'I don't want to give my life to Jesus, I don't want to lose control'. Don't fool yourself, everybody is living for something but you've already lost control because you're already serving something, you're already crowning something as king, as ultimate in your life... You need the true king.. the one you were created to love and serve, he's also the only king that won't oppress you, he's the redeemer - he died for you, for your sins, and for your failures, he died to set you free.. He did not come in wrath, judgment and sword of God's justice against our evil and the evil and injustice of the world; no, instead he came lowly and weak to bear our judgement. He's the king who comes to relieve our burdens not add to them.
1. "If Jesus is the center of your life, and you fail Him, He will forgive you. Anything else you base your life on you will have to live up to. But there is NO OTHER center for your life which died for you! Everybody has to live for something. Whatever that something is becomes "Lord of your life," You crown it, whether you think of it that way or not. Jesus is the only Lord who, if you receive him, will

fulfill you completely, and, if you fail him, will forgive you eternally.”
-Tim Keller

2. If you don't know Jesus as King then you can't truly know him and experience his forgiveness, his love, his redemption and his fullness of life that he offers.

4. How can he be your king?

1. Let Him serve you

1. Jesus can't be your king, you can't really serve Jesus until you have let him serve you. In our passage we read how he is the lowly king who comes bringing salvation. He's the king who's delight it is to save his people, and give them a share in his glory
2. It is a Biblical mandate that before you act for God you must first allow him to act for you. Before you humble yourself before God (through religious acts, trying to change your life for him, serve him, obey him, etc) we must receive and know that God in Christ humbled himself for us, and suffered the substitutionary death of the cross in our place. We must allow Jesus to go low, for our sakes, and receive it, or else we have no part, no portion, no place with him. Remember the foot washing scene with Jesus and Peter - Peter claims that Jesus will never wash his feet, Jesus will never serve him. Jesus in essence says, "If I can't wash you, If I can't do this service in forgiving your sin through my humiliation and death You can't have my presence or my power." If Jesus can't trump our conscience, we can't have his companionship. If we think we are too humble, unworthy, above or beyond to receive Jesus' free grace, we will miss out on him entirely.
1. Let Jesus be your Lord and savior by being, as he clearly wishes to be your servant. Let the blood of his cross cleanse you from all sin. let him become sin for you that you may become the righteousness of God in him.
2. As the hymn says, "light of light dispel my darkness, let your frailty strengthen me, let your meekness give me boldness, let your burden set me free! Oh Emmanuel, My savior, let your death be life for me!"

2. You must worship him. Give him your loyalty and allegiance.

1. Your life must center on someone or something. To truly make Jesus your king, your life must center on him, he must become everything. Forsaking all others keeping only unto him. Pledging your allegiance to him and him alone. He must be king.. You must worship him, not out of obligation, but compelled by his grace; you have seen and experienced his loveliness, his wonder, his gentleness his power his love and his grace. Because in him you have seen the glory of God. You have come to see that he is the true king you were made to serve and worship. The only one deserving of all glory and praise.. That he himself is the pearl of Great price, the treasure hidden in a field, and that there can be no kingdom with the king.
2. If I follow Jesus will I have to give up... will I have to pray, read my bible, give up sex, quit my Job, move to Africa? But here we are negotiating, there aren't any negotiations with King Jesus.
3. Usually we are willing to give up things, but we aren't willing to give up the right to decide what those things are.
 1. "Give me all of you!!! I don't want so much of your time, so much of your talents and money, and so much of your work. I want YOU!!! ALL OF YOU!! I have not come to torment or frustrate the natural man or woman, but to KILL IT! No half measures will do. I don't want to only prune a branch here and a branch there; rather I want the whole tree out! Hand it over to me, the whole outfit, all of your desires, all of your wants and wishes and dreams. Turn them ALL over to me, give yourself to me and I will make of you a new self---in my image. Give me yourself and in exchange I will give you Myself. My will, shall become your will. My heart, shall become your heart."
 2. This is what it means to give King Jesus our loyalty
3. **You must trust him -**
 1. Even when life doesn't make sense. Even when life seems to be falling apart all around us we trust in his goodness, his sovereignty, his faithful love, his provision, his promises.
 1. As Paul says even when it feels like were being destroyed and slaughtered when it seems as though we have been godforsaken **"in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things**

present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” -Romans 8:38-39

4. You must obey him -

1. If you only obey God because you understand you haven't actually obeyed, you've entered into an agreement and he's simply your consultant. That is not obedience. You must obey Jesus not because you understand all that he asks of you but because you believe that he is the king, he is good, he is true, and he loves you.
1. “Your heart must say something like, I do not know all that you are going to ask of me, Lord. But I'll do whatever you say in your Word, whether I like it or not, and I'll accept patiently whatever you send into my life, whether I understand it or not.” We cannot say to Jesus, you are my consultant, I will be happy to take your recommendations and I might even do some of them. No. If you want Jesus with you, you have to give up the right to self-determination. -Keller
2. But you also must obey him because you understand that this is what you we're created for, and who you were created to be. As Lewis says, “God designed the human machine to run on Himself. He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other.”
3. When you submit to Jesus when you obey him, you begin to find your true identity, a new and lasting peace, a whole new hope filled way to live. A life of flourishing.

5. You must Hope in him

1. Not in the stock market, not in your political figure or party, not in some hope for humanity to set up some utopia, not in 401 k or the fact that you got into Bitcoin early on. You must set your hope on him and his coming kingdom. Actively waiting for his return - the return of the king, the setting up of the kingdom - all our hopes and dreams, our heart desire, our soul longing is for his reign on earth as it is in heaven!
1. This is how we make Jesus our King and as we do his life and his character begin to flow through and out of our lives. And in

this way we begin to represent the true king to the world
around us.