

Who Is Jesus?

Matthew 21:1-17

Sunday March 28th 2010 Morning Service

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Verse 10 – ‘When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, **“Who is this?”** Just who is Jesus? This passage gives us three views of Jesus:

1. God’s View of Jesus (1-8; 14)

God’s view of Jesus is implied here in that the supernatural power Jesus possessed would have come from God the Father and therefore demonstrates the Father’s blessing and validation.

This passage reveals three supernatural facets of Jesus.

- a. **Jesus predicts the immediate future** - what will happen regarding the donkey (v 1-4) There seems to be something supernatural going on here. It may not be - it may just be prediction based upon natural knowledge - but if it is supernatural it fits with Jesus knowing his immediate future, which of course he did in the sense that he knew what was going to happen in the next week – that is, his crucifixion
- b. **Jesus fulfils OT prophecy** – v5 - Zechariah 9:9. Here is one of those cases where Jesus fulfils OT prophecy. This shows God’s validation of him. Jesus fits all the prophetic criteria of the OT.
- c. **Jesus performs miracles** – v14 – he heals the blind and the lame. Jesus was acting with God’s power. Again this shows the Father’s validation.

What we have here then is God the Father’s validation of Jesus being his special anointed messenger, the Messiah. This being the case, Jesus is someone we cannot ignore and must listen to. God the Father is speaking to us through Jesus.

2. The Crowd’s View of Jesus (9-11)

There are four things here:

- a. **Jesus is the Son of David** – he is a king. These people saw Jesus as a **king**.
- b. **Jesus comes in the name of the Lord** – he comes with the authority of God. These people saw Jesus coming as **God’s messenger**, or Christ.

- c. **Jesus is a prophet from Nazareth in Galilee** – he is a prophet declaring the will of God. Again this points to these people seeing Jesus as a messenger from the Father in heaven.
- d. **Jesus is to be praised** – ‘they shout ‘hosanna’ - he is to be honoured and praised.

When we put this together these people accepted some amazing things about Jesus. They saw him as a **king**, a **prophet** and someone **worthy of praise**. This crowd saw Jesus as someone they should **obey**, someone they should **listen to** and someone they should **praise**.

3. The Leader’s View of Jesus (14-17)

How did the spiritual leaders of Israel view Jesus? They rejected him.

- a. **They rejected his miracles** – they were wilfully blind and stubborn. Even when the supernatural stares them in the face and miracles are done before their eyes they still reject him. However much evidence some people have they still reject Jesus.
- b. **They rejected what the children said** – they are stubbornly proud. Jesus points to the polar opposite of these proud rulers by bringing attention to the children. He is saying that simple humble children have more sense than these learned men. Knowledge, even biblical knowledge, can blind us if we do not approach it with humility. If we come merely to defend our position and views we can become hardened and blinded to what God is actually saying to us.

So, we see here that the learned spiritual leaders rejected Jesus with stubborn blind hearts and proud wills. The irony here is that Jesus was healing the blind, and healing some of the humblest in the land, that is, the lame. The miracle itself was a rebuke to these leaders who saw themselves as those with spiritual sight and great ability. We must always be open to what God will say to us and ready to obey him.

One Final Question

What was Jesus’ view of the religious people there? Look at verses 12-13 These were religious people involved in the trappings of religion – they were involved in the buying and selling of the practical necessities to engage in temple worship. They thought they were right with God. They thought they were doing what God wanted – helping the people to get the right sacrifices necessary for worship. They were all in one way or another preparing for worship. They believed in the Law; they submitted to those who taught the Law; they knew they needed sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins; they were there to remember God’s deliverance from the Pharaoh. They believed in God; they believed in God’s Word and God’s deliverance. And yet Jesus overturned their tables. What was wrong?

What did Jesus find so detestable about these religious people?

First, these people had turned true religion into an instrument for their own advantage. It had become something that they used to serve them, rather than a means of their serving God. How easily we can do that. We can use Christianity as a means to display our gifts and abilities and control people.

Second, Jesus here tells us what he expected these people to have been involved in as a major priority. Look at verse 13 – “It is written,” he said to them, “**My house will be called a house of prayer ...**”

When Jesus looked at them the greatest priority he saw for them in the expression of their faith was prayer. It was not the upkeep of the temple system, important although that might well have been. For an expression of living faith he was looking for his people to have a living relationship of dependence on their God. If Jesus looked at your faith and my faith, what would he see?