



new life fellowship

**Sermon Title: Palm Sunday: Lessons from the Triumphal Entry**

**Speaker: Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor**

**Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11**

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup>saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup>If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”

<sup>4</sup>This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

<sup>5</sup>“Say to Daughter Zion,  
‘See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>6</sup>The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. <sup>7</sup>They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. <sup>8</sup>A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup>The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna<sup>[b]</sup> to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”<sup>[c]</sup>

“Hosanna<sup>[d]</sup> in the highest heaven!”

<sup>10</sup>When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”

<sup>11</sup>The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.” (NIV)

### **Sermon Outline:**

Jesus riding a donkey during the Passover feast points to the prophetic message of Zechariah. Jesus is demonstrating the fulfillment of prophesy, while at the same time a reframing of power.

Jesus riding this donkey shows us what type of messiah he is and what it means to be powerful.

### **Jesus is redefining what true power is.**

In Jesus we find that true power is found in humility, vulnerability and loving well. We know what is considered powerful in the world around us. What is considered powerful in the world is seen as weak in the kingdom of God and what is powerful in the world of God is not considered powerful in the world.

In the Kingdom of God, we need a lot more discernment regarding what true power is and what true power looks like.

Palm Sunday asks us if we will live according to the world’s definition of power, or will we live according to Jesus’s demonstration of power? The most powerful people are those who know how weak they are – that they are marked by brokenness, gentleness and love God and their neighbor as themselves.

Jesus coming in on a donkey reminds us that gentleness, humility, and love is power.

When the people wave their palms in the air, they are saying Hosanna! (Save Us Now)

**The waving the palms and Hosannahs speaks to our deep desire for salvation.**

The people are crying out because they know they need a power outside of themselves to help them. They are longing for the promise of God's messiah.

"We admitted we were powerless over \_\_\_\_\_ and that our lives had become unmanageable."

Christianity is for dead people. The sooner we admit our deadness and our powerlessness, the sooner we position ourselves to receive the love of God. Instead of waving our palms, we hide our palms. The invitation for us is to wave our palms as well, crying out to God for help.

**The palms being waved also speak of the human propensity to control God.**

Jesus's crucifixion was actually a coronation. Palm Sunday reminds us that even though you cannot see what God is doing, he is working. God is working beneath the surface in ways we cannot see. We gather together on Sundays to be reminded that God is working in ways that we cannot imagine.

Palm Sunday reminds us that God's ways are not our ways, His thoughts are not our thoughts.

We are invited to open ourselves up to the strange way of salvation that only God can deliver.

**Sermon Summary:**

This Sunday, Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor, leads us in our Palm Sunday sermon, which begins Holy Week. Pastor Rich explores the Triumphal Entry on what we learn from Jesus riding a donkey, and the people waving palm branches.

**Sermon Questions:**

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin, when you were taught about power, what type of picture or example was offer to you? Did this view of power point towards the world's standard of power or were you taught about looking to a power outside of yourself? Do you still hold the same view of power today? Journal your answers to these questions, offering them up to God.
3. God's ways are higher than our ways and he often takes us in a direction that we weren't anticipating. When in your life has God taking you in a direction that you were not expecting? What did this experience like for you? How did this differ from what you were expecting God to do in your life? Share these answers with your small group or a trusted brother or sister in Christ.
4. Where in your life are you living according to the world's definition of power? We have a hard time admitting we need a power outside ourselves. Have you been struggling alone, trying to fix things on your own? Jesus wants to rescue us out of our despair and self-sufficiency. Can you understand this and admit that you are not able to fix things of your own accord and that you need help outside of yourself? Share your answers with your small group.
5. The invitation of Palm Sunday is for us to wave our palms, offering our confession up to God. Are you going to wave your palm or are you going to hide your palm? If you are not able to wave your palm, find time this week to offer this up to God asking for help to wave your palm, so that you are moving from a place of by self-reliance to a place of reliance on God.