

# A Form of Godliness

by Welcome Detweiler

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*The sermon highlights the contrast between Christ's humble entrance into Jerusalem and his future coming in power and glory, emphasizing the importance of accepting him as our Savior.*

**Duration:** 12:04

**Scripture:** Job 11:12, John 12:12

**Topics:** "Salvation Offered", "Sinful Nature"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the incredible accomplishments of Jesus Christ in just three and a half years of ministry. He highlights that Jesus is coming to Jerusalem to offer himself as a ransom for sinners. The preacher compares the sinful nature of man to that of a wild beast, emphasizing that man is born with a sinful nature and often ends up in trouble. He warns that Jesus will return in power and glory, and it is crucial for individuals to accept God's offer of salvation before it is too late. The sermon also mentions the rejection of Jesus by the nation of Israel and the consequences they have faced as a result. The preacher concludes by highlighting that Jesus has the power to transform untamed individuals into obedient Christians, referencing various miracles performed by Jesus. The sermon also references a verse from the book of Job that associates man's nature with that of a wild ass's colt.

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## Transcript

My scripture reading is found in John chapter 12 and verse 12. On the next day, much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna, blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon.

As it is written, Fear not, daughters of Zion, behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's coat. These things understood not his disciples at the first, but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him. For three and a half years the Lord Jesus had been moving about in the land of Palestine, doing mighty works of power in order to silence forever anyone who would question the fact that he was the eternal Son of God.

He proved this to the most skeptical mind by demonstrating his power over demons, disease, and death. He was master of wind and waves. Over the very elements he subdued both the vegetable kingdom and the animal kingdom at his will.

The fish in the sea and the feathered kingdom were subject to his commands, and perhaps greatest of all, he subdued the hearts of men and women and caused them to offer voluntary praise and adoration. No man apart from the Son of God has ever accomplished so much, even in a lifetime. But Christ did all this in three and a half wonderful years.

His days of displaying who he was were now rapidly coming to a close, and he is coming to Jerusalem in order to give himself a ransom for guilty sinners. His purpose for coming into the world was to die as a substitute for poor, helpless, guilty sinners, so that God could pardon the guilty and remain righteous in so doing. As he approaches the city of Jerusalem, he looks as though the people were ready to receive him as king, and that he would not be rejected as he himself had predicted.

The royal rider is coming in very humble guise. No herald goes before him, no guards accompany him, but in utter simplicity he rides alone toward the Jewish capital. The news spreads rapidly, and soon a crowd of people, largely those who had been benefited by his ministry or who loved him because of what he had done for them, are gathered as a cheering crowd to lay a carpet of palm branches as an emblem of their desire to recognize him as a king.

Their voices are joined as they cry, Blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. It would indeed appear that they were giving him a genuine welcome, and in the case of some there was no doubt reality, but it is very evident that many of them were simply drifting with the current of public opinion, a very fickle crowd, for the same people, at least many of them, but a few days later cried, Crucify him! Crucify him! They would remind us of many today who have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. They recognize generally that the gospel of the grace of God is good and produces permanent results, but they are carried away with the current of public or religious opinion and have no convictions of their own.

Empty professors of religion, going through the motions of ordinances, victims of religion without Christ. In a general sense, all religious people will pledge some allegiance to Christ, but as to being the possessor of eternal life, being born again, and absolutely certain of heaven, they know nothing experientially of such divine realities. If the crowd speaks well of Christ, they adjust themselves to the conditions and in effect say Hosanna.

If the crowd despises his name, they are equally well at home in the company of Christ-haters. The world calls them good mixers, God calls them hypocrites, spiritual sissies, lacking in courage and moral backbone. Remember, it doesn't take a big man to float downstream, even a dead fish can do that.

Anyone can cry Hosanna one day and cry Crucify him the next day, but not everyone can say, I have been saved by God's matchless grace, and the divine life that was imparted to me at conversion has enabled me to gladly sever all interests in the program of those who have no time for my Savior. In Luke's account of this incident, he describes the beast upon which Christ rode as one whereon yet never man sat. This is worthy of special notice.

Under the Mosaic economy, only those beasts that had never been worked were to be used for sacrificial purposes. Christ was not a secondary man. He was born of a virgin.

He rode the untrained foal of an ass whereupon yet never man sat. He was buried for three days in a new sepulcher wherein was never man yet laid. Some of you farmers will understand this, for if you have ever enjoyed the thrills of riding an unbroken colt for the first time, you will remember that it is accompanied by

ups and downs, usually ending with a good solid down.

The riding of this beast into Jerusalem is not usually included in Christ's miracles, but it certainly proves that Christ was more than an exceptionally good man. He was the creator and controller of all things. Even the natural, untamed, wild nature of a beast is subject and subdued to Christ.

As he officially presents himself to the nation of Israel, he comes in this lowly manner. Since that memorable day, Christ has performed many like miracles in changing many untamed, wild men and women into useful and obedient Christians. There is a rather humiliating verse found in Job chapter 11, which associates man's nature with this awkward beast.

It reads like this, verse 12, For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt. The suggestion is that man is born with a sinful, wild nature, like the beast feeding on its wild oats, drinking high-powered wild water, reveling in wild parties, ending up in trouble with no way out than shooting himself into hell. It's a mercy that the poor beast can't read, for he would be highly insulted if he knew that God had compared the human race with his high and respectable order.

But God could answer the accusation by reminding the ass that he has given him the honor of having more sense than man. For in Isaiah 1.3 he says, The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass knoweth his master's crib. But Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider, our sinful nation a people laden with iniquity.

Whenever I read this story of Christ riding into Jerusalem and being soon rejected as Israel's Messiah, I like to link with it another scene found in the Revelation chapter 19. I'm reading from verse 11. And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse.

And he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and yet a name written that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God.

And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

I'm sure that you have noticed quite a contrast in these two scenes, although it is the same royal rider, not now in lowly guise on an ass's colt, but on his white charger, a vivid symbolic description of Christ's coming with his redeemed to take vengeance on his enemies and to deliver his earthly people Israel. He rides a white horse as the Prince of Peace. He comes to execute judgment and to establish divine authority over all the earth.

He will snatch the scepter of injustice and misrule from which the earth has suffered and will rule with a rod of iron in perfect righteousness. During that reign of perfect peace, all the little politicians will be dethroned and Christ shall reign where the sun does his successive journeys run. His kingdom spread from shore to shore till moon shall wax and wane no more.

From north to south the princes meet to pay their homage at his feet while western empires own their lord and savage tribes attend his word. We are living between the two momentous rides of the Lord Jesus

Christ, His official appearance in humility is history. Nearly two millenniums have passed.

But his appearance in power and glory on the white charger is future and you had better be certain that you are saved before he makes his appearance. You will then be given no opportunity to explain your alibi for if your name is not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life, you will be swept into a Christless eternity, not by mistake, but because you have here and now neglected to receive God's wonderful offer of salvation. It is a very serious mistake on the part of the nation of Israel to reject their Messiah when he came in humility and the nation of Israel has suffered more than the average nation ever since.

But it is even more serious for an individual to hear the story of Christ's redeeming love and to reject it. Rest assured that payday is coming and if you will not take refuge in the finished work of Christ as a means of pardon for all your sins, you will suffer for it, and that is putting it very mildly. One of these days, he will saddle his white charger and find you still a lost sinner awaiting to be consigned to outer darkness.

Why not turn to Christ tonight? He loved you. He died for you. Your sins were laid upon him and God is satisfied.

He not only loved you when he died for you, but he still loves you and he loves you too much to see you perish in your sins. How can you turn down such a lover of your soul? Break from those shackles that will lead you to a certain doom and find in Christ this very moment all that you need both for time and for eternity.

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