

DCF:

He came into the office on a Monday morning. He was a friendly enough guy. Said he was from the national office and was here to see how things were going. He asked how people felt the business was going and what the prospects were for the future. He went out to eat with some of the workers at the local diner for lunch and seemed to be truly interested in them. He did the same on Tuesday and again on Wednesday. By then, the workers were getting a bit suspicious. They asked him “Why are you here?” “Oh,” he replied, “just to see how things are going.” “But why?” several of the workers asked him. He evaded that question for a bit, but finally told them. “I’m here to figure out the best way to shut you down. The head office has scheduled your factory for elimination.” Kind of a sneaky way to go about it, don’t you think? Why not be honest right from the start?

Why not be like Jesus, some might say. Jesus never hid the reason for being here on earth. He was always upfront about who He was, where He had come from and why He was here. He spoke publicly about these things and even used some very vivid events to highlight the facts. As we study the Word of God today, we see clearly **“HE CAME TO CONQUER”**. He came to conquer sin with amazing humility and with amazing power. Come with me today as we go to the Word and see this fact once more.

Part One: With amazing humility

Are there people who didn’t know who Jesus was? Perhaps. Today we see Jesus, the master teacher, using a visual aid to proclaim who He was. To those who were raised knowing the Old Testament, this picture was striking. It’s a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophesy that we heard today, from Zechariah. Their king comes to them riding the colt of a donkey. This procession into the city is something that everyone understood. Why, even we understand the significance of a procession declaring something. When we go to a graduation ceremony, the graduates file in, their presence telling us they are there for something special, something different. When we have a parade, a procession on the fourth of July, it gives honor and praise to those who have served their country. The procession that Jesus headed meant something very special. He came to establish His eternal throne.

But there was a big difference in His approach. Usually a conquering king would ride a powerful, prancing stallion, visually proclaiming his power and glory. He would rally the people to support him in his drive to establish his kingdom. Not Jesus. He came riding the lowliest of beasts, the colt of a donkey. The king of heaven and earth riding such a lowly beast? Why, it would be like our president arriving at his inauguration driving a 1997 rusty Ford 150. A common work vehicle. Jesus came, with amazing humility to conquer. Notice please one more thing. Jesus did not come seeking support for His mission. He didn’t need the help of the people to conquer. Truth be told, the people couldn’t have helped Him anyways. They were powerless to conquer.

But conquer what? Jesus did not come to conquer the Romans and establish an independent nation of Israel. Oh, some thought that’s why He came. In fact, the crowd used an Old Testament word of praise “Hosanna” which means “save.” Did they intentionally mean that word to suggest that Jesus came to save them from some evil? Perhaps, although by this time in Israel’s history the word hosanna had devolved into a word that was just an expression of joy. It’s kind of like the word “hurray.” Do you know what that means or where it came from? There’s a lot of uncertainty about that word. Some think it comes from a word that Norse warriors would shout that word before they went into battle. It originally meant “on to paradise.” Nowadays? It’s a shout of joy and approval, isn’t it?

Jesus did not come to conquer the Romans. He came to conquer sin. His entrance into Jerusalem was the beginning of the end game in God’s plan of salvation. This entrance and Jesus’ upcoming passion, was the fulfillment of a plan that started way back in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. Throughout the intervening years, this plan had been gradually revealed to sinful mankind. Integral to this plan was Jesus’ amazing humility.

Jesus humbled Himself all the way to the cross. Now, humility in Jesus’ case meant setting aside the full use of His power and glory. It’s amazing when you look at it. Here’s Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, true God, humbling Himself. He gave up for a time all the perks of heaven to put on human flesh and live on this dusty, sinful ball we call earth. He tamped down His glory and set aside the full use of His godly powers for 30 some years. He humbled Himself to the point that He would die. Why? To pay for your sins and mine. To redeem the world from the eternal effects of sin - punishment in hell. By drawing the full wrath and anger of God against sin, He emptied the devil’s power to accuse and convict believers of sin.

Can we ever begin to comprehend Jesus’ amazing humility? Can we ever begin to understand His payment for our sin, His suffering of God’s anger against sin while He was on the cross? No, and thank God for that!

Because He suffered, because He died, we will not suffer what He suffered. He did this for you, purely out of love for you. We could never have helped Jesus in His mission, because we don't have the ability to pay for our sins. He did it all for you.

It was a real payment. It was a real victory because of Jesus' amazing power.

Part Two: With amazing power

Again, we get just a slight glimpse of who Jesus truly is in today's lesson. Being God, He knew about the colt that was tied at the entrance to the town. He knew the right words the disciples were to say to the owners. He knew what would happen. Listen again to these words that show His knowledge of all things. , ***“Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ tell him, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.’” ⁴They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, ⁵some people standing there asked, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” ⁶They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go.”***

We get a slight glimpse of Jesus' power in this event, but we don't see the full extent of Jesus' power, do we? I mean, we don't see His power as He battles sin on the cross. We don't see the extent of His determination to complete our salvation as He suffers. We don't see the down and dirty details.

But we do see the results. Jesus came to conquer sin and establish His forever kingdom with amazing power. That kingdom was not an earthly kingdom, but an eternal kingdom. It wouldn't end with His death, for He would never die after His resurrection. It will never be conquered, for it is upheld by His almighty power. The gates of hell will never prevail against it.

It's amazing to us that His kingdom still exists to this very day. Amazing to us, but not to Jesus, who established it by His amazing power. It's amazing to us, because we've never seen an eternal kingdom here on earth. In the history of the human race, all nations rise and fall. None last for more than a few centuries. We recall the Assyrian empire, the Egyptian empire. We remember the Greek, the Roman, the British empires. All rose. All fell. But not Jesus' kingdom. It will endure beyond the end of time because it is established and maintained by His amazing power as God.

You are a member of this amazing kingdom. Jesus conquered death for you. Jesus brought you into this kingdom. Not in a flashy way, not with pomp and circumstance. Simply by the power of humble words and plain water the Holy Spirit gave you a saving faith and made you a citizen of paradise. This world may not see anything special about this that causes them to give praise to God. They don't see Jesus' power. But you do. You have been saved. You have been given the gift of forgiveness and eternal life. So, how will you respond to His amazing power/

Well, the people of Jerusalem showed Jesus honor when He rode into Jerusalem. They spread their cloaks on the road. They cut palm branches and did the same. They shouted out their approval of His arrival by quoting parts of Psalm 118. ***“Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” ¹⁰“Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!” “Hosanna in the highest!”*** They verbally praised the Lord as He came to them.

They showed their thanks by their words and actions. How can you show Jesus honor since He came to conquer sin and death for you? Oh, not by cutting branches and throwing your coats on the ground. There are other ways, right? We show Jesus honor when we lay our gifts on His altar here at church. That's one way to praise Him. We show Jesus honor when we gather together to praise Him in our worship services. We're taking time and expending effort to visibly show Him our love. We show Jesus honor when we thank Him in our prayers. We show Jesus honor when we dedicate everything in our lives to His glory. Encouraging our children to grow in their knowledge of God's Word. Choosing a career that is in line with His will. Picking hobbies and belongings that don't interfere with His mission of spreading the Gospel. Mentioning Him in our conversations with friends and neighbors. Inviting others to hear the story of Jesus, our conquering Savior.

Jesus was always upfront about who He was and why He had come. ***“HE CAME TO CONQUER.”*** He did it with amazing humility and amazing power. Thank God He conquered sin for you.

AMEN