

PALM SUNDAY  
SOVEREIGN LORD AND SAVIOR

4/14/19

Jesus is and always has been controversial. It is a simple fact of the reality of who He is. Either He actually is God or He is not. Either He is the Sovereign Lord or He is not. If He is not, then a negative response or even no response makes sense. If He is, then a positive response of belief and submission makes sense.

There may be no better illustration of that than what happened on what we call Palm Sunday. What appears to be a wild and sincere worship of Jesus, turns out to be pretty shallow and fickle. The people totally reversed their response in less than a week. How can that be?

I think that is because they had, and we have, an inadequate view of who Jesus really is, which then leads to an inadequate response. It seems that we want a savior, but we don't want a *sovereign* savior. We want to be set free from our sin and slavery, but we imagine that as living independent autonomous lives.

That really isn't an option. We live enslaved to Satan or to Christ. It is interesting that those who were welcoming Jesus had the facts correct. **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!" (John 12:13)**

They were crying out "Hosanna", which means "save," "save us," or "Savior" if they were addressing Jesus directly. They wanted saving. That is a really good thing. They also recognized Jesus as King of Israel. They wanted to be set free, which is also a good thing. However, Jesus' kingdom proved to be something other than they had in mind, and His salvation did as well.

He was both ruler and suffering servant. How those things combine into the reality of following Jesus is the message of the gospel. The crowd had a skewed idea of what that looked like. The religious leaders had an antagonistic view of what that looked like. Even the disciples didn't get it until Christ was raised from the dead and He brought all the pieces together. We dare not separate the work of Jesus from the person of Jesus.

The Easter saga is an entire package. Jesus existed in eternity past. He came to earth and took on flesh to pay the price for our sin. He died in our stead. He was raised to life that we might have new life.

Paul summarized it pretty well in **1 Corinthians 15:3-7**.

**For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.**

So the question for us is, "Who is Jesus and what does it mean to worship Him?"

**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. What is interesting or disturbing to you about the various responses to Jesus during “the triumphal entry”?
2. What was Jesus’ response to their responses?
3. How do you see those responses as typical of responses to Jesus, perhaps even typical of our responses to Him?
4. Perhaps our responses come down to our response to the question that Jesus asked of His disciples, “Who do you say that I am?” Who do you say He is?