

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

STUDENT LESSON

AND THEN JESUS SHOWED UP— TRIUMPHANTLY

Is it just me, or does everyone run into powerful people at the strangest times?

Back in 2017, my family and I spent a week in and around Washington, DC. Our goal was to visit as MANY historical landmarks as possible. My family loves bike riding, so we decided to ride our bikes to visit museums and memorials, plus it was free transportation! Riding through a busy city is such a different thrill from trail biking. The bike lane sits in the middle of the road, so pulling up to a stoplight and being smack dab in an intersection is a wild experience.

So, here's my family, minding our own business, riding around to all the different places: the Washington Monument, the WWII Memorial, the Vietnam Wall, pretty cool stuff. Then we happened upon the Lincoln Memorial. We're walking up the stairs in the front and along comes (OUT OF NOWHERE) Former Governor of Texas, then-current Secretary of Energy, Rick Perry. We all know and love him, right? Well... I don't know... Maybe he's cool? We hadn't even heard of the guy! Now, KEEP IN MIND! We had been biking ALL morning. A morning, mind you, that quickly grew into a sweltering, sweaty degree of HOT! With each of us attached to a backpack, our shirts had fallen victim to a deep discoloring of a few shades darker than normal. Our brows struck with a relentless layer of sweat. So this dude, Rick, invites us to go to the TOP of the Lincoln Memorial. Now, step back a second, we still don't know who this guy is. What authority does this guy have to get us up there? Well, you don't question the guy who's promising you something super cool. Apparently, just do what the guys with the M16s say and you get to walk on top of the memorial. So, we treat him with respect and express our EXTREME gratitude. After all, Ricky P was probably doing this for his public image anyway. That's the story of how a sweaty family found themselves on top of the barrier-free ledge of one of America's coolest memorials with a political figure!

In our passage this week, we'll learn about how the people of Jerusalem were just going to the Passover when BAM they heard about some dude (you may have heard of Him) who brought a dead guy back to life. As this encounter is featured in all four gospels, you'll hear about the different perspectives on the same situation. I pray that as you do your daily devotions this week, you'll be able to apply what you learn to your life.

Open it

1. **Have you ever met someone REALLY important? Did you know they were important? How does knowing what someone has done change the way you act around them?**

Day 2 — Today's Theme: Yankee Doodle Came to Town

Read John 12:13–15.

The New Testament starts with the four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each of them are important because they cover a different perspective about Jesus' life and ministry. The testimonies given were all written with a specific audience in mind. Matthew wrote for the Jews, Mark wrote to the Romans, Luke wrote to the Greeks, and John wrote for both Jews and Gentiles, meaning that he wrote for believers and non-believers. Each of these four authors also wrote to highlight a different aspect of who Jesus is. Matthew wrote about Jesus being King (descendant of David), Mark showed that He's the Servant, Luke wrote about Him as the perfect man, and John highlighted that Jesus is God. Today, we'll be focusing on the similarities between John's Gospel—Jesus is God, and Matthew's Gospel—Jesus is King.

Here is a list I made briefly summarizing the order of events in both John and Matthew, starting from when they made it to Jerusalem and ending when it mentions the Pharisees wanting to arrest Him.

John	Matthew
The people in Jerusalem met up, laid out branches of palm trees	Jesus sends two disciples to find a donkey with her colt by her <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives an excuse as to why they need them • The Lord needs them • No questioning stated
Shouted, "Hosanna!"	Prophecy is stated
Jesus found a young donkey	Disciples bring donkey AND the colt
Fulfills prophecy	They place their cloaks on the donkey for Jesus to sit on. He sat on, they set Him on (different translations)
Disciples didn't get in until after Jesus was glorified	An already large crowd spreads cloaks while some spread branched from the trees
The crowd grows after news of Lazarus' revival spreads	Shouted, "Hosanna!"
Pharisees can't do anything about Him because of the crowd	Word spread about Him in Jerusalem
	Cleansing of the temple, cursing of the fig tree
	Chief priests and Pharisees couldn't find a way to arrest Him because of the crowd

8. How do the events as listed in Matthew better emphasize Jesus being a King?

9. How do the events as listed in John better emphasize Jesus being God?

Similar to John and Matthew, we focus on different aspects of events to emphasize the main message to an audience. In Matthew's testimony, his audience was the Jews. He focused on what they needed to hear; the Messiah they've been waiting for is FINALLY here! In John's testimony, his audience was everyone, so he focused on everyone! We see throughout John's gospel examples of Jesus witnessing to people of all backgrounds. In order to relate to all audiences, John emphasizes different aspects of Jesus' Ministry.

10. When sharing the Gospel with YOUR audience, how do you know what to focus on? What does YOUR audience need to hear?

Day 3 — Today's Theme: A Long Time Ago in a Testament Far Far Away...

Read John 12:14–16 and Zechariah 9:9.

John and Matthew's Gospels are the only two that talk about a prophecy being fulfilled. Why is that? Maybe because of the purpose of their Gospels? Fulfilling prophecies is one of the best ways the Bible proves that Jesus is both the one true God (John's Gospel) and King of our lives (Matthew's Gospel). The prophecy mentioned here is referencing Zechariah 9:9, where Zechariah uses very similar verbiage to John and Matthew, with few exceptions. Zechariah talks about righteousness, victory, and most importantly, humility.

11. Look back at the way the prophecy is used in John 12:14–16 and Matthew 21:4–5. What similar statements are mentioned? What differences can you find?

Jesus didn't show up on a noble, armor-clad steed with fully enchanted diamond armor. No, Jesus showed up on a donkey that His disciples brought to Him from the town.

Now, take a look at the prophecy featured in Zechariah 9:9.

12. What does this prophecy being fulfilled say about Jesus? How does Jesus show righteousness, victory, and humility through His actions in John and Matthew?

Day 4 — Today's Theme: The Disciples Brains were on River Time

Read John 12:16–19.

Here we see that the disciples didn't recognize a prophecy being fulfilled right away and Matthew's equivalent hints to the same notion of eventual realization.¹ Even the disciples, the ones closest to Jesus during His ministry, had to process prophecies for at least a week, maybe more, in this case. It wasn't just the disciples who didn't put two and two together right away either. While it doesn't specifically say what they were doing at this time, they clearly followed Jesus into Jerusalem in order to record what He did.

Ok, who else was there? Well, well, well, if it isn't the PHARISEES!! Unfortunately, they also weren't looking for prophecy-fulfilling actions. They were only there waiting for Jesus to slip up so that they could quickly arrest Him without causing a scene.²

God often gives us scenarios in our lives for different reasons. It doesn't always feel like everything is going our way all the time, but we can be comforted by Romans 8:28, "*And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.*"

13. Think of some maybe not-so-great times in your life that turned into valuable experiences that you're reminded of frequently. What are some distractions that pull us from seeing God's bigger picture?³

14. What can you do to ensure that Jesus remains the focus of all that you do?

¹The Gospel's weren't always written entirely chronologically. For example, in this passage we can see that the prophecy wasn't said or even remembered at that moment it was fulfilled. So Matthew and John put them in the story where it emphasizes the main idea more effectively.

²John 12:19

³ These could be minor lessons too. They don't have to be super tragic or life-altering. God works in every situation, big or small. A small example for me would be how tests in school stressing me out motivated me to study to do better in the future.

Note: This study was written by Micah Hett, www.villagebible.church/students.