

PALM SUNDAY



NORTHVIEW  
**STUDENTS**  
5th/6th grade

DATE(S)

April 1-2, 2023

SERIES AND LESSON TITLE

Palm Sunday (One-Off)

TAKE-HOME POINT (THP)

Love Jesus for who He is, not  
for what He can do.

SCRIPTURE FOCUS

John 12:12-18  
John 19:14-16

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Give any Campus-Specific Announcements



THE OVERVIEW

# OPENING GAME / GROUP TIME

## LARGE-GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY

### "Truth or Lie: Easter Edition"

A screen game that displays statements about Easter and students must decide if the statement is a Truth or a Lie.

## OPENING SMALL GROUP

### QUESTIONS

Take attendance and make sure to welcome anyone who is a first-time guest!

What was the highlight of your week?

What is the best Easter candy and what is the worst, in your opinion?

When you're finished (and there's time), pray for our time of worship/singing.

STUFF TO ASK TO UNIQUELY CONNECT THE LESSON TO KIDS' LIVES

### ACTIVITIES

STUFF TO DO SO THINGS AREN'T BORING



# LARGE-GROUP SCRIPT

## THE MESSAGE

### Palm Sunday – April 1-2, 2023

(Start by sharing a personal story of a time you experienced a parade, whether you were watching one or marching in one. If you don't have a parade story, talk about a time when a large crowd showed up to see someone (i.e. concert, performance, celebrity spotting, etc.) The point is to talk about a time that a person or group of people drew a crowd and how exciting it was. If there are funny moments in your story, be sure to share those:)

(Transitioning out of your story...)

There is something so exciting about a crowd, isn't there?! The energy is electric, and the anticipation is high! Everyone is there to see something amazing, and it is such a bonding experience. Today, I want to talk about two different times in the Bible that a crowd gathered to see somebody. And not just anybody... Jesus! Even though Jesus drew a crowd both times, it was for two very different reasons, and the energy of the crowd couldn't have been more opposite.

The first story is from the Book of John, in the New Testament, where John, a disciple of Jesus, describes the moment when Jesus entered into Jerusalem, riding on the back of a donkey. Has anyone had the chance to ride a donkey or a horse before? (wait for students to raise hands) Yeah, it's not super comfortable, but they didn't have mini-vans and motorcycles gonna do, right? This moment that happened almost 2,000 years ago is now known as The Triumphal Entry, in other words, "The Big Entrance!" and we celebrate it on Palm Sunday, which is the Sunday before Easter. That's today!! Let's read about it in John 12:12-18...

(Ask for a student, or student leader, to read this passage)

<sup>12</sup>The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup>They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Blessed is the king of Israel!"

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

<sup>15</sup>"Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion;  
see, your king is coming,  
seated on a donkey's colt."

<sup>16</sup>At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

<sup>17</sup>Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word.

<sup>18</sup>Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. (John 12:12-18)

How cool is this scene?? It's like Jesus is in a parade... but he's the only one in the parade. There aren't big balloons, extravagant floats, or Santa Claus (shoutout to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade!). It's just Jesus on a donkey... and people go NUTS!! Back then they didn't have confetti or sound machines to wave. Nope. They had something way better... Palm Branches! They waved those palm branches all over the place and then threw them in the street as a sign of respect! They also shouted "Hosanna!" Yell that with me... "Hosanna!!" (let students repeat) Now yell it like you mean it... "Hosanna!"

# THE MESSAGE

Hosanna literally means "Save!" or "Save us!" The crowd was PUMPED to see Jesus. But why? Well, John actually tells us pretty clearly in verse 18. Let's read that again:

<sup>18</sup>Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. (John 12:18)  
Do you see that? They heard what Jesus DID, the miracles he had performed, and that's what drew the crowds. Everyone was hoping they would see something amazing for themselves! Many of them probably even wanted Jesus to do something amazing for them. They focused on what Jesus had DONE and what He was going to DO.

But not everyone was excited to see Jesus. If we go on to read verse 19, it says...

<sup>19</sup>So the Pharisees said to one another, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!" (John 12:19)

So while the crowds are partying and celebrating getting to see Jesus in person, the Pharisees, or religious leaders, are not so happy. They hate seeing the crowds so excited to see Jesus. They had heard about what He had done, but they are even more concerned about WHO He is claiming to BE. It's one thing to do some amazing things, but once you start claiming to be the Son of God, which Jesus did, that's going to turn some heads. The Pharisee's didn't trust Jesus. They didn't think He was who He claimed to be. They thought He was a liar. And they made it their week's mission to instill the same doubt in everyone else! And guess what... it worked. Less than a week later, on Friday, the crowd gathered to see Jesus, but for a very different reason. Let's read about it in John 19:14-16...

(Ask for a student to read, or read it yourself)

<sup>14</sup>It was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about noon.

"Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews.

<sup>15</sup>But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!"

"Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.

"We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered.

<sup>16</sup>Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. (John 19:14-16)

See what I mean? Totally different feel than just 5 days before on Palm Sunday. The crowd went from shouting "Hosanna! Hosanna!" to "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" That took a turn, didn't it? I can imagine there are few things more exciting than a large crowd cheering you on, but few things more terrifying than a crowd screaming at you in anger and hate. What happened?? Well, this sad turn of events over just a 5-day period made it clear that the crowd loved what Jesus could DO, but they did not TRUST who He WAS! Let me say that again... The crowd loved what Jesus could DO, but they did not TRUST who He WAS!

They thought He was a liar. They were influenced into believing Jesus was there to deceive them, not save them. And it drove them to go as far as to ask their leader, Pilate, to put Jesus to death. Little did they know that this request was actually giving Jesus a chance to prove once and for all that He is EXACTLY who He claimed to be.

# THE MESSAGE

I always hate it when people spoil the ending of movies. That being said, I'm going to spoil the end of this story. But hey, since it happened 2,000 years ago, can it really be considered spoiling it?? Anyway, the Pharisee's plan ends up succeeding and Jesus is put to death on Friday. And he wasn't just put to death, he suffered. He was brutally tortured and was nailed to a cross. Just 5 days after the crowd celebrated His arrival on Palm SUNDAY, they had Him put to death on FRIDAY. But, as some of us already know, that is not the end of the story. Next week we are celebrating Easter, which is celebrating the fact that Jesus did NOT stay in that grave, but rose from the dead just three days after being put to death. Proving once and for all that He is exactly who He claimed to be. He is the Son of God! I can't wait to celebrate that amazing truth with you, and the rest of our Church, next weekend!!!

So what does this mean for you? How can you apply what you learned today to your life this week? And what in the world is our THP today?? That's right, I haven't said it yet. My bad! Here it is:

**THP: Love Jesus for who He is, not for what He can do.**

From our story today, we learned that the crowd made the mistake of focusing more on what Jesus could DO for them, than on who He IS. Following Jesus is not about doing things for Jesus so He will do things for us. That's shallow. And that mentality doesn't last very long. Like we saw from today's example, it only lasted 5 days for the crowd. Instead, following Jesus means loving Him for who He is, and for what he has done for us. You see, by dying on the cross for our sins and rising from the dead to conquer death, He has given us the chance to be in right relationship with God again! That's amazing! Let's be real, there's nothing else He should need to do for us. That's plenty! But He chooses to give us even more.

He is our comforter when life gets tough.  
He gives us wisdom when we are faced with a difficult decision.  
He welcomes us into His family.  
He gives us strength when we feel weak.  
He gives us hope, even on our most difficult days.

I could go on and on! Jesus is so generous! So let me close by asking you, "Do you love Jesus for who He is, or for what you think He will do for you?" to say it a different way, "Do you love Jesus because he deserves it, or to get something from Him?" Let's remember our THP this week as we prepare to celebrate Easter:

**THP: Love Jesus for who He is, not for what He can do.**

(close in prayer)

# CLOSING SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

## CLOSING SMALL GROUP

### QUESTIONS

**Leaders Note:** Make sure to have some Bibles for the students and yourself to use.

What was the THP today and why was that important during the message?

Let's read John 12:12-18 together. What do think it would have felt like to be in the crowd that day?

Let's read John 19:14-16 together. How would the feeling in the crowd this day have differed from the first day?

Our THP is: **Love Jesus for who He is, not for what He can do.**

What do you think it means to love Jesus for who He is, instead of what He can do?

How often do you focus more on what Jesus can do for you, rather than who He is? If you were to approach your relationship with one of your friends this same way, how do you think that would go?

How will the THP help you to live differently this week? Be specific

How can this group pray for you this week?

### FINAL THOUGHTS

After your group is finished with your discussion questions, close in prayer!

Remind students that there is no 5/6 service next week because of Easter!

Encourage those students in your group who made first-time decisions or who made re-commitments to follow Jesus today! Tell them that this group is a support system for them and they don't have to do this life alone. If there is a student who makes a first-time commitment to Christ, have them text NVSNEXT to 85379 or fill out a response card so you can capture their information and our staff can follow up with them. Once your group discussion is over, close your group in prayer!



# PREP NEEDS

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## SMALL-GROUP SUPPLIES

- Some Bibles for students to share during group discussion
- Pen/paper for SOAP study (optional)
- Playlister material

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## LARGE-GROUP SUPPLIES

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## AUDIO/VISUAL NEEDS

AppleTV with the Playlister app or simply access the Playlister material on the Northview Church website: [www.northviewchurch.us](http://www.northviewchurch.us)

