



# Palm Sunday

Matthew 21:1-17 | Ryan Pfeiffer | March 29, 2026

**INTRO.** Ever been in a huge Crowd?

- Concert, dance party mosh-pit, a Black Friday at Best Buy,
- Energy, the excitement, intensity

Every Gospel talks about THE CROWDS at Jesus' entry to Jerusalem

1. vs 10 When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred ...
2. Ancients historians put Jerusalem anywhere from 250K to 2M! At Passover.

They want us to hear the Shouting, the Singing... Hosanna to the Son of David... Hosanna in the Highest...

Representing the pent up messianic expectations of hundreds of yrs!

To add fuel to the fire... rumors were spreading thru the crowd about Jesus...

- He had raised Lazarus from the dead! (John 12:17).

John tells us that even Jesus' enemies had to admit "The whole world has gone after him!" (Jn 12:9)...

In just 5 days this same crowd will go from shouting Hosanna to crucify him!

How does it end up here?

It's in today's text we see that as soon as Jesus begins exercising his authority as King— people begin to have second thoughts.

**FOCUS:** Accepting Jesus as KING of our life means embracing his authority to cleanse us so that he can renew us.

**FIRST: HIS AUTHORITY.** v12 Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves.

**PPT.** Temple courts... Gentile courts— people from all nations could gather.

It's this area Jesus is concerned with... Maybe not everyone else's priority!

The Religious Leaders are Clearly offended and angry about this... v15 "they were indignant" WHY??

Mark's gospel "And who gave YOU authority to do this?" (Mark 11:28).

Jesus is assuming the right to tell them how the TEMPLE should be used.

He's not just telling them... he's doing something about it... right there... AND THEY are like "What gives you the right!?"

Jesus CLEANSING THE TEMPLE— represents the way Jesus comes into our lives to restore the priority of God's presence / Holiness in our life.

Because you are that TEMPLE. "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?" —1 Cor 3:16.



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**AND - RELIGIOUS LEADERS** represent that part of us - offended by Jesus' claim to tell us what our lives are really meant to be.

**ILLUS: Mentor**— Ryan are those thoughts from God? Why are you agreeing?

I needed Jesus' authority over my doubts!

**REFLECT:** Where have you sensed a need for Jesus' authority in your life?

**NOW: HIS RENEWAL.** 13 "It is written," he said to them, "'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it 'a den of robbers.'" 14 The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them.

Often people will ask me, what does renewal mean?

**FIRST...** it means a breakthrough in our depth of love for God.

Jesus said the most important thing in life is love... "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

- Sometimes our lives incrementally drift from that first love... PPT clutter.
- Sometimes he is just taking us deeper... taking all areas of our hearts

Our love for God feeds prayer... 13 My house will be called a house of prayer.

Where prayer fades... our love for other things overpowers love for God...

**EM Bounds.** "Prayer honors God, acknowledges His being, exalts His power, adores His providence, secures His aid."

Prayer restores our sense of God's presence... the fragrance of his holiness.

**SECOND...** renewal means growth in the breadth of love for others... v14 The blind and the lame came to him at the temple and he healed them.

A religious spirit resists the messiness of God's love for outcasts, outsiders, needy people...

Jesus Movement... it was the barefoot, longhaired, drugged out hippies.

There was so much fear—> what they were doing to culture...

1 John 4:18 But perfect love drives out fear...

Renewed love for God always produces a greater love for others.

Matt 22:39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'



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**As a church we seek to cultivate compassion for all people...**

- 1. Unborn children**
- 2. Vulnerable young mothers**
- 3. Foster Children**
- 4. Immigrants**
- 5. Homeless**
- 6. LGBTQ person**

**This is a love that holds to biblical truth while holding out grace/mercy.**

**Deuteronomy 10:18 He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.**

## MONDAY – Cleansing & True Worship

### Morning .....

**Reflect.** Matthew 21:13 “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you make it a den of robbers.”

- Jesus cleanses the temple → He desires pure worship, not performance
- Holy Week begins with heart examination
- Easter invites renewed devotion

**Prayer.** Psalm 139:23-24 “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!”

**Pray for:**

- A heart that values prayer over performance
- Awareness of anything in your life that needs cleansing
- Renewed desire for authentic worship

### Evening .....

**Reflect.** Psalm 24:3-4 “Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.”

- God’s presence calls for purity
- Christ cleanses us fully
- We end the day in surrender

**Prayer.** Book of Common Prayer (Collect for Purity)

“Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy Name.”

**Pray for:**

- Forgiveness for specific sins from today
- Purity in thoughts, motives, and actions
- A deeper love for God above all else

## TUESDAY – Authority & Truth

### Morning.....

**Reflect.** Matthew 21:42 “Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the Scriptures: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes”?’”

- Jesus is rejected yet becomes central to salvation
- God overturns human judgment
- We must build on Him

**Prayer.** Psalm 118:26 “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord.”

#### Pray for:

- A life firmly built on Christ
- Trust in God’s ways over your own
- Alignment with God’s truth

### Evening.....

**Reflect.** John 12:36 “While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become children of light.”

- The light is His gospel truth
- His Light must be believed and followed
- Delay hardens the heart

**Prayer.** Psalm 27:1 “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”

#### Pray for:

- Courage to respond to God
- Sensitivity to the Spirit
- Freedom from resisting God

## WEDNESDAY – Hidden Motives & Betrayal

### Morning.....

**Reflect.** Matthew 26:14-15 14 Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests 15 and asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?” So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. 16 From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

- Judas reveals hidden compromise
- Proximity and familiarity doesn’t mean devotion
- God examines the heart

**Prayer.** “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”  
– Psalm 51:10

#### Pray for:

- Exposure of hidden sin or compromise
- Integrity in private and public life
- A loyal, undivided heart toward Christ

### Evening .....

**Psalm 41:9** “Even my close friend, someone I trusted, one who shared my bread, has turned against me.”

- Jesus understands betrayal from close friends like Judas
- He suffers abandonment from his closest friends
- He enters suffering knowingly
- Our sin grieves his Spirit

**Prayer.** “The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.”  
– Psalm 34:18

#### Pray for:

- Healing from relational wounds
- Grace to forgive those who have hurt you
- Faithfulness and loyalty in your relationships

## THURSDAY – Communion & Surrender

### Morning .....

**Reflect.** Luke 22:19 “And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.’”

- Jesus gives Himself freely
- The cross begins with love
- We receive before we respond

**Prayer.** “Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?” – 1 Corinthians 10:16

#### Pray for:

- Gratitude for Christ’s sacrifice
- Deeper understanding of communion and grace
- A heart that receives before striving

### Evening .....

**Reflect.** Luke 22:41 “He withdrew about a stone’s throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, ‘Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.’ An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.”

- Surrender is costly
- Jesus submits fully
- Obedience precedes victory

**Prayer.** “Into your hands I commit my spirit.” – **Psalm 31:5**

#### Pray for:

- Strength to surrender control to God
- Trust in God’s will over your own
- Obedience in specific areas of your life

**FRIDAY – The Cross**

**Morning** .....

**Reflect.** Isaiah 53:5 “But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.”

- Jesus suffers in our place
- The cross is substitution
- Healing comes through His wounds

**Prayer.** “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.” – **Psalm 51:1**

**Pray for:**

- Gratitude for forgiveness through the cross
- Healing in areas of brokenness
- A deeper understanding of Christ’s sacrifice

**Evening** .....

**Reflect.** John 19:30 “When he had received the drink, Jesus said, ‘It is finished.’ With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.”

- The work is finished
- Nothing can be added
- We rest in grace

**Prayer.** “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.”– **1 Peter 2:24**

**Pray for:**

- Rest in Christ’s finished work
- Assurance of salvation
- Freedom from guilt and shame

**SATURDAY – Silence & Waiting**

**Morning** .....

**Reflect.** Lamentations 3:25-26 “But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.”

- God works in silence
- Waiting builds trust
- Not all is visible

**Prayer.** “Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.” – Psalm 37:7

**Pray for:**

- Patience in seasons of waiting
- Trust when God feels silent and evil seems to go unchecked.
- Faith in God’s unseen work

**Evening** .....

**Reflect.** Psalm 130:5 “I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope.”

- Hope anchors the soul
- Waiting is active trust
- Resurrection is coming

**Prayer.** “Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.” – Psalm 42:5

**Pray for:**

- Hope in God’s promises
- Strength in uncertainty
- Confidence in God’s timing

## **Easter Day**

**Reflect.** Matthew 28:5-6 But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said.'

- He is Risen!
- Death has been defeated
- The stone has been rolled away
- Hope is alive again

**Reflection Question:** Where do I still live as if the stone has not been rolled away?

**Prayer.** Philippians 3:10-11 "I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings... and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead."

**Pray for:**

- Awakening to the power of the resurrection in your life
- Renewed joy in the victory of Jesus over sin and death
- Courage to live as a resurrection people in a broken world