

Who Is This?

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[0 : 0 0] the God of the humble amen when you meet Jesus isn't he has a way of dealing with your pride it's hard to be proudful in the presence of Jesus but we do our best to try we do our best to try let's pray again Father thank you for sending us such a humble savior great in power glorious in majesty boundless love the deepest humility how can all of that exist in the same person but it does in Jesus and there's no contradiction worthy is the lamb who's also the lion of the tribe of Judah wow blessed be your name help us to see it help us to see him open our eyes

Father again we do want to pray my heart breaks for Pastor Scrubs and Lord his family losing their Nashville and losing their daughter and all the two other families who lost children those who lost adults in that horrible horrible demonic event oh God surround them with your presence draw that church close to one another that school close to one another and to you Father keep Lord keep your we know the world's going to try to politicize and make movements out of this Lord keep your people from doing it help keep us from jumping on bandwagons help us to see what has happened your people have been attacked in the country of religious freedom by someone who was broken and hurting bless her mother Lord give her grace draw her to yourself give her grace she deals with this situation too

Lord so many people are hurting stand with your people shepherd your sheep we think of the young lady even here at Covenant College former graduate Valerie who took her own life and then left such a condemning suicide note that attacked people we know people we know from this church we know oh God bless them Lord help them to deal with any guilt they may feel may they find in you there is grace and forgiveness and Lord keep them from taking unearned guilt that young lady was broken too and hurting oh God show us how to minister to those who are struggling with transgenderism and identity help show us how to love them but Lord help us to love them with grace and with truth may you draw such to yourself and show them how much you love them Father bless your word now as it goes forth help us to see the humble king and may we respond accordingly draw someone today to yourself show someone how holy and humble Jesus is today and how loving and how forgiving show someone today and grant them life that is truly life use your unworthy servant to proclaim your truth now for Jesus sake and the good of all who hear this message we pray amen and amen we're taking a quick side trip from our study in the gospel of John and we're going to spend time today in Matthew chapter 21 Matthew chapter 21

I don't always do Palm Sunday messages but this year I said if the Lord was go for it so I'm going for it Psalm I'm sorry Matthew 21 verses 1 through 11 hear now the word of the Lord now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage to the Mount of Olives then Jesus sent two disciples saying to them go into the village in front of you and immediately you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her and tie them and bring them to me if anyone says anything to you you just say the Lord needs them and he will send them at once this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet saying say to the daughter of Zion behold your king is coming to you humble and mounted on a donkey on a colt the foal of a beast of burden the disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them they brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks and he sat on them most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road and others cut palm branches from the trees and spread them on the road and the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting

[6 : 3 3] Hosanna to the son of David blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest and when they entered Jerusalem the whole city was stirred up saying who is this and the crowd said this is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee that is the word of the Lord please be seated thank you again praise team for leading us wonderfully in worship now I don't know if you remember 1999 I mean it was really a while ago now when you think about it can you believe it

we're 23 years into the 21st century that's just that blows my mind I dreamed of this day as a kid I thought we had flying cars though I heard there's a prototype but I don't

I haven't got one so I don't know maybe you got one keep hope alive but in 1999 in December Time Magazine ran this campaign man of the century who remembers that man of the century okay really only a couple people remember this oh thank you thanks Jim appreciate you now man of the century they were going to choose who was to be the man of the century and put this person on you know the cover of their magazine now running with that because of that there was a huge campaign from Christians to lobby Time to choose Jesus of Nazareth as the man of the century Time didn't get the memo evidently they chose Albert Einstein by the way and if you were to go you can go online and see that picture of Einstein on the cover of Time Magazine as the man of the century I mean people were really uptight about this I was getting emails and texts family members vote for Jesus vote for Jesus why were we so concerned that Jesus be chosen if Time had chosen Jesus what would they have said about him that he was a great man and would Jesus really only be the man of the century I mean really is that good enough Jesus is more than a great man the angel who proclaimed his birth said he will be great capital G he will be great and be called the son of the most high man of the century sounds a little weak to me if Time had said yes would there have been a victory for the cause of Christ now speaking of victory

Palm Sunday is about victory we call it the triumphal entry Jesus didn't call it that but that's what we call it the triumphal entry into Jerusalem into the holy city if it was a triumph how did he defeat his foes he didn't defeat them by winning a popularity contest he did it by the humble loving sacrifice of his own life for our sins this is the Jesus we need to know in this time in our country when more and more will you hold to the truth of Jesus and seek to live in his righteousness are becoming less popular a little less popular at one point in our nation's history

Christianity was held up then in the 20th century especially toward the mid toward the toward the end people were apathetic to Christianity it's not so bad not so good whatever now we're slipping to the other side where our values are becoming the enemy and have become the enemy how are we going to represent Jesus and win people away from darkness in this atmosphere I want to focus on the big question of this passage there's a big question in this passage that I read it's verse 10 when he entered Jerusalem the whole city was stirred saying who is this that's not the minor point that's the major point the evangelist

[11 : 59] John is designed this section to answer who is this I want to survey three cultures with you that try to answer that all this all important question who is Jesus first of all let's start with when asked who Jesus is what do people say today throughout history Jesus has been seen as I said before as a great man has any man done more for humanity than Jesus even Napoleon Bonaparte talked about the greatness of Jesus he saw him as a greater conqueror than him and without blood Napoleon some see him as a great religious leader his ethic of love is supreme Thomas Jefferson thought of Jesus that way he didn't believe he was son of

God he was divine but if you go back and google the Jefferson Bible Jefferson loved the ethics of Jesus and tried to infuse them into our country but at the same time his Bible if you ever look at it or read about it he carved out everything miraculous he cut up his Bible his New Testament to get the picture of Jesus that sat with his understanding he was a great teacher some would say great teacher his ability to communicate deeply yet simply second to none many many religions look at Jesus as a great teacher he was a great revolutionary some would say he turned the tide on the powerful many oppressed people might look to Jesus and say he's our guy follow him

Gandhi had great respect for Jesus he's a great role model some would say following his example brings us to our higher selves he is what we are supposed to be and can be many in the liberal we call the liberal church that's not politics that's theological theology Unitarians and whatnot they look at Jesus as a great role model following him will make get us to our best life now in our higher selves so we consider him a great social justice warrior he fought injustice elevating the poor and the powerless in society we've got whole doctrines devoted to that but that's all and I believe yes he's all of those things as you read through the gospels you see these traits in him very clearly but is this all that he is and are those traits even primary why do we focus on those traits why does our culture say yes to

Jesus we want we can get our limited minds around those things you see we if shrink shrink if we shrink Jesus down we can handle him better we can use him better that's the user friendly Jesus it also keeps our ego safe and our little ghettos because we can fix our problems ourselves if we just

do better see we just do look at Jesus if we just do better we just need a guide we just need a role model maybe even a plan some have said the sermon on the mount is the plan if we just live the sermon on the mount wow we can do it we're not all that bad as human beings after all we are the top of the food chain evolutionary speaking we invented the computer we put people in space we invented the internet with

Al Gore's help and most of all we invented the iPhone we can do anything I decided to look up I didn't realize there were three of them the humanist manifesto something years ago you know we had to read stuff like that in college y'all know that stuff but there's three of them there's a third did you know there's a third humanist manifesto came out came out sometime I think in 21st century here's how humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that without without supernaturalism affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity that's that's how it begins beautiful except without supernaturalism I would affirm I would affirm everything else except that part

[17 : 31] I think and it goes on it never I wouldn't affirm but it goes on humanism we are the top of the food chain humanity can do anything we are the apex predator there that Jesus that Jesus even if such would acknowledge him and the ones I just described they're all too small they fail to grasp the magnitude of this person and minimizes our true and our deepest need as human beings that's today who did the people of Jesus day believe him to be but they did have an opinion notice the people of Jerusalem are coming outside to see what all the fuss is about see the crowds coming in the crowds gathered out here and they're going into the city with

Jesus and the people in Jerusalem are going what's going on they're coming out looking out the windows what's all the hubbub what's all the commotion and they're coming outside and and and and and I mean if you heard the ruckus on your street you would at least pick peek out the window maybe the bravest of us will open the front door in our culture you might get shot but you know the brave of us you want to see and the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest and and they're talking about a man well then who is it now I suggest to you that the people of Jerusalem recognize that language that was messianic king type language and so they're coming outside to see well who are they calling that and notice in verse 11 the crowd say this is the prophet

Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee some of them they probably would have heard of him because he's been to Jerusalem before this is the final trip his third trip to Jerusalem he had been there for various feasts remember in John 8 we've been studying how he was at some of those feasts and he's been there in Passover he's been there before here's his final final trip to this ancient city Jesus of Nazareth the prophet the prophet they say Islam sees him that way Islam says that Jesus is the prophet when we were in the UK Sandy and I took we were in Manchester England we took a couple Ubers around to visit some folk Bible studies and what not and both times we got Muslim drivers and Manchester people the Manqueans are very talkative very friendly people and so they're down the earth salt of the kind of we thought maybe we start trying to witness to this guy and we didn't know where he was from and

I think one guy I'm pretty sure one guy said he was from Bangladesh and he's Muslim he begins telling us about his family and we're talking and we get to talking about Jesus and that's what he said Jesus oh yes blessed be the prophet Jesus and me and Sandy begin to try to subtly talk to him about who how he's more than that but this is not the first time people have asked this question about the identity of Jesus in the gospels you know this right in Mark chapter 4 verse 41 it says they were filled with great fear and said this is when Jesus calmed the storm on the boat remember they're out there he's asleep on the boat because so tired and the disciples are rowing for their lives they wait they're rowing for their lives and so they're filled with great fear and they're scared and this is before they're scared and they think they're going to drown they wake up Jesus to row you gotta help us they had no idea what he was gonna do so this is what happened

Jesus said to the wind and the waves peace be still no one expected that and this is the response they were filled with great fear and said to one another who then is this that even the wind and sea obey him disciples thought the minnow was going down they're gonna join Gilligan on the island and Jesus said not today peace be still what the text you gotta read the text is powerful because when when when when literally it says they feared fear greatly they were terrified not of the sea anymore but of Jesus King

[22 : 56] James says like this what manner of man is this he ain't like us BB he ain't like us brother elder Burke he ain't like us oh that's beautiful and Luke 5 Jesus forgives a man his sins and here's

the question from religious leaders Luke 5 21 crowds and Pharisees began to question saying who is this who speaks blasphemies who can forgive sins but God alone in a smaller scenario something similar happens in Luke 7 48 and 49 a woman of ill they consider of ill reputation comes in and lavishes love on Jesus he said to her your sins are forgiven and those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves who is this who can forgive sins who is this twice who is this who is this guy in

Luke 9 9 even the political leaders are concerned Herod said John I beheaded they heard about Jesus ministry Herod had put John the Baptist to death who is this about whom I hear such things he heard about the miracles Jesus was doing and he sought to see him who is this I gotta go check this guy out because people were even saying that John the Baptist had come back from the dead Herod is all wiggled out some said Elijah the prophet had come back you see Jesus contemporaries were all perplexed about who Jesus was everybody keeps asking the same question who is this today we ask the same question who is this I like to collect magazines and I think it was National Geographic this year has a big spread art big book a whole magazine about Jesus in the beginning of Christianity over the years

I think it's time has a picture of Jesus on the cover artist rendition of Jesus on the cover and who is this who is this who is this we ask it they asked it but who does the bible say Jesus is who does let's turn to the pastors one more time and we are going to try to walk through this real quick Jesus is basically shouting his identity for all to hear now there is discussion debate about what the first thing he does here in this passage when he sends the disciples to go get the donkey as he knew without knowing you know what I'm saying he they see that as a miracle some see it as he had already arranged that because he knew the people we don't know for sure I think it was a miracle of knowing personally but the idea though he sends his two disciples in to get the donkey he says it's kind like borrowing somebody's car why don't you go borrow and go borrow brother Zimmerman's car and we gonna take that into Jerusalem so they go and they get the donkey and they come back out and even tells them what to say if anyone stops you because you know you're taking somebody's car they just might stop you tell them the Lord has need of it stop there for a minute just for a second if Jesus is who the Bible says he is who we believe he is as Christians he has the right to all of our stuff so if Jesus says I want you to use that car for ministry that house you live in for ministry I want you to give that thing away because you got too many of those give that away give that one away you know he can say that right it's okay with you for many of us it's not because we're holding on to our stuff like this because our culture has told us that our lives consist in how much stuff and the quality of stuff that we have and we believe it we believe it so

I wonder but anyway this guy evidently believed in Jesus and so he sent the donkey he sent the mother donkey with a baby donkey two donkeys went okay why both donkeys well because the mother calms the baby the baby wasn't tiny it was big enough to carry Jesus because he sits on the younger the cult but with mom there leading mom leading he's much more cooperative they knew that they've done that in that culture many times so this is what happened but ask the important question why does he choose to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey if he was if he was merely a revolutionary come to deliver his people from oppression should he have chosen a great stallion an impressive war horse to inspire shadow facts for you

[28 : 22] Lord of the Ring fans that was a little shot for you I mean the king of horses that's what I would have rolled in on baby haha me and Gandalf going to battle listen there's nothing inspirational about a donkey unless you see stubbornness as your favorite trait to us the donkey is like the president of the United States riding into Washington D.C.

after winning the election and he rides in in a Honda instead of the Cadillac limo that they call the beast oh I love that Barack Obama was the first one to use the beast by the way I mean imagine if that your guy won the election and he rode for his inauguration he shows up in a Honda Americans would be upset he's denigrating the office he's not taking the office or she the office seriously we would be upset because he's not representing us in the way to which we want to become accustomed America limo limo baby limo all the way represents prosperity dignity power he comes in on a donkey first of all ancient kings would ride on donkeys on occasion we see that happening with

David 2nd Samuel 16 2 David and his family were brought donkeys to ride in on the most important passage to me is when David David is dying and he decides to make Solomon king and there's actually a split in the kingdom over one of Solomon's brothers is being anointed king and David

says okay take my donkey this is first kings 1 33 and 38 king David say you're going to be king and take my donkey put him on it and proclaim it as king throughout the land so you see in ancient Israel the donkey was could be a royal mount but listen it makes a statement it says the king comes in peace to reign he comes in peace but mostly the Lord Jesus is lifting this page as you know out of the Old Testament right out of prophecy right out of Zechariah chapter 9 verse 9 rejoice greatly oh daughter of Zion shout aloud oh daughter of Jerusalem behold your king is coming to you righteous and having salvation is he humble and mounted on a donkey on a cult the fall of a donkey that that prophecy is during the time of

Zerubbabel during the time when Ezra right go back to Ezra and Nehemiah during that time this is where that prophecy is given so hundreds of years before the prophet Zechariah sees the coming of the great king into the city of Jerusalem and he's not coming in the beast he's not coming in the war horse he's coming on the donkey because he is peace and righteousness and humble he's a divine warrior go back and read Zechariah chapter 9 when you read it you'll see in the beginning it talks about how God's going to conquer the nations who persecuted his people then at the end of it he comes back to that idea of conquering but in the middle when we find Zechariah 9 9 he speaks of one that he will sing he will send a king who will come into the city who will come to his people and he will be the king they've been waiting for during the time of

Zerubbabel there was no king in Israel but now he says Zerubbabel get ready baby there will be one will come there will come a king and he and he's talking about his reign will be forever he will conquer all his foes but how does he do it first of all he comes in peace he comes in peace with deep humility he comes to declare he is declaring who he is their king our king the one who will never be voted out of office the one who will never die like Queen Elizabeth the longest reigning monarch ever is Jesus Jesus the people honor him you see what's happening they honor him they put their cloaks on the donkey so he doesn't have to touch it he sits in on the donkey and they won't even let the donkey's feet touch the ground kids isn't it beautiful you see they lay their cloaks on the ground so that even his donkey doesn't get his feet dirty they put palm branches they create this royal red carpet into the city and it's all done spontaneously because the people are excited they recognize in Jesus one who is great they cry out using a portion of Psalm 118 which is the [33 : 48] Egyptian halal it's one of the psalms that's sung at Passover isn't that important because now they're coming in this time upon Sunday is just a week before Passover they're getting ready for Passover my pastor used to tell us all the time that what's happening on this day is that they're bringing the lambs in into the city who will be slaughtered and Jesus the lamb of God is coming into the city in triumph ready to die and they sing Passover hymns he may have even sung that particular hymn hymn his disciples when they were in the upper room but like us today they didn't truly know what they needed they didn't know what they needed to be saved from they thought their biggest problem was Roman oppression today we would say we need to save people from poverty from slavery from alcohol and drugs to save people from low self-worth low self-esteem save people from racism to save people from lack of education from poor health care and certainly bad politics and pistol packing grandmas on top of that

I would have bad driving and listen those things are important but if that's all the church says or even all she emphasizes we lose our prophetic edge we lose our gospel we lose our message we lose listen we are not a social service or political lobbying organization we are much more because our savior is much more sure we care about those things we are called to be salt and light in this earth and we are to engage in every aspect of living bringing the kingdom of God and the reign of King Jesus to bear on all aspects of living politics art music science all of it belongs to Jesus do you hear me all of it belongs to Jesus we leave nothing out we go into all of it in his name as you are gifted and equipped and called you go into all those fears but brothers and sisters that is not the gospel message their gospel deliver us from the

Romans it was political it was religious it was social it was all of the above all the things that our culture says is good but Jesus is saying that's not your biggest problem I've come to do battle against the forces of darkness that enslave your souls I'm here to do battle against the hopelessness and helplessness that leads people to go into an elementary school and shoot children I'm here to deliver you from the hopelessness and helplessness of poverty that goes beyond not having stuff I'm here to deliver you from the pain in your soul from the hole in your soul that keeps you estranged from God and makes you think you're the center of the universe we're all practical humanists they didn't get it they're waving palm branches they don't get it the palm

branches between

Malachi and Matthew 400 years right during that time was the Maccabean revolt of the Jewish people but he revolted against the Greeks who were oppressing them and Judas Maccabe who led that who became one of their great leaders when he rode into Jerusalem they threw down palm branches do you see what's happening they're throwing down palm branches here comes the new Judas Judas Maccabe good good Judas here here comes the new leader here come they are thinking our greatest need is political is political take Israel back for Israel make Israel great again that's what they were saying listen I'm not making that I know it's a popular slogan but that's what they were saying because they thought their greatest problem was the fact their bodies were oppressed it was a problem but not their greatest problem family we have our children waving palm branches they should be riding in here on donkeys

I don't mean politically the palm branch is militaristic the palm branch is not the gospel don't tell the kids it's okay we can keep the palm branches I'm not saying but don't you be swayed we're not waving palm branches at Jesus we're humbling our souls and says here is our humble king how are we going to win how are we going to defeat the forces of darkness how are we oh tweak back Paul Tripp in his book reactivity talks about how Christians on social media we decry injustice we decry policies we don't like we decry doctrine of error and we do it with evil with anger and we attack and we smash each other

[40 : 01] Hulk must smash kill kill put down the arguments show who's best who's smartest and we just go we are pathetic we have forgotten that our king comes to bring victory humble riding on a donkey he comes in peace however listen listen John said it best in John 1 John 1 14 Jesus is full of grace and truth the donkey here he is in Jerusalem grace and truth coming into the city he's coming in humble he's coming in but read on later the next section he cleanses the temple he throws out the money changers truth truth but he comes with grace and truth we want to come with truth with no grace we don't look like him brothers and sisters when we do that we are not preaching the gospel like that grace without truth has no message is weak truth without grace is brutal and will kill the impact of the message how do you talk on social media listen we got to change our tactics y'all now some of you don't fall for this amen so you just write it off and you just praise

God you're not this is not you but we can't sacrifice either grace nor truth we can't sacrifice humility or truth gentleness no truth we can't they all go together in Jesus who do you need to apologize to online or maybe even in person because you've come to them with truth but no grace no humility no gentleness you see that's what we're being accused of we're being accused by the transgender community and other communities we're being accused that those Christians say the reason that girl dies is because those Christians listen we are welcoming but not affirming grace and truth grace and truth we welcome we love we put our arms around everyone who's hurting no matter what their identity is no matter who they claim to be we put our arms around them because they bear the imago

Dei the image of God and we say we love you we care about you we do everything we can to help you we love you but then there's truth and the good news is that the bad news is that's not the life God wants you to live whoever you are no matter any kind of sin I'm talking about anyone if you are trapped in sin if you are living in a way that does not know God you're trapped in darkness whoever you are it doesn't matter what your identity is there are all kinds of problems that we deal with all kinds of brokenness that we deal with and all of it enslaves us and makes us think that we know the answer to our problems and if it's not Jesus we don't know the answers we put our arms around anybody who's hurting and in need and we want to love them in Jesus name but the truth is there was a sacrifice made for your sins if you will receive him there is one who loves you more than we could ever love you there is one who died that people like you and me might be set free he went into Jerusalem on a donkey but five days later he will rise up on a cross and a few days after that that's the triumphal entry he right when he burst the bonds of death and will send to the father that's the triumphal entry he did it for you if you will have him he did it for you and people of God if we represent him then how we speak with others with whom we disagree how we speak with others who need to know what God revealed to us because we didn't know it how we speak and how we interact with them becomes so important grace and truth you don't have a stallion to ride on he didn't give you one get in your Honda and let's love people father help us we've been inundated with stuff that makes us say and do things that in your name even that pushes people away and we

but the truth of the matter is we know your truth pushes people away too keep it from being
because of us help us to love people help us to follow him who is gentle and lowly and meek yet he
is king in jesus name amen you