

I Can Praise Jesus Christ

An Easter Bible Study for Kids by

Every Generation
MINISTRIES



Every Generation Ministries helps churches in 15 countries minister to children. This lesson is an example of the life-changing resources our national ministries offer in Argentina, Belarus, Chile, DR Congo, Egypt, Hungary, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Romania, Uganda and Ukraine.

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Lesson Aim

Even when things don't go as I expect, I can praise Jesus, my King.

Basic Idea

Jesus rode into Jerusalem and the people worshipped Him as they would a King, their promised Messiah. The Jews believed that He was the Messiah the prophets had foretold through the ages. However, they were expecting their Messiah would bring freedom from Roman domination and oppression. Instead, Jesus was coming to free the people from slavery to sin. He came to be King of their lives so that God's kingdom could come to earth as it is in Heaven.

So, when Jesus didn't set out to do what they wanted, many turned against Him a few days later. Their cheers of, "Hosanna," turned to angry cries, "Crucify Him!"

Scripture

Mark 11:1-10

Devotional

Every Generation Ministries believes that transformation in the life of your child begins with transformation in your life. Before you teach this lesson to your children, take a moment to reflect on this lesson aim in your own life. Read this devotional and ask yourself if you really believe that, "Even when things don't go as I expect, I can praise Jesus, my King."

Jesus was and is the promised Messiah, the King of Kings. But God's ways are not our ways. God has an eternal perspective that we do not begin to understand. The Jews believed that the Messiah would be a political King, but Jesus was coming to usher in a different kingdom—the Kingdom of God. People would be free to live a different way by trusting God to give them the power to have the abundant life He planned for His children.

So often, we want Jesus to be who we want Him to be. When He is not, we get disturbed and angry. This is true for children as well as adults. A child might wonder and cry out, "Why is my grandma dying when I prayed that Jesus would heal her?" Or they might ask, "I really wanted that Playstation 4 console. I prayed that Jesus would answer my prayer, but I didn't get the PS4." It is our job to help kids understand that we must take Jesus on His terms, not ours. He knows what is best for us and sometimes does not do things the way we expect or hope.

Jesus entered Jerusalem to announce that He is the Messiah and King. However, Jesus was not aiming or claiming to be a political ruler that would conquer the Romans. Jesus was announcing that as Messiah, His aim was to free people from slavery to sin. His goal was to conquer Satan and free creation to worship God and live in close relationship with Him now and always in God's Kingdom.

Think of examples of when God did something that you were not expecting Him to do. Perhaps Jesus didn't act in the way that you thought He was supposed to act. How did you feel? Did you praise Him anyway when things didn't go as you hoped? Write about a time that He did not do what you expected Him to do, but much later, you realized that His plan was much better than yours. We must follow the real Christ, not the Christ that we create in our minds. Pray about the unexpected things that are happening in your life, good or difficult, and praise Jesus for being your King and Lord.

Bible Background

Ahead of time, watch the following video from Got Questions Ministries on the significance of the triumphal entry by copying and pasting this link into your browser: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSY0YN5aQwE> or read it here.

On Palm Sunday, the Sunday before the crucifixion, (John 12:1, 12) Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a borrowed donkey's colt. The book of Zechariah foretold that the King would ride into the city in a gentle manner, on a colt. This certainly was not the expected way kings entered a city. Kings came as conquerors riding on powerful horses, but a colt was a symbol of peace. This story appears in all four Gospel accounts (Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-40; John 12:12-19) so it is clear that the triumphal entry was a significant event, not only to the people of Jesus' day, but to Christians throughout history.

The disciples spread their cloaks on the donkey for Jesus to sit on, and the multitudes came out to welcome Him, laying before Him their cloaks and the branches of palm trees. People cried out, "Hosanna," which came from a Hebrew word, literally meaning, "Save us, we pray." (from Psalm 118:25). The crowds hailed the "King who comes in the name of the Lord." (Mark 11:17). Most people were probably not aware of the significance of this day; they were merely caught up in the excitement and celebration of the event.

Jesus' purpose in riding into Jerusalem was to make public His claim to be their Messiah and King of Israel in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Matthew says that the King coming on the foal of a donkey was an exact fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, "Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

People lavished praise on Jesus because they thought He was going to be their messianic deliverer by conquering the Roman oppressors and giving them political freedom and peace.

Jesus received the worship and praise of the people. No longer did He tell His disciples to be quiet about Him but to shout His praises and worship Him openly (Matthew 12:16, 16:20). Cloaks were spread as an act of homage for royalty (see 2 Kings 9:13). Jesus was openly declaring to the people that He was their King and the Messiah they had been waiting for. Christ told the Pharisees that if the people did not worship Him, even the stones would cry out. It is the purpose of God's creation, including us, to worship Him as our God.

However, Messiah Jesus was coming for a different kind of freedom. He would free the people from slavery to sin, not from Roman oppression. Many recognized Him as the Son of David who came in the name of the Lord. But when He failed in their expectations, when He refused to lead them against their occupiers, the crowds quickly turned on Him. Within just a few days, their cheers of, "Hosanna," changed to cries of "Crucify Him!" (Luke 23:20-21). Those who hailed Him as a hero soon rejected and abandoned Him.

The Triumphal Entry is "the story of the King who came as a lowly servant on a donkey, not a prancing steed, not in royal robes, but on the clothes of the poor and humble. Jesus Christ comes not to conquer by force as earthly kings but by love, grace, mercy and His own sacrifice for His people. His is not a kingdom of armies and splendor but of lowliness and servanthood. He conquers not nations but hearts and minds. His message is one of peace with God, not of temporal peace. If Jesus has made a triumphal entry into our hearts, He reigns there in peace and love. As His followers, we exhibit those same qualities, and the world sees the true King living and reigning in triumph in us."

(Gotquestions.org)

Lesson Aim Note

The Lesson Aim is mentioned many times throughout the course of this lesson. To make it noticeable, it is **in bold**. It is critical to repeat and explain it numerous times. The goal is for the children to not only learn the Lesson Aim but to understand it well enough to be able to apply it to their daily lives.

Supplies Needed

This is a comprehensive list of all supplies you will need to complete this lesson.

- Paper
 - A stick puppet print out for each child (at the end of this lesson)
 - Popsicle sticks to glue onto stick puppet print outs
 - Scissors
 - Crayons or colored pencils
 - Glue or tape
 - A cookie, cupcake or treat for each child that LOOKS delicious but is not very tasty (for example, healthy nice-looking treats that aren't very yummy!)
 - Small palm branches made from paper or small real branches
 - Puppet-sized coats/robes made from felt, cloth or paper
 - A sheet of brown butcher paper to signify a road
 - A large paper heart for each child, large enough for them to draw on during discussion
 - A sheet of small stickers for each child (hearts, stars, colored circles, etc.)
 - Jesus sticker for each child (optional)
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Relationship

Every Generation Ministries believes that a relationship that reflects the love of God is a crucial element of transformational ministry. The life of Christ, particularly His love, flows through our relationship with our children (Deuteronomy 6:5-6). Relational activities can be fun, sincere, humorous... The purpose is to learn something about each other and to grow in relationship.

Supplies Needed:

- Paper
- Puppet patterns (at the end of this lesson)
- Scissors
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Glue or tape

Families will enjoy fellowship together as they make puppets for the story of the Triumphal Entry of Jesus. Puppets included are Jesus, the donkey, various onlookers, various disciples. (Print out is at the end of this lesson).

Experience

Every Generation Ministries believes that experience is a key element of learning. Transformation is not just a cognitive exercise. We learn by integrating God's Word into the everyday "experiences" of life (Deuteronomy 6:7).

Supplies Needed:

A cookie, cupcake or treat for each child that LOOKS delicious but is not very tasty (for example, healthy nice-looking treats that aren't very yummy!)

Parent Says: Did you notice that I put out some wonderful snacks for you to eat today? Were you expecting a special treat? If so, what were you hoping for? Does this look like something you'd love to try?

Give each child a treat. Watch as they eat to see their faces and listen to their comments.

Connecting Questions:

1. Did you enjoy the treats I made for you? Why or why not?
2. If you did not like the treats, did you complain, or did you thank me for my kindness and thoughtfulness in making them for you?

Connecting Statement

Parent Says: Today we will hear about someone in the Bible who comes and acts in ways people were not expecting or hoping. Let's see what they do before and after He arrives.

Truth

Every Generation Ministries believes that the Word of God needs to be “impressed” on our children. It is the Bible Truth that we are teaching and is the core of the lesson (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

Parent Note: It is important that the children understand that the story you are about to teach is from God’s Word, the Bible. We want them to understand that the stories are all true and they help us to understand who God is and how He wants us to live. We recommend having a Bible in hand.

Supplies Needed:

- Bible
- Stick puppets (made during Relationship time)
- Small palm branches made from paper or small real branches
- Puppet-sized coats/robes made from felt, cloth or paper
- A sheet of brown butcher paper to signify a road

Scripture: Mark 11:1-10

Lay the brown paper on the floor and have children sit along the "road." Choose children to hold each puppet and to move the puppets as the leader tells the story. Choose someone to be Jesus, at least two of the Disciples, plus a few people in the crowd. Give everyone that does not get to hold a puppet a coat or a palm branch (puppet sized) to place on the road at the appointed time.

If you have a large family, divide them into two groups and allow each group to show the events as you tell the story.

Parent Says:

On the last Sunday before Jesus died, Jesus and His disciples were walking to Jerusalem to the Temple to celebrate the Passover. (*Children (or other family members) move their puppets to show that they are walking along the road.*)

Passover was an important day when all Jews remembered that their people, led by Moses, were saved because they trusted in God and followed His instructions. On the first Passover, many years earlier, God passed over the houses of those who put blood from a lamb over their doorposts. Then they were set free to begin their journey to the Promised Land.

All Jews knew this story as well as the story of King David, who ruled Israel and who would one day have a family member that would be their Messiah, the King of the Jews.

As Jesus neared the city, He asked two of his disciples to do something for Him:

(Child holding Jesus puppet turns to face others holding disciple puppets.)

“Go into the village opposite you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt, a baby donkey tied there. No one yet has ever sat on it. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ you say, ‘The Lord has need of it’; and he will send it back here.”

(Let the child holding the Jesus puppet put Jesus' words into his/her own words and say the instructions again.)

The two disciples went away and found a colt tied at the door, exactly as Jesus said. They brought the colt to Jesus and put their coats on it; and Jesus sat on it.

(Let the two children holding disciple puppets find the child holding the donkey puppet.)

(Let children spread coats over the donkey puppet's back and let the Jesus "ride" the donkey puppet as they walk slowly along the road.)

The people wanted to praise Jesus, their Messiah. They were expecting a powerful King that would ride in on a big white horse. Instead, Jesus quietly rode down the hill on a baby donkey.

Even though they were surprised by the way Jesus came, people still praised Him that day. Crowds of people spread their coats along the road, and others laid leafy branches on the ground that they had cut from the fields. Those who went in front and those who followed behind were shouting and praising Jesus. It was like a parade.

(Let everyone holding a coat or a palm branch put it down on the road. Then have the children holding the main character puppets walk down the road further over the coats and palms.)

"Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest!"

Let's try to say these words—"Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!"

(Let everyone repeat the phrases a few times. Thank your puppeteers. Then have everyone turn to look only at you as you tell the rest of the story.)

These words were songs of praise to Jesus. Hosanna means, "Save us, we pray!" People wanted to praise Jesus because they had seen Jesus do wonderful miracles. Many had been there to see Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead. Lots of people had eaten the bread and fish that was served when Jesus fed 5,000 with two fishes and five loaves. They knew that Jesus was very special, and they liked watching him do amazing things. Many believed that he was their Messiah. They knew that Jesus deserves everyone's praises and were glad that Jesus could perform miracles. But the people didn't really understand the **real reason** why Jesus came to earth.

The people hoped that Jesus would free them from the Romans who were so cruel to them during that time. The Jews hated the Romans because they lived in constant fear of being beaten or put in prison for not following the Romans' rules. The Romans were violent and mean to them. The Jews never knew what was going to happen next, so they were always worried and anxious. The people also hated paying the heavy taxes that the Romans made them pay.

The Jews wanted to be free, like in the Book of Exodus, when they had been freed from the Egyptians and Moses led them to the Promised Land. In a way, they wanted a superhero to come and make their lives easier and more peaceful. But Jesus came for a different reason than the people were expecting and didn't do the things they were hoping and praying for. Some people praised Jesus and continued to praise Him after He died and rose again, even though things didn't go as they hoped. But other people turned against Him and cried out for Him to be killed because He wasn't the King they were expecting. He wasn't offering the kind of freedom they wanted. When they realized that Jesus didn't plan to lead a big revolt against the Romans, they became disappointed and angry. Soon after this wonderful day of praising and singing Hosannas, people began yelling angry words of death, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" They wanted Jesus to be put up on a cross to die, even though it was the meanest form of death ever invented.

Jesus came to free the people from their sins. He came for a much bigger reason than conquering one Roman king in one small part of the world. Jesus came to conquer Satan so that slavery to sin and evil would no longer bind us. Jesus knew that He was going to be arrested and that he would die on a Roman cross. But He also knew that He would come alive again and conquer death. He planned to set up God's Kingdom on earth, so we could live differently. He would give us the Holy Spirit to live inside of us, so we could have His power to live God's way, not our way.

Jesus was and is the Messiah and did come to be King—the King of our lives, to rule in our hearts. Jesus came for everyone in the whole world, not just for the Jews.

Today and always, Jesus doesn't do things our way. He does things His way (God's Way) because Jesus is God the Son. When He hears our prayers, Jesus always answers them. He always keeps all His promises. However, often, His answers, His plans, His ways are different than what we think they should be. But Jesus, God the Son, is always right. Jesus is never wrong. He always does what is best for us, His people, when we trust in Him. **So, even when things don't go as I expect, I can praise Jesus, my King.**

(Invite everyone to shout together:)

Hosanna! Jesus, Save us! "BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD." Jesus is God's Son. Let's bless His name.

Let's say that together: "**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.**"

Together, let's say, "Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest!"

Jesus came to help us every day, to give us power to make good decisions so we can do the right thing and be kind to others. The Lord Jesus came to give us His love, joy, peace and forgiveness. Jesus came to be with us always as the King of our lives. Let's trust and praise God no matter what!

Let's Pray:

Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest! We praise you, Jesus, King of our lives! Rule in our hearts and help us to live the way you want us to live. Help us to remember to praise you even when you do things differently than we hope or expect.

Discussion

Every Generation Ministries makes a big deal out of “talk about them,” believing that it is crucial to talk about the Bible Truth above and connect it to the real lives of our children. Talk about how to connect God’s Word to your child’s real life (Deuteronomy 6:7).

1. How did Jesus come into the city of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday?
 2. Why were the people waving palm branches, laying coats on the ground and praising Jesus?
 3. Who did the people think Jesus was and what did they expect Him to do?
 4. Have you ever prayed and asked Jesus to do something, but He didn't do it? How did you feel?
 5. How can you praise Jesus even when you are having a hard day or when things don't go as you expect or hope?
 6. My friend prays and asks Jesus to do a lot of things and then is sad or mad when He doesn't do them. What would you tell my friend?
 7. How will you worship and praise Jesus this week?
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Response

Every Generation Ministries believes that responding to God from a transformed heart is the ultimate goal of our time here on earth. Children are encouraged to respond to God's Word in thought and action, immediately and on into the future (Deuteronomy 6:8-9).

Supplies Needed:

- A large paper heart for each child, large enough for them to draw on
- Crayons or colored pencils

Respond Now:

Let children draw prayers inside their paper hearts that God has answered differently than they hoped or prayers that don't seem answered yet. Give them a few minutes to color their pictures.

Everyone should close their eyes and bow in prayer. Pray together, allowing children to praise Jesus for things that come to their mind, especially ways that God has worked differently or unexpectedly. They can tell reasons they love Him and things they are thankful for, too.

Be patient when there is silence. Parents can model what it means to praise Jesus by sharing praises of their own, especially unexpected answers to prayer or ways they are trusting Him through hard times. When children open their eyes, give each child a large paper heart and a sheet of stickers. As they place each sticker around the outside of the heart shape, have them think about or say one thing that they praise Jesus for. Then place a picture of Jesus or write the words, "Jesus is King of My Heart" in the center of the heart. Have them tell you some of the things they remember to praise Jesus for.

Keep Responding:

Give children a few extra stickers with their heart sheet that they don't stick on yet

Tell them to put a new sticker on the paper each time they praise God for something during the week. Put two stickers if they praise God for something that He did that wasn't what they expected or hoped. Each week come together with their papers and share.



Easter Stick Puppets

Cut these out and glue them onto popsicle sticks!

