

# Jesus Gets Flash Mobbed!

*Matthew 21:1-17, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:29-44, John 12:12-19*

Good morning men! So this morning we'd like to welcome to the live Bible Study ten Area Directors in training. If you've been here, you know Man in the Mirror is in the process of hiring three hundred and thirty Area Directors, one for every one thousand churches. We have so far appointed about seventy Area Directors, ten of them are in their first training this week, so if you are an Area Director could you raise your hand and keep it up for a second? Would you join me in welcoming these men? Thanks guys for being here! Their mission is to build relationships with roughly a hundred churches within their area over the first three years when they go active and consult with them to help them be more effective in discipling men.

Let's go ahead and do a shout out. We have this group meeting in Ware, MA. Bob Hamilton is leading this group of six to eight men. They are meeting at 7:00 AM on Saturdays at Ware Community Church using the online videos. I wonder if you would join me in giving them a great Man in the Mirror welcome? One, two, three, hoorah! Welcome guys, glad to have you with us.

All right, so we're in this series, *Hanging Out With Jesus*, and I ran across something this week. I don't usually do these things, but somebody sent me this over the internet, and of course you know it's true because it came over the internet. Apparently UPS pilots and mechanics have a good time together. A UPS pilot, when something goes wrong, will fill out what they call a gripe sheet, turn it in, then the mechanics make the fix, then the pilot looks at that before the next time he goes up to make sure it was done. So these are reported to be some actual exchanges:

Pilot: Test flight okay except auto-land very rough.  
Mechanic: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

Pilot: Something loose in cockpit.  
Mechanic: Something tightened in cockpit.

Pilot: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a two hundred feet per minute descent.  
Mechanic: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

Pilot: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.  
Mechanic: Evidence removed.

Pilot: IFF inoperative in off mode.  
Mechanic: IFF always inoperative in off mode.

Pilot: Number three engine missing.  
Mechanic: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

## **A Carefully Choreographed Mission**

Well it's good to have fun, and there's nothing more fun than Christianity. There's nothing that brings more joy, more happiness than Christianity, except when you have someone in your life that you love who does not believe in Jesus. Then everything changes. Men tend to compartmentalize, but with women it seems like when they have a problem that problem effects every area of their lives, it spills over into every compartment. Men, when we have a problem, we compartmentalize, but if you have someone that you love who doesn't know Jesus then you know that effects every area of your life. It just puts a burden on your life every place you turn. What we're going to do this morning is look at a story that we know as the Palm Sunday story. The title of the message is *Jesus Gets Flash Mobbed!* What I want us to see to begin with is the idea that there is a carefully choreographed mission underway.

So let's talk first about the big picture. The big picture is that Jesus has a singular mission that he is on and it is total global conquest. Jesus is interested in bringing the Gospel of salvation to every person. God our father wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. God is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance. So God's mission is total global conquest. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. If you believe in me, you will have eternal life and you will never perish. No one will be able to snatch you out of my hand. That's the mission, that's the big picture, and it goes even deeper than that because Jesus said the thief, referring to the devil, his purpose is to steal from you, to kill you, to destroy you and everything you love. My purpose is that you might have a rich and satisfying life. An abundant life, that it might be full and meaningful. So what I'm going to do Jesus says, I'm going to come and show you how to make that your reality, and how you can make that the reality of everyone you come in contact with, everybody you love, everybody you care about.

So he begins by saying in John 5:39 the scriptures are about me. Moses wrote about me, and in Jeremiah 1:12 he says and I am watching over my word to perform it. All of these things that we read, I am watching over this word that has been written down by the prophets to perform it, to make it become a reality. So this morning we see a great example of exactly how Jesus makes that happen.

Now this particular story is in all four gospels. Just a note, Matthew was writing to the Jews. Matthew was trying to persuade them that Jesus was the fulfillment of the prophecies in the Old Testament. Matthew was going about the business of proving Jesus to them, and so in the book of Matthew there are approximately sixty fulfilled prophecies and forty Old Testament references. Mark, and Luke and John for that matter, were written more to the Gentiles, so Mark rather than the fulfilling of prophecy as in Matthew, was more interested in presenting the great deeds and works of Jesus. In the book of Mark there are nineteen miracles that are reproduced. Luke on the other hand was more interested in presenting the biography of Jesus, the story of his life and giving this accurate account of what happened in Jesus' life. Then we get to John, and John's purpose was to make it possible for us to have faith in the deity of Jesus. So John emphasizes the deity of Jesus Christ, we need all of these different emphases in order to make a full Gospel. All of the gospels repeat this story, but we're going to look at two to see the unique perspectives. We're going to start with Matthew 21:1:

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage...

That's an easy word to say, right? Bethphage, wow! You can go there today by the way, and as I recall when I was there somebody had set up a couple of donkeys or something tied to a rail as sort of a tourist attraction.

... on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, tell them that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

Watch this, this is important. This is why Matthew wrote his gospel, to show the fulfillment of these prophecies about Jesus. Verse 4:

This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet (Zechariah):

"Say to the Daughter of Zion,  
'See, your king comes to you,  
Gentle and riding on a donkey,  
On a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

So Jesus is orchestrating, choreographing this scene. Most of these fulfilled prophecies just happened, but Jesus actually organized this as a publicity stunt. He made this happen, he set this up. This wasn't going to happen unless Jesus organized this particular fulfillment of scripture. Jesus was there when the scriptures were written, Jesus is the Spirit, the Father, three in one. So Jesus has already inspired Zechariah to write this prophecy and now he orchestrates its fulfillment in actuality. Jesus picked a donkey, the colt of a donkey. Kings used donkeys in the Old Testament, but also common people used donkeys. As time went on, and by the time of Jesus in particular, donkeys were not looked upon with a great deal of pride. They were sort of looked down on, and so Jesus did not pick a jewel encrusted chariot to come into Jerusalem with, he picked a donkey, a sign of the common man, of humility. He humbled himself, and entered the city on a donkey, kind of like Pope Francis. His whole demeanor, his personal humility comes through over and over again, and that's what Jesus was doing.

Then a flash mob! Watch this. Verse 6:

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them and Jesus sat on them. Then a very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut palm branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Hosanna in the highest!"

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

Just like you would see on a video of a flash mob, somebody doing something very extraordinary and people wanting to know what's going on? Who is this? And what do they say?

The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

Just to take a look at this from Luke's perspective, turn to Luke 19:37. It says:

When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples...

Now before it was the crowd saying this is the prophet from Nazareth, but now it says:

... the disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen...

So in Luke we see that the emphasis is on in the miracles. In fact, in the John passages we see the crowd is all amped up from the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead. But Luke points out that it's not just that miracle, it's also the accumulation of all the miracles. All of these things that have happened, all of these fulfilled prophecies the people have seen, all of the miracles recorded in Mark, these things are adding up, and the disciples break out in praise. You know that this is exactly what happens in your life! When you are regularly in the word of God, and he is speaking to your heart, and you are out connecting with other people, Christians sharing the reality of Christ in their life, and non-Christians where you start to see the lights come on in them, you have this accumulation of praise! The Bible says rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Well how do you get there? You get there by engaging, it's a carefully choreographed mission and we're part of the mission! Okay so here's the big news, after all that time, two thousand years, it's the same mission! We're on the same mission! Nothing has changed! It is exactly the same. The marching orders go and make disciples never amended, never rescinded, never altered, that's the mission! There is no other mission!

So Jesus is investing in men and asking them to go and invest in other men. That's what he was doing then, that's what he is doing now. Then he had a donkey bring him to the people. Guess what? Now you're the donkey. You're the one he wants to bring this great news to the people over whom he weeps. Let's read on:

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"

He replied, "I tell you if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it...

Here's the Big Idea today: **I am part of a carefully choreographed mission to bring Jesus to the people over whom He weeps.**

You think you're weeping over somebody that doesn't know Christ? Yeah, well you are. Do you know why you are weeping? Because it is God who is weeping over that person and by his spirit he has put in you, he is sovereignly orchestrating all human events to bring that person into a right relationship with him and he's using you to do it. So he's letting break your heart what breaks his heart. So when we weep, it's not we that want that person, it's that Jesus wants that person. So you can say to yourself I am part of a carefully choreographed mission to bring Jesus! I'm the donkey now! I saw a church sign that said come and be discipled. I don't think so! It's go and make disciples, we're bringing Jesus to the people. That's what's going on here, Jesus is bringing himself to the people. He's not up in the temple saying come on over here and I'll tell you how to be saved, he's going to the people. And that's what he wants us to do, he wants us to bring Jesus to the people, the people he cares about, the people for whom Christ died.

## Why Was Jesus Weeping?

So why was Jesus weeping? After all, this was the height of his popularity, he's got this flash mob, but it's because of who was in the crowd. Yes there were disciples in the crowd, but there were also people in the crowd who had confused expectations. In John right before this story it says the people were expecting a kingdom that was going to come immediately. They were looking for a jewel encrusted chariot to bring their leader in, they weren't looking for a donkey. They were looking for temporal salvation, they were looking for relief from the oppression of the government. So they thought that this moment, when they were laying down their garments and palm branches that they were welcoming a military coupe. They were flash mobbing for temporal salvation. You know how it is when your guy is running for office and you think he's winning, you know how excited you get? When he wins, you're pulling for him, you're flash mobbing for him, because you want him to solve your temporal problems. You're looking for a savior, someone to take care of you, someone to take care of all the cultural decay, poverty, racism, fatherlessness, and all of these things!

When a former mayor of Orlando, Bill Frederick, was considering running for governor, the papers were full of information about this. So in the days when I was a real estate developer, I had many dealings with the city and we knew each other. I saw him at a UCF dinner one night and I went up and said, "Bill, I'm so excited you're thinking about running for governor. I'd just really like to encourage you to run, I think that would be awesome! You're the kind of man we need! You can change things, you can make a difference!" He said, "Well you know, I would really appreciate if you would pray for me about making the right decision."

Ow! I didn't care at all about him, I just thought it would be cool to know somebody who was the governor of Florida! I didn't care about what God was saying to him, what God's calling was on his life, it was my man! So I flash mobbed him right there on the spot! So I said, "Okay, I'll do that." And slinked away. The next morning after I really repented, I got up and God came to me. I put together a little scriptural guide for someone to decide whether or not they should run for governor. It's about five pages of scriptures and questions, like how do you go about being truthful to yourself? Have you made a sober assessment of your ability to be governor? If you choose to seek the governorship, will you be making the best use of the gifts that you have been given and vice versa? Are you letting your concern over failure play a part in your thinking? Why would you want to run, etc? It was pretty obvious that God had given it to me, so I made an appointment with Mayor Frederick and I went down and I gave it to him. Two days later, he decided not to run. I'm not saying that was why, but I'm sure it had a part in it. Since then I've given it to four politicians, Bill Nelson, Bill McCollum, and Bill Gunter. Two of them decided not to run, and two did. But the point is that the reason I was interested at all is because I was part of the crowd. I was not plugged in to what God was doing at the beginning of that, I just flashed mobbed him. So Jesus is weeping because there are people in the crowd like me! That's why Jesus is weeping, and you've got friends, loved ones, co-workers, neighbors, right now that are just like that too, and Jesus is weeping over them! Now Jesus is Joy. Nothing interrupts the joy of Jesus, but there is still a part of Jesus that is always weeping over the lost.

The Big Idea today is this: **I am part of a carefully choreographed mission to bring Jesus to the people over whom He weeps.**

## Why Being A Good Example Is Not Enough

Finally, why being a good example is not enough. The Gospel of Jesus is not a feeling. The Gospel of Jesus is not an esoteric idea. The Gospel of Jesus is truth. The Gospel of Jesus is analytical. The Gospel of Jesus has content to it. There are prophecies that were made about Jesus that have been fulfilled, there were great miracles that Jesus performed, and these had been recorded and written down. There is content to the Gospel, and it's not enough just to be a good example out in the community with people saying oh Brian he's such a good guy! Boy he's really got it together, he's a Christian you know? But they don't know the content, the truth of the Gospel that makes Brian the way that he is. Or somebody says look at me, you can be like me. You're not drawing attention at that point to the Gospel, to Jesus, to the historical Jesus. Our faith is not in an idea, our faith is in the historical person of Jesus, the man who was also God, fully God and fully man. That is the truth to which we should draw people, and so the problem is that being a good guy risks nothing. To be a good Christian guy risks nothing, who cares! There is no gain unless you take a risk! The people that we love, if we just model and example our Christian faith to them but we don't explain to them this historical truth about this historical person, it is the person of Jesus, this simple narrative of Jesus. The birth, the life, the death and the resurrection of Jesus, this is what draws people to him.

I have a couple of things taped in my Bible, they have been taped there almost forever, and they're by Oswald Chambers and I want to read a couple of excerpts from them:

If my holiness is not drawing towards him, it is not holiness of the right order. A beautiful saint may be a hindrance if he does not present Jesus Christ, but only what Christ has done for him. He will leave the impression what a fine character that man is.

And then from November 9<sup>th</sup>: It is not the strength of one man's personality being superimposed on another but the revealed presence of Christ coming through the elements of the worker's life. When we preach or share the historic facts of the life and the death of our Lord as they are conveyed in the New Testament as I have been doing with you this morning, our words are made sacramental and God uses them to create in those who listen that which cannot be created otherwise. That's just the way it is.

What a wonderful personality! What a fascinating man! Such marvelous insight! What chance has the Gospel of God through all that? If a man attracts by his personality his appeal is along that line. If he is identified, however, with the Lord's personality then the appeal is along the line of what Jesus Christ can do. The danger is to glory in men, Jesus says we are to lift him up.

That's the mission. Same mission, always been. The Big Idea today: **I am part of a carefully choreographed mission to bring Jesus to the people over whom He weeps.** Say that together! **I am part of a carefully choreographed mission to bring Jesus to the people over whom He weeps.** Let's pray.

### **Closing Prayer**

Our dearest father, Lord, we come to you today. We all know everything that's been said today is true, and Lord it's not enough just to be an example, we need to bring the facts of the truth of the historical person of Jesus to the people over whom you are weeping, over whom we are weeping if we ever want to see anything change. Lord we thank you for this story to see how Jesus so carefully choreographed this publicity about the fulfillment of prophecy, how the people mobbed him and yet he still wept. Lord, help us each to take away from these truths something that will help us today to be more effective as we bring Jesus to the people over whom we are weeping as well as over those for whom you weep. We pray this in your name, and everybody said amen!