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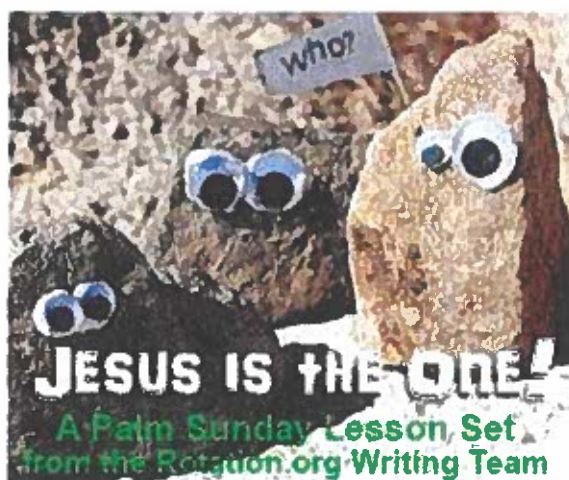
(WT) Palm Sunday - Bible Background and Lesson Objectives

 The Writing Team ○ Fortifying our Supporting Members

Rotation.org Writing Team

Palm Sunday: Jesus is the One!

Bible Background and Lesson Objectives



Scriptures:

The story of Palm Sunday is found in slightly different versions in all four Gospels. Most of the Writing Team's Palm Sunday Lessons focus on Luke's account because it includes Jesus' key encounter with the complaints of the Pharisees and his response that God will make the stones cry out. Two of the lessons compare

the four versions. One of the lessons has the kids reworking Matthew's version which includes the use of palms in the story. And the Drama lesson looks at Psalm 118, which describes the king processing through a crowd toward the Temple and was very likely on Jesus' mind as he rode into town that day.

There are some interesting differences between the four Gospels on this story:

Matthew 21:1-11 (includes the palms, doesn't include the stones)

Mark 11:1-10 (no mention of Zechariah's prophecy)

Luke 19:28-44 (includes Pharisee telling them to be quiet, and Jesus' reply that stones will shout, but doesn't mention palms and doesn't use the word "Hosanna.")

John 12:12-19 (mentions people greeting Jesus with palms before he gets on the donkey)

Memory Verses:

"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is **the one** who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" Matthew 21:9

"Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Teacher, rebuke your disciples!' 'I tell you,' he replied, 'if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.'" Luke 19: 39-40

"As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, "If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes." Luke 19:41-42 (This is the memory verse for the computer workshop.)

Lesson Objectives

Students will....

- Be able to locate the story in their Bible and know that it is found in slightly different versions in all four Gospels.
- Know that Jesus came to Jerusalem along with thousands of others to celebrate the Jewish Passover, and that he knew it would lead to confrontation over his identity and mission.
- Know that the "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem begins the Holy Week in which he would be arrested, tried, and crucified for his claim to be the Messiah, The One sent by God to save his people.
- Understand that the shout, "Hosanna," (which means, "Save us!")—is what all people ask of God, but as the story tells us, Jesus had a different idea about what kind of "saving" the people needed. Jesus is God's answer to that prayer and plea.
- Understand Palm Sunday as an opportunity to decide whether you are part of his parade or not. Whether you step forward with cloaks, palms and shouts of Hosanna to claim Jesus as your saving king, or fade into the crowd, or walk away disappointed that Jesus isn't what you expected. As the Cooking Workshop puts it: "do you have a 'heart' of palm" or are you just waving at the parade.

Bible Background

What Palm Sunday is all about

On Palm Sunday, Jesus initiates the final confrontation with Jerusalem's authorities that will lead to his death. Up until this point, he had been operating in the countryside, and staying away from declarative statements or definitive acts that would definitely announce his kingship. Up until this Sunday, the miracles and the statements were all open to interpretation, and he occasionally asked people to keep quiet about it, because it was not time. **But on THIS SUNDAY it is finally time.** Jesus tells his disciples to go get a donkey so that he can ride it into Jerusalem—like Solomon did, and as Zechariah 9:9 prophesied the future king like David would do.

Jesus knows the symbolism would not be lost on his followers or the authorities.

I am the One. Here comes your King. Choose.

The four Gospel accounts not only draw on a historical action by Jesus, but connect it to two Old Testament passages which surely were on the hearts and minds of his followers, his detractors, and Jesus himself that day.

Zechariah 9:9 prophecies the coming of a king who is "just" and would bring salvation. But Zechariah also declares this king will be humble—and to prove it, he will come riding a donkey (instead of a chariot or warhorse). How is it, then, that the learned Priests completely dismissed Jesus' claim? Books have been written about that, but it is fair to say that they feared a Messiah not under their control, and one who seemingly was uninterested in supporting their position, the Temple, or have the power to throw the Romans out.

Psalms 118, taught in the Drama workshop, describes the One who must push past his enemies to enter God's courts with thanksgiving, trusting God with his life.

Jesus knows he is riding into a complex situation and troubled city. Perhaps this is why Luke recalls him weeping after the parade. In Luke, Jesus answers their shouts of Hosanna ("save us!"), by crying, "they don't know what makes for (real) peace." ...but he continues on his mission to forgive them, even if, as Jesus says, they don't really understand what peace is.

How dangerous was his mission at this point? *Very dangerous.* Indeed, that's what the Pharisees that day are warning him about, according to Luke (a detail Matthew and Mark do not share.)

There had been previous rebellions and riots which the Roman army had put down (and there would be more).

There were political factions seeking the upper hand, and zealots hoping to instigate a rebellion. Every Jew looked to the day when a new king would come and rescue them, and there had been failed "messiahs" before.

Along comes Jesus, --who obviously does not meet their criteria for the kind of king or Messiah who could lead a revolution, and is definitely not a Pharisee. So

he must be silenced one way or another to keep what "peace" existed in Jerusalem. If only they knew what made for peace, Jesus says in Luke, (real "Hosanna," real saving).

Reflecting on the meaning of Palm Sunday for us today

Palm Sunday is a point of decision for Jesus, for the crowd, and for us.

Thousands of pilgrims were coming to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, and still come to our churches today. Jesus had been there before, ...but never like this—never riding like a king.



Is he your king? —or not?

Are you willing to shout aloud that you need him to save you? (Hosanna" means "Save us now!")

Do you understand what kind of "saving" this Messiah is talking about?

**Do you have a heart of palm, of thanksgiving and peace?
...or are you just there for the show?**

It is easy to follow Jesus until he makes plain his claim to be The One, the Promised Messiah. Up until Palm Sunday, it was easy to think of him as just a wonderful teacher and healer. But will you follow this Messiah when you discover he's going to the cross instead of the throne? Peter himself had trouble with that, and Judas. It would take the miracle of the resurrection to change their minds otherwise.

We long for a powerful leader, and it would be so much easier to have a geographical Kingdom, rather than a "spiritual" one, ...or so we think. "If only they knew the things which make for peace," Jesus cries. If only WE knew. -and we can, if we listen.

Thank God we do know. Thank God Jesus is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

He's The One comes to rule a Kingdom of the Heart instead of soldiers. He's not about force, but forgiveness.

He's The One who wants to lead by example, not by threats and armies.

It's messy. It's time-consuming. It's about transformation. But that's Jesus.

God, save us—from our preconceived notions about you. Save us from our desire for easy answers, mere "shows" of support, and desire quick solutions. Help us to see the humble Messiah riding before us, and follow him where *he* leads—for he is The One who says, "Thy will be done" ...and then does it all the way from the parade to the cross.

Written by Rev. Neil MacQueen with contributions from Virginia Colvig

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1/18/16 @ 10:08 PM *

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/ Writing Team Lesson Set: Palm Sunday ~ Jesus is the One!

/ (WT) Palm Sunday ~ Creative Writing (Sign Making) Workshop

(WT) Palm Sunday ~ Creative Writing (Sign Making) Workshop



The Writing Team ○ Fortifying our Supporting Members

Rotation.org Writing Team

Palm Sunday: Jesus is the One!

Creative Writing (Sign Making) Workshop

Lesson Summary:

Students will creatively read and modify the passage, then write/create a collection of large "Jesus Rally" signs that express key ideas in the story and the meaning of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem for us today. The signs can be part of a worship service experience or Palm Sunday display in the church hallway.

What is a "Creative Writing" workshop?

It's a lesson in which students express the scripture and their thoughts about it **using written words**. In this particular workshop, students will participate in two types of creative writing exercises: writing key word substitutions for the scripture reading and creating their own "Jesus Rally Signs"—the kind you might see at a parade, or protest, or rally.

Scripture:

Matthew 21:1-11, the story of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem

Key Verse: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" Matthew 21:9 (NRSV)

Objectives for the Rotation

See the [Bible Background](#) at [rotation.org](#) for this set's complete list of objectives.



Preparation and Materials

- Read Bible background
- Print the [Student & Teacher Handout](#)
- Poster board of various colors and sizes
- 1x1 wood sticks, approximately 36" long to staple signs to
- Heavy Duty staple gun
- Palms
- Markers and items to decorate signs with
- Paper and pencil

Lesson Plan

Tip: Plan your lesson time so that it emphasizes creative thinking and writing over creative sign-decorating.

Open

Welcome your students and describe today's sign-making activity. Show them a couple of signs of your own (or from previous classes).

- The Thing is the King
- Rocks on a roll!

- Rock-sanna !

Ask them if they've ever been to a PEP rally. Explain that the story of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem turned into a sort of PEP rally for Jesus and his followers. Explain that some people, such as the Romans and Jerusalem authorities, didn't want the rally to take place because they thought the rally would turn into a protest or worse—a riot of people proclaiming Jesus as their King. Ask your students to tell you what they know about the Palm Sunday story, and what happened after the parade was over.

Dig in to the Word

Print the following Bible Study and instructions [attached to this lesson at rotation.org](https://www.rotation.org). The handout includes a copy of the Matthew scripture passage with key words marked in it that the students will work on changing.

Why this "substitution" activity? Because reading through the story and then inserting their own "word substitutions" helps them better listen and understand the concepts. Working on the word/concept substitutions is also ***an excellent opportunity for the teacher to go deeper.***

See the Study Questions in the Handout for deeper study with your students.

Key points:

- Jesus was acting in a way that only a king would act: riding into the gates on a donkey. (How was he acting?)
- Jesus' followers were acting with respect and joy (how do we do that?).
- Jesus' followers were announcing Jesus to the world (why and how do we do that?).

Share the Word!

Students will create a number of full size "parade" (rally or "protest") signs—stapling them to wood sticks as if they could be carried. (The sticks emphasize an

important idea: that our words about Christ are meant to be carried so the world may see.)

First, have the students design/write their sign on a piece of paper, then have them share their sign idea with you and others. Then let them choose a poster board and help them lay-out their sign, write it out, then decorate it.

Finish the sign by **stapling their sign to a piece of 1x1 wood stick** as if it were to be carried.

Finish the lesson by having students share their signs and make appropriate teaching comments.

Tip: To display the signs on sticks, have several five gallon buckets ready with rocks/gravel/bricks in them to weight the bucket so that they won't tip over. Weighted buckets are also movable, allowing you to display the Jesus Rally Signs in a prominent church location.

Student Rally Sign Starters

You may write these on the board or print them out to stoke student sign creation:

Jesus is The One! _____ is in the Top Ten. And _____ is way down the list!

The Rocks are Rockin: "_____"

Follow Jesus to _____.

Having a Riot and Can't Be Quiet about _____.

The King is _____.

Jesus = _____.

Stop _____. Start _____.

Don't just stand there, follow and _____.

Corporate Slogans students can re-purpose:

Better ingredients, Better Pizza, Papa Johns (Better ____, Better ____, Jesus Christ)

Just do it (Just __ ____, Just do ____.)

Ba-da, Ba, dah dah... I'm loving it (I'm loving ____.)

15 minutes a day (praying with Jesus) will save you _____

God's love is like the energizer bunny, ...it just keeps going and going and _____.

Can you hear me now? (Can you hear ____)

Got Milk? (Got ____?)

Love, it's what makes a Subaru take you to church!

Snap, Crackle, Pop --Make your life krispie by following Jesus

Whats in your wallet? (Whats in your ____?)

Tip: AS students work on their signs, have them explain their sign to you. Help them to improve it. As a take-home reminder, let students write down their favorite sign slogans on blank name tags and wear them.

Closing

At the end of the class, have students show off their sign and say something about what it means to them. Have the students help you make a display of them.

Adaptations

For Younger Children, have helpers help them come up with the numbered word substitutions in the Bible Study Handout. Have a helper TRACE their slogan on the poster board which the non-readers can then color in and decorate.

For Worship: Have the processors stand in front with their signs so that everybody can see them all together.

invite adults to make a few of their own signs to hold up during the procession. Following that, the pastor (who has taken notes of what they've seen) can offer some remarks as they invite people/kids to hold their sign up again.

Written by the Rotation.org Writing Team

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[Palm SundayHandout.pdf](#)

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Palm Sunday: Jesus is the One!

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Student & Teacher Bible Study Handout for the Palm Sunday Creative Writing & Sign Making Workshop



Instructions for this Handout

1. Give each student a copy of the following scripture and numbered “substitutions” list.
2. Assign each student TWO of the numbered substitutions to complete.
3. Then read through the scripture for the first time *without making any substitutions*. This will help students get familiar with the next task, which is to replace the word/phrase they have been assigned with something else.
4. Now have them write down their answer to the number questions so that others can read it. The numbers correspond to a word/phrase marked in the scripture passage. This is an excellent time to help individuals as they struggle to come up with substitutions. Encourage them to come up with a substitution that will MAKE SENSE when the scripture is read.
5. After they have written down their substitutions, read through the scripture a second time, pausing at each number to hear the students shout out their substitutions when their number comes up in the reading. If you have the time, do the substitution exercise a second time, re-assigning numbers. For larger classes, assign two or more students per number.
6. Finish with the study questions after reading through the scripture with the student substitutions.

Numbered “Substitutions” List

Replace with your own words:

- 1- The village: _____ (name a little town near you)
- 2- Donkey: _____ (what a really important person would ride in or on)
- 3- The Lord: _____ (another name for Jesus Christ)
- 4- Daughter: _____ (another word for a close friend)
- 5- Zion: _____ (the name of your church)
- 6- King: _____ and _____ king (two words that describe what a great king does)
- 7- Humble: Who is _____ (another word or phrase for “humble”)
- 8- Cloaks: _____ (A prized possession most people wouldn’t want to give up)
- 9- Cloaks: _____ (Another word for love)
- 10- Cut branches from the trees: _____ (Something Jesus wants you to give up)
- 11- Hosanna: _____ (A sound you make when you’re excited)
- 12- Hosanna: _____ (Another sound you make when you’re excited)
- 13- Who is this? _____ (Something people say when they are confused or unsure)

Matthew 21:1-11 (NRSV) *Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem*

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into **(1- the village)** ahead of you, and immediately you will find a **(2- donkey)** tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘**(3- The Lord)** needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet Zechariah, saying,

“Tell the **(4- daughter)** of **(5- Zion)**: Look! your **(6- king)** is coming to you,

(7-humble), and mounted on a donkey, with a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their **(8- cloaks)** on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their **(9- cloaks)** on the road, and others **(10 - cut branches from the trees)** and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

“**(11- Hosanna)** to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
(12- Hosanna) in the highest heaven!”

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, **(13- “Who is this?”)**

The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Questions for Study:

1. Why did Jesus ride a donkey? (It was an Old Testament sign of peace, humility. Not a war chariot.) What kind of animal or vehicle would Jesus ride in today to show people he was humble? What would “not-humble Jesus” have done and said on Palm Sunday to show that he wasn’t humble?
2. Why did they spread their cloaks and palms on the road for Jesus? (It was a true sign of respect. The roads were dirt, and likely had dust and animal dung on them.) What do Christians “give up” in order to follow Jesus? (For example, we give up our Sunday mornings! And grudges, and self-centered-ness.)
3. We talk a lot about preparing room for Jesus in our hearts. What ATTITUDE or THOUGHTS should we place in our hearts that would let Jesus know he was welcome there and we were serious about following him?
4. The placing of your cloak and cutting of branches and placing them in the road for Jesus was a very PUBLIC act. It showed others what they thought about Jesus. What PUBLIC acts do we do today (or should do) to show others who we believe Jesus is, and that we follow him?

(WT) Palm Sunday ~ Bible Skills & Games Workshop



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Rotation.org Writing Team

Palm Sunday: Jesus is The One!

Bible Skills and Games Workshop

Lesson Summary:

Students will participate in a Bible Game Show that reviews and compares important Palm Sunday details from all four Gospels. Students will finish with a "Hoop-sanna" reflection game.

Scripture:

This particular workshop in the set will use all four Gospel accounts of the Palm Sunday story:

Matthew 21:1-11 (includes the palms, doesn't include the stones), **Mark 11:1-10** (no mention of Zechariah's prophecy), **Luke 19:28-44** (includes Pharisee telling them to be quiet, and Jesus' reply that stones will shout, but doesn't mention palms and doesn't use the word "Hosanna"), and **John 12:12-19** (brief, mentions people greeting Jesus with palms before he gets on the donkey).

Memory Verses referenced in the Bible Game Show:

"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is **the one** who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" Matthew 21:9

"Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Teacher, rebuke your disciples!' 'I tell you,' he replied, 'if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.'" Luke 19: 39-40

"As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, "If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes." Luke 19:41-42 (This is the memory verse for the computer workshop.)

Objectives for the Rotation

See [Bible Background](#) at rotation.org for this set's complete list of objectives.

Additional Objective for the Bible Skills & Games Workshop:

- Familiarity with the knowledge that the four Gospels often tell the same story with slightly different details.

Materials and Preparation

- Read the [Bible Background](#) and this lesson.
 - Bibles
 - Gameshow "buzzers" or sound props (bells, rattle, horn)
 - Gameshow scoreboard (easel or whiteboard) -decorated with palms.
 - Two or three non-bouncy balls, wide masking tape, marker, picture of Jesus, and either a hoop or decorated bucket for the "H-O-O-P--S-A-N-N-A" game. * *See the "Hoop-sanna" Reflection below for details of how to set-up your hoop area ahead of class.*
 - Paper, 8 ½" x 11" and markers to write answers on.
 - Print this lesson's quiz questions (below).
-

Lesson Plan

This lesson plan assumes your students know something of the Palm Sunday story, but it will also get them digging into their Bibles.

Open

Welcome your students and tell them about today's activities and subject. Don't introduce the story of Palm Sunday as you don't want to give away any of the quiz answers. The Game Show is your Bible study. During parts of it they will need to read the story.

PALM SUNDAY GAME SHOW QUESTIONS

The game instructions are designed to keep certain students from dominating their team answers, and to emphasize different types of answering skills, including memory, and deducing the right answer through reasoning. Some rounds have different ways of answering so that winning is not just about who's fastest. Each team will need a way to be heard (buzzer, bell), and paper and marker to write down some of their answers. Point values are relative and rather unimportant. Make sure everyone feels like a winner. Play in teams of 2 to 3 players.

For younger players, have a teacher/helper assist them in thinking about the answers, and give them clues.

ROUND 1: WRITE DOWN YOUR ANSWERS - A Warm Up

1. Write down the names of the 4 Gospels. (1 pt for every correct Gospel.)
[Matthew, Mark, Luke, John]
2. Now CIRCLE the Gospel or Gospels which have the story of Palm Sunday in them. (1 pt for each correct. All four have it.)
3. Write down 3 things, actions, or important points from the Palm Sunday Story. (1 point per correct answer)

ROUND 2: LIGHTNING ANSWER ROUND

Be the first to buzz in. ONLY when I say your team name, may your appointed captain answer for your team. If you get it wrong, I will say "wrong" and then all other teams can buzz in, wait to be recognized, then try to answer. Wait for me to recognize you before answering. If you shout out the correct answer without being called on, I will say, "too soon" and then other teams can buzz in to answer.

1. What did Jesus ride on Palm Sunday?

2. According to Matthew, Mark and Luke, what did the disciples do once they brought the donkey to Jesus —before Jesus sat on it? (they put their cloaks on it)

3. According to three of the Gospels, what one special word did the people shout when they saw Jesus riding on the donkey? (Hosanna)

4. What was the name of the town Jesus was riding into? (Jerusalem)

Hint: It was the capitol of Israel.

5. Why was Jerusalem so full of people, what were they doing there? (it was Passover)

Hint: It was a Jewish festival.

ROUND 3: LOOK THEM UP & WRITE THEM DOWN

Teacher: List these four gospels for all to see: Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, John 12.

1. According Matthew 21: Jesus riding on the donkey was a sign that he was what?

There are TWO possible answers, and you MAY look them up. I will award 3 points for each correct answer. (humble and a king)

2. One of the four Palm Sunday stories in the Gospels does NOT contain the words, "Hosanna" or "palms." Which one is it? (Luke)

3. Three of the Four Gospels mention people spreading their cloaks on the ground before Jesus. Which one makes no mention of people spreading their cloaks? (John)

4. What does the Hebrew word "Hosanna" mean? (Save us, rescue us)

ROUND 4: CLOSED BIBLES

1. All four Gospels recall the crowds shouting the following phrase. I will give you 2 points for each correct answer:

"_____ is the one who comes in the name of _____." (Blessed, the Lord)

2. At the end of Luke's version of the Palm Sunday story, a group of people yells something at Jesus.

(a) For two points: Who were those people? (Pharisees)

(b) For two more points: What did they yell? (Teacher, order your disciples to stop.)

(c) For three points: What answer did Jesus give them? ("if these were silent, the stones would shout.")

(d) And finally, for two points: After Jesus rode in through the gates of Jerusalem, he did something unusual, and then said, "if only they knew what really made for peace." What did he do that was unusual? (he cried). (Hint if needed: he was sad)

FINAL ROUND:

You can win a total of ten points for your final answer. After I hear all the answers, I will award the 10 points to the best answer, 7 points to the second best, 5 to the third best, and 3 to the fourth best. (Shorten if you have fewer than four teams.) You have two minutes to discuss and write down your answer.

Here is the question:

It is easy to stand around waving and cheering for Jesus on Palm Sunday, but what things can you do to show him and others that Jesus really is your King and Lord?

"Hoop-sanna" Reflection

*Place a hoop or basket against the wall, label it "Believing Jesus is The One," and put a picture of Jesus beside it.

In front of the Hoop/Basket, place 3 masking-tape lines on the floor—one at 10', the second at 5', the third at 3' from the hoop. Mark the 10' line with the words, "Only here for the fun parade." Mark the 5' line with the words, "Sort of paying attention and trying a little." And the third line: "Trying to be regular with worship, prayer, study and service."

Let everyone have two or three throws to see if they can get the ball into the basket/hoop.

The point: Believing in Jesus is harder when you stand back in the crowd. Getting closer to Jesus—talking to him, letting his words guide your life, thanking him for what he has done to save you, —these are the things that will make your faith come alive.

Ask your students to suggest other things that could have been written on the lines.

Final Hoop Reflection:

Tell your students that there is something wrong with this Hoop game. Because, in fact, it is Jesus who reaches out to each of us. (As you say this next thing, walk the basket to the person standing at the far away line.) It is Jesus who approaches us, and if we're receptive, he can un-harden our hearts, Jesus can give us the faith we hope for.

And here's one more twist: maybe WE are the bucket/hoop, and Jesus is the one tossing the ball! Some people really want Jesus and give him a big target to aim at. While others make their hoop small and hard to reach. (Demonstrate this by having the kid toss the ball to each other, one of them pretending to be a small hoop, then big hoop.) Amen? Amen!

Written by Ruth Wilcox and the Rotation.org Writing Team

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⬆ Original Post

(WT) Palm Sunday ~ Cooking Workshop



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Palm Sunday: Jesus is the One!

"Having a Heart of Palm" Cooking Workshop

Lesson Summary:

Students will prepare, cook, and eat Heart of Palm Dip, discussing and deciding if they have a "heart of palm."

What does "heart of palm" taste like?

The palm hearts themselves are rather plain tasting, close to water chestnuts or artichoke. It's what you mix them with that gives them taste. This "flavoring" is part of the lesson's meaning. The recipe below will make it taste like onion dip with more texture. See the special notes about various ingredients kids may or may not like.



Scripture:

Matthew 21:1-11, the story of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Key Verse: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" Matthew 21:9 (NRSV)

Objectives for the Rotation

See [Bible Background](#) at rotation.org for this set's complete list of objectives.

Preparation & Supplies

- Read the [Bible Background](#) and lesson plan
- bibles
- palm branch
- Preview the recipe and collect the ingredients and utensils
- Mixing and Serving Bowls
- Chopper or knife
- Food processor
- Grater [Optional]
- Measuring cups
- Napkins
- Plates
- Spatula
- several pairs of washed/clean craft scissor to cut pita in shapes

Ingredients

- Cheese, Asiago or Parmesan - grated
- Cream cheese, 4 ounces
- Hearts of palm, 8 ounce can
- Mayonnaise, ½ cup
- Onions, green, 1 cup chopped
- Sour Cream, ½ cup
- Pita bread for toasting (cut with clean scissors)



Update: As the discussion below illustrates, kids can be finicky about adult

flavors (like green onions, for example). Check out [these suggestions](#) in the comments below.

Lesson Plan

Opening Bible Study

Welcome your students and explain what they'll be doing today in the lesson.

Warm-up Questions: I love parades and celebrations! Do you?

Have you ever seen a famous person or celebrity up close? [Allow responses, but keep them brief.] What is it like to see a famous person?

Say: Today we are going to read about one of the world's greatest celebrities, one of the world's most famous people. Do you know who I'm talking about?

Write the words: "Limousine," "Flags," "Confetti," and "Cheering Crowds" on the board. Tell your students that you want them to listen for those four things in the story you are about to read.

Dramatically read the story to them from Matthew 21:1-11, then ask them these questions:

- Did he ride in a limousine? (No? What? - a donkey, which is what kings rode to show they were humble)
- Did the people march with flags? (No? What? - they cut palm branches and waved them)
- Did they shoot off confetti cannons like they do at the Super Bowl? (No? What? - they spread their cloaks on the road)
- Did anyone complain about him? 🌟 According to Matthew, NO! Your students may be confused by this because there are four different Gospel versions of the story. Only Luke and John record that some Pharisees made snide remarks about the parade. Have them look at those remarks in Luke 19:39 and John 12:19 and tell you what the Pharisees said about Jesus.)

- Important Question: What happened to these crowds when Jesus was tried and crucified?

Say: It's easy to cheer Jesus when he's just passing by in a parade and all we have to do is cheer.

Ask: Which do you think Jesus wants? Crowds waving palms and cheering him and then running away from him, ignoring him? Or people who turn their hearts over to him?

Do this: Take a palm and wave it in the air as you meekly say "Yay Jesus, I guess you're important, I guess I'll go to church," and then place that palm on your heart and say in earnest, "I believe in you. I want to be in your presence. I want to follow you with all my heart."

Make your point: Jesus wants us to do more than wave palms in our hands and shout Hosanna when he comes riding by once a year. Jesus wants us to have hearts of palm —hearts that praise him and shout Hosanna every day."

Read the following examples, and ask them to vote, either: "**Palm in hand?** (*wave raised hand weakly back & forth*) **or Heart of palm?** (*solemn faced with hand over heart*)"

(Poser? Or Believer? Only here for the fun parade stuff? Or here to give your life?)

1. Shows up to church only at Christmas and Easter time.
2. Only helps others when asked to help.
3. Only reads Bible at church.
4. Thinks about Bible stories they've learned.
5. Would rather sleep in on Sunday, but knows it's important to get up for worship.
6. Thinks of themselves as a Christian, but thinks church is boring and for losers.
7. Invites a friends to come to church or fellowship group with them.
8. Never talks to friends about what they do at church.
9. Runs people down behind they're back.
10. Finds time to talk to Jesus in prayer every day.

Ask your students to summarize what someone with a "heart of palm" is like.

Dip!

Tell your students that they are about to make "heart of palm" dip to remember the kind of heart Jesus wants us to have. Tell them where "heart of palm" comes from (it's the edible part of a palm plant). This may surprise them, and gross out a few of them. If so, suggest that they not be "Pharisees" who refuse something before tasting it. Before mixing, have students taste what un-seasoned heart of palm tastes like (it has very little flavor).

After washing their hands, split up the following duties and begin assembling the dip.

★ As you give them ingredients to process and add, suggest that "having a heart for Jesus" is also the result of putting many things together, such as, prayer, being humble, recognizing your need for forgiveness, learning to be unselfish. These things soften a person's heart, allowing Christ to enter in and change us.

Chop the hearts of palm and green onion a bit in the food processor, and then add the remaining ingredients. Make sure the lid is on tightly and process until smooth.

*Important: If you don't grate the cheese before adding it to the food processor, the chunks can get caught on the blade and then cause the dip to "explode" all over the place, so a tightly-fitting lid is essential.

After mixing, immediately place in a stainless steel bowl and put it in the freezer for 10 minutes. It will taste better that way.

Be sure to see the variations on the recipe discussed in the comments below at rotation.org.

While it's cooling, use the PITA REFLECTION below.

Notes: This batch makes about two cups, so the recipe might need to be increased for a large number of participants. Hearts of Palm dip will last several days in the refrigerator.

Option: Make plenty of "Hearts of Palm Dip" for the congregation's time of fellowship or for others to take home. Write out the words, "Jesus Wants Us to Have Hearts of Palm" and include your scripture reference and decorate with palms.

Digest! (Pita Reflection)

As the dip is cooling, pull out some pita bread and invite students to use clean scissors to quickly cut them into the shapes of palm leaves, donkey, king, cloaks, and place on a baking sheet. As they assemble the pita pieces to toast them, ask them about Jesus riding into Jerusalem that day —***how we can show Jesus that we believe he is our king, our leader, in charge of us, more than just waving palms and parading into church.***

Toast the pita pieces, watching them carefully so they don't burn. (It will take less than a minute under the broiler. You may want to turn them over to toast both sides.

Now enjoy a "Hearts of Palm" dip party. As they're tasting, some may not prefer it (assure them that that's okay.) It's what's in the heart that God cares about, not what's on their taste buds!

Close with a prayer that the message of Palm Sunday would find it's way past our stomachs and into our hearts.

Adaptations

For Younger Students:

Give each of them a palm leaf to imitate you when you share "waving" as part of the crowd, versus, "having a heart of palm." Simplify your vocabulary and concepts. Have them make dip to share with others or go home.

Make several different versions of the recipe letting the kids choose which ingredients they want to put in. (Younger children especially, may balk at seeing

green onions or tasting sour flavors. See the notes below here at rotation.org.)

Resources

There are many Hearts of Palm recipes online. Here's one that has simpler ingredients: lemon juice and olive oil, instead of onions, cheeses and sour cream. It tastes more like a hummus. <https://staciebillis.com/addic...-hearts-of-palm-dip/>

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Attachments

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Images (2)



3/5/07 @ 9:32 PM *

 Original Post

Note:

This is easier and faster to make than hummus and my kids love it. When this dip isn't making me look good at a party, it's serving as an after-school snack.

Hearts of Palm Dip

From *From my Make It Easy cookbook*

Makes about 1 cup

INGREDIENTS

1 (14-ounce) can or jar hearts of palm, roughly cut into 1- to 2-inch pieces if not already cut

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice (from about 1 juicy lemon)

1 teaspoon roughly chopped garlic (from about 1 clove)

1/8 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons olive oil

Place the hearts of palm, lemon juice, garlic and salt in the bowl of a food processor and whiz on high speed for 10 to 20 seconds.

2

Stop the food processor, scrape down the sides, and turn on again, this time adding the oil in a slow, steady stream. Keep the machine running until the dip is smooth and creamy. Taste and season with more salt, if desired; pulse two to three times to blend well. Transfer the dip to a bowl and serve immediately or store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for 5 to 7 days.
