

# ***“Telling the Triumphal Truth”***

John 12:12-19

May 18, 2014

**Intro:** Revisit John’s broadest outline:

John’s Prelude (1:1-18)

“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God...”

“...the Word became flesh & dwelt among us...”

“darkness... vs. light...”

Key personal encounters with Jesus:

John the Baptist

“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!”

First disciples

“What do you want?”

Nicodemus

“You must be born again.”

Woman at well

“Come and see...”

Healed paralytic

“Do you want to be well?” “Go and sin no more or worse will come.”

Feeding of the 5,000

“...and many of His disciples followed Him no more.”

Jesus juxtaposed with Judaism’s feasts, festivals, & formalisms

“I am” statements...

Jesus’ miracles pointing to & proving He is the Messiah

Seeing Nathaniel before they met...

Knowing the Samaritan woman’s whole history...

Paralytic healed...

Official’s child healed from long distance...

Blind man of ch.9

Lazarus restored to life after 4 days in the tomb...

- Jesus said: “I am the resurrection & the life”
- Jesus proved it thru Laz!

T/S: Brings us to last week...

## VIDEO: John 11:55 – 12:11

1. Religious leaders are now determined to kill Jesus...
2. A dinner party is given in honor of Jesus...
3. People are classified by their heart-conditions:
  - a. *Miracle* – Lazarus – worshipper in fellowship
  - b. *Martha* – worshipper through service
  - c. *Mary* – worshipper through all-in sacrifice & love
  - d. *Many* – those who “believed” (to some extent)
  - e. *Multitude* – many are like circus attendees
  - f. *Monster* - Judas
  - g. *Murders* – (v.10-11)
4. **TAKE-AWAY**
  - a. **Passage begins AND ends contrasting Satan and the Savior**
  - b. God’s glory has been promised & revealed in & thru Jesus
  - c. **Everything is pointing us to the person & purpose of the cross...**

**T/S:** That brings us to our text for today... John 12:12-19 the “triumphal entry”

- Remember where we’re coming from...
- Remember where we’re going...
- BOTH are essential perspectives to understand where we are!

**T/S:** **VIDEO: John 12:12-19**

## PREVIEW:

1. We've left one dinner, heading for another...
2. Today's topic... **the transition & the triumph**
3. We'll be keying in on:
  - a. *Large crowds*
  - b. *Small Church*
  - c. *One Christ*

## BIG IDEA: *Telling the Triumphal Truth*

**T/S:** False messiahs have been plentiful throughout history...  
- Matt 24:11 = *And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.*  
- John 12:37-41 = NO excuses!

### I. LARGE CROWDS

*12The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.*

1. *Passover:*
  - *Concept*
  - *Season*
  - *City*

## 2. "Large Crowd"

*Two crowds are noted:*

*A. Crowd coming with Jesus from Bethany...*

*B. Crowd comes out to meet Him from Jerusalem*

### **What big crowds do...**

Man-made superficiality

Man-made perversion & twisting of God's ingredients

Man goes to God, not recognizing it is God coming to man

Man asks: "Save us" (from others) vs. sin & self

Man wants a Savior... but rejects a Servant (and service)

Man wants a Warrior... but walks away from Worship

Man wants Psalm 118:25... but not vv.19-29

Man wants what man wants vs. what the Messiah offers

Man wants to hear selectively & obey occasionally

<sup>13</sup>So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!"

**PALM BRANCHES:** During both major wars with Rome, reliefs of palms were stamped on the coins minted by the rebels. Thus this act of celebration is by no means neutral. It symbolizes Israel's national hopes, now focused on Jesus, being hailed as he enters the city. - NIV Application Commentary,

The Old Testament does not associate palm branches with Passover, but rather with the Feast of Tabernacles ([Lev. 23:40](#)). In the intertestamental period, however, palm branches became a general symbol of victory and celebration. When the Jews, led by Simon the Maccabee, recaptured Jerusalem from the Syrians, they "entered it with praise and palm branches" ([1 Macc. 13:51](#); cf. [2 Macc. 10:7](#)). Perhaps many in the crowd had that incident in mind as they waved their palm branches. - **John MacArthur**

**HOSANNA!:** "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel." Hosanna, a term of acclamation or praise, transliterates a Hebrew word that literally means, "Help, I pray," or "Save now, I pray" (cf. [Ps. 118:25-26](#) NKJV).

### **Seeking Salvation matters...**

What we seek salvation from... matters.

**Read Romans 3:23 & 6:23**

How we seek to be saved... matters.

**Read 2 Peter 3:1-7**

The result of being saved... matters.

**Read Revelation 2-3**

The relationship between the saved & Savior... matters.

**Read Romans 1:1 & 12:1-3**

The perversion of these truths... matters.

**Read Malachi 2:1-9**

The contrast between worldly-work & want-to-worship matters!

The cry of "Hosanna!" is an Aramaic phrase meaning "Save us now!" and it occurs in a number of the psalms (esp. [Ps. 118:25](#)). The following words ("Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord") likewise continue to quote from [Psalm 118:26](#) and announce a blessing on the pilgrim arriving in Jerusalem. But what comes next ("Blessed is the king of Israel!") is not in the psalm and departs considerably from its intent. Suddenly we gain the impression that the crowds are greeting a national liberator.

### **Psalm 118:19-29**

- 19** Open the gates of righteousness for me;  
I will enter through them  
and give thanks to the LORD.
- 20** This is the gate of the LORD;  
the righteous will enter through it.
- 21** I will give thanks to You  
because You have answered me  
and have become my salvation.
- 22** The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone.
- 23** This came from the LORD;  
it is wonderful in our eyes.
- 24** This is the day the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

25 LORD, save us!  
LORD, please grant us success!  
26 He who comes in the name  
of the LORD is blessed.  
From the house of the LORD we bless you.  
27 The LORD is God and has given us light.  
Bind the festival sacrifice with cords  
to the horns of the altar.  
28 You are my God, and I will give You thanks.  
You are my God; I will exalt You.  
29 Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;  
His faithful love endures forever.

**One Christ: (see Zechariah 9:9)**

This "gentle [humble] king" is not a man of chariots and war horses, swords and bows ([Zech. 9:10](#)), but one who will bring peace to all nations. His gift is a gift of life, not conquest. Hence, Jesus is forcing a messianic reinterpretation of his purposes for the crowd, which is caught up in a frenzied passion for Jesus' kingship. - NIV Application Commentary, The - NIV Application Commentary, The - John: From biblical text...to contemporary life.

- MAJOR REVELATION: Proper Prophetic TIME

A. "The exact day that The Lord chose to enter Jerusalem fulfilled one of the most remarkable prophecies of the OT... Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks (**Dan 9:24-26**)..."

B. Key ingredients =

- Artaxerxes decree
- Rebuilding of Temple (445 BC)
- Nehemiah 2:6
- Jewish years = 360 days

HEART & MOTIVE.... Matters!

Waving palm branches was symbolic of a nationalistic spirit. The crowd fully expected to see Jesus issue a call to arms and drive out the hated Romans. - Preaching the Word

John's note that the people flocked to Jesus because they heard that He had raised Lazarus from the dead reveals the superficial nature of their faith. Their desire was that Jesus would accept the role of political ruler and military deliverer that they expected of the Messiah (cf. [John 6:14-15](#); [12:13](#)). They probably reasoned that since He had the power to raise to life one who had been dead for four days, He could surely use that power to free them from the yoke of Roman oppression. As was the case with so many other crowds that followed Jesus (cf. [2:23-25](#); [6:2,14-15,26,60,66](#); [12:42-43](#)), this one consisted chiefly of thrill seekers.

The triumphal entry is a stark counterpoint to Mary's pure and extravagant devotion. On the surface, we could say that the celebration of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem shows the crowd's enthusiasm for Jesus, and certainly John wants us to see it that way. But there is a darker motif in the story. The crowd is cheering a fantasy: - NIV Application Commentary

The crowd in Jerusalem assumed that Jesus and his movement would serve their cause. Their vision for society and Jesus' presence could together make changes they dearly desired. As the gospel story unfolds further, Jesus' failure to satisfy those visions (religious, political, and social) leads to a cry for crucifixion one week later.  
-NIV Application Commentary

In what manner do we likewise use Jesus to fuel our own visions... Do we ever take up the name of Jesus and attach it to our own agendas?

Hosea 4:1-3 & Malachi 2:1-9 = God rebuking false priests & man-centered church! (Great OT context to sandwich around Palm Sunday crowd in John 12 - Rev. 2-3 is other book end)

Add broad road connection to the big crowds & narrow gate connection to the "small church" analogy...

Add the Helmet of Salvation section on Luke 9:23... "Deny, Pick-up, & Follow" requirements. (All the while acknowledging grace - Eph. 2:8-10)

Rom 1:16-20 & 2 Peter 3:1ff = men "suppress the truth..."

"Without faith it is impossible to please God..." = application against the Palm Sunday "crowds"

2 Timothy 4:1ff... "they call unto themselves..."

James tells us it is NOT okay to be double minded...

## II. SMALL CHURCH

<sup>14</sup>And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

<sup>15</sup>“Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt!”

The Lord's choice of a mount was a purposeful, conscious fulfillment of [Zechariah 9:9](#): "Fear not, (the words fear not were added from [Isa. 40:9](#)) daughter of Zion (a reference to Jerusalem [cf. [2 Kings 19:21](#); [Isa. 10:32](#); [Zech. 9:9](#)] and by extension the whole nation); behold, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt." If Jesus had been the conquering warrior the people were hoping for, a war horse would have been a more appropriate mount (cf. [Rev. 19:11](#)). By choosing to ride a donkey, however, Jesus entered Jerusalem as the humble ([Zech. 9:9](#); [Matt. 21:5](#)) Prince of Peace. Only when He returns the second time in judgment will Jesus ride the white horse of the conqueror ([Rev. 19:11](#)). The symbolism of His humiliation was lost on the crowd

Jesus was a King like no other. Instead of the pomp and circumstance associated with earthly kings, He was meek and lowly ([Matt. 11:29](#)); instead of defeating His enemies by force, He conquered them by dying ([Heb. 2:14](#); cf. [Eph. 1:19-22](#); [Col. 2:15](#)).  
MacArthur New Testament Commentary, The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary – John 12-21.

Just as He perfectly fulfilled all of the Old Testament prophecies regarding His first coming, so He will also come again in exactly the manner foretold by the Scriptures.

<sup>16</sup>His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.

## **Motivation always trumps comprehension! (see the Pharisees vs. the Tax Collector)**

Luke 18:9-14

### The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

**9** *To some who were confident of their own righteousness<sub>(A)</sub> and looked down on everyone else,<sub>(B)</sub> Jesus told this parable: **10** "Two men went up to the temple to pray,<sub>(C)</sub> one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. **11** The Pharisee stood by himself<sub>(D)</sub> and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. **12** I fast<sub>(E)</sub> twice a week and give a tenth<sub>(F)</sub> of all I get.'*

**13** *"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast<sub>(G)</sub> and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'<sub>(H)</sub>*

**14** *"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."*

John's editorial comment about their misunderstanding recalls [2:22](#), following Jesus' cleansing of the temple. It was not until Jesus was glorified—when they saw the nature of Jesus' person and work and were filled with God's Spirit—that they understood the true picture of what was happening.

In contrast to the crowd's superficial, fleeting attachment to Jesus, which ended in rejection, His true disciples persevere in believing in Him. The Lord said to "those Jews who had believed Him, 'If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine'" ([John 8:31](#)). The writer of Hebrews warned that true believers "are not... those who shrink back to destruction, but... those who have faith to the preserving of the soul" ([Heb. 10:39](#)). A professed faith that does not "bear fruit in keeping with repentance" ([Matt. 3:8](#)) is dead, non-saving faith ([James 2:14-26](#)).

<sup>17</sup>The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness.

In [1 John 2:19](#) John wrote of such people, "They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us."

### III. ONE CHRIST

[18](#)The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. [19](#)So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him.”

Double meaning(s) is still at work in John...

Afraid of the crowd's reaction if they arrested Jesus openly, the Pharisees could only look on in frustration and dismay...

QUOTE: “...the nearer the temple of the Lord, the further from the Lord of the temple.” – Matthew Henry

### IV. CLOSE

But far from being elated by the joyous cries of the giddy multitude, Jesus was grieved by the people's superficial attitude toward Him. He knew that many who were hailing Him as the Messiah that day would cry for His death the following Friday.

[\(Luke 19:41-44\)](#)

- MacArthur New Testament Commentary

## **Luke 19: 37-44**

**37**As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, **38**saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” **39**And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.” **40**He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.”

### **Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem**

**41**And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, **42**saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. **43**For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side **44**and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”