

Angela Pound

From Rock to Cornerstone

Announcements

Opening:

Welcome, everyone! Today is Palm Sunday, the day we remember Jesus entering Jerusalem as King. But before the crowds cheered, there was a stone. A very important stone. [Point to large stone at the cross]

It's not just a rock. Jesus calls Himself the stone the builders rejected—the stone you cannot ignore. Today, we're going to see that even when the crowds cheer, the choice is already being made. And each of us has to decide what to do with this stone—It can either be the foundation of your life... or it can be a stumbling block. We can build on it or trip over it.

Psalm 118:19-24 reads:

“Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it. I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing; it is

marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”

Let us pray,

Loving God, teach us. Teach us to be more like you in this world. Full of love and peace, that others may know You through our words, our faith, and our actions. As we come to service today, prepare our hearts, to receive your Word, to sing your praises, to shout Hosanna. Help us to lay down all of our burdens and worries at the foot of the cross, relying on your strength and the power of your forgiveness. Help us worship you with a free spirit, not just today in this building, but every day, everywhere, for you are the God whose kingdom does not end. Bless us Lord, be with us in this time and space. And Lord, as we remember how Christ the King entered Jerusalem to the sound of joyful shouts, increase our faith, and listen to our prayers, so that we may praise you every day, by living always in You. Amen

Now, I will ask if some of the children and youth can hand out palm branches to everyone.

As I read Mark 11:1–11 the blue parts I would like for the congregation to respond with.

(While this is going on have two “disciples” come up front to get the “donkey” and then take it to the back. “Jesus”

gets on the donkey, have some of the children lay coats on the ground as they walk up and everyone waves palm branches.)

“When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’ ” They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, **“Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!”** Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.”

3 Songs:

This Is the Day

Praise

Jesus Messiah

Ask children and youth to go around and get foodbank items:

Ask: Have you ever said, “Hey, that’s not fair!!”

- Get responses from children, youth, and adults

Maybe your brother got a bigger piece of cake.

Maybe your friend got more time on the game.

Maybe someone got something you didn’t—and it just didn’t feel right.

Yeah... we’ve all been there.

But what if I told you something surprising?

Not everything that looks *unfair*... is actually wrong.

Imagine three kids trying to look over a tall fence to watch a baseball game.

- One kid is really tall.
- One is medium height.
- One is really short.

Now imagine we give them all the exact same box to stand on.

That sounds fair, right? Everyone gets one box.

But guess what?

- The tall kid can already see.
- The medium kid can kind of see.
- The short kid still can't see anything.

Same boxes... but not the same result.

Now imagine we do something different.

- The tall kid doesn't need a box.
- The medium kid gets one box.
- The short kid gets two boxes.

Now all three kids can see the game!

At first, someone might say, "Hey—that's not fair! He got more boxes!"

But actually... that *is* fair.

Because fair doesn't always mean *the same*.

Sometimes fair means giving people what they need.

But There's Something Even Better... What if... instead of giving out boxes...**we got rid of the fence?**
Or changed it into a chain-link fence that everyone can see through? (Show the graphic)

Now nobody needs a box at all.

That's called **justice**.

Helping someone with a box = kindness

Giving people what they need = fairness

Fixing the problem so everyone can see = justice

Justice means changing things so the problem doesn't keep happening.

What Does Jesus Do?

Jesus didn't just help people one at a time—
He cared about the bigger picture too.

- He fed the hungry
He welcomed people others left out
He stood up for those treated unfairly

Jesus shows us how to love people *and* how to make things better.

What About Us?

So what can we do?

- Share what we have

Help someone who is struggling
Stand up when something isn't right
Look for ways to make things better for *everyone*

Sometimes that might feel unfair...

But it's actually love.
It's actually fairness.
It's actually **justice**.

Remember This: Next time you think: "Hey—that's not fair!"

Ask yourself:

"Does someone need help right now?"
"Is there a way to fix the problem for everyone?"

Because when we do that...we're living the way Jesus teaches us to live.

Here's a short video from South Sudan a few years ago.

So, here you see how they are not only fighting for equality, but CBM is working through justice to support communities being able to feed themselves.

The slide above shows the world hunger map. There are 20 countries with extreme hunger in the world.

This year our Easter Campaign is to support the local food banks. Food is a need not a want, and unfortunately there are many people locally and all around the world that do not have enough food to eat in a day. While donating food

and money isn't "fixing" the issue, it helps support those who need it, while we also work and fight for ways within our communities to support those who need it on a longer term scale. So, let's see how much we can raise for the local foodbanks this season, with either writing on your envelope, foodbank or Easter, or as the note in the e-transfers.

Let's pray:

Woman from the Crowd:

I was there that day. There were so many people—but that wasn't unusual. Jerusalem is always alive with crowds. And it wasn't the procession either. Over the past two years, we had seen countless scenes like that—lines of the broken and hurting: stumbling, speech-slurred, weary, carried, pushed, lifted, brought before Him.

Yeshua.

No one would have dared to believe such healing was possible—except that it was happening. To everyone. Even to those we thought beyond hope. Everyone became like---- newborn! Legs straightened and muscles strung right. People who were mute----now they are singing and adding a little dance too!! And crippled individuals are running and leaping!! So—yes, we've been watching these

parades for many months now. But this time--- they finally saw WHO he was! Everyone ran to pull down branches from the trees. Which means----Victory! Triumph! When was the last time we were victors of anything? And we all took off our cloaks, our outer robes---and just laid them at his feet and at the feet of the donkey he was riding. We knew what we were doing because -----Finally, we all saw it. He was the king!! He was the one we've been waiting for since. since we were a people.

And the singing! Everyone was happy! We are not ----we have not been happy people. But this day!

“HOSANNA! HOSANNA!”

Children singing and old men, my grandpa, the young mothers----everyone! Cheering, laughing, shouting! Hosanna. And you know what “Hosanna” means, yes? It means, Please Save us! Save us!

Finally----a king to lead us! To lead our people. We can be a nation again—not servants and slaves to the Romans ...

And we said---we turned to one another, all my friends, my neighbors, my cousins, we were all standing and shouting together, and we said, “We will follow him anywhere—even into battle!”

But we didn't.

We could not guess what would happen next. And if we

had, no one would have been there that day. But I saw it. How those same people---not all of them, but some of them---my neighbors, my relatives, my uncle and cousins----they were there just days later. How many days? They were shouting again. Just yelling this time—not singing, and not waving palm branches but waving their fists and shouting—— CRUCIFY HIM!!

How did this happen?? From O Save Us Our King, Our King! To CRUCIFY Him, blasphemer!

HOW? But maybe I know. They wanted a king, a MAN king who acted like a god. They didn't want a king who WAS God. They never really wanted God at all.

I wonder how many of us want God to enter our world and become king over our lives? We think, foolishly, that we will give up too much. But here is what I know now: that day of singing and celebration and triumph was true. And real, more real and more true than anybody ever knew: "Ho-sanna!! Praise to the King! O Save us!!" we shouted. And then very quietly, through lashes, fists and nails ...

He did.

Short Interactive Message: Object: Crown and Palm Branch

Ask the children to come up front as there will be a visitor

in a minute.

Question 1:

“Why do you think the people were cheering when Jesus came into Jerusalem?”

Possible Answers:

- They thought Jesus was a king
- They hoped He would save them

“People were expecting a powerful king—someone with a crown and a war horse who would defeat their enemies. (Show crown.) But Jesus did something surprising—He rode on a donkey, not a war horse. He came as a king of peace, not a king of power.

The crowd shouted Hosanna, which means: *‘Save us!’* They wanted help, but many didn’t understand how Jesus would save them. He didn’t come with an army—He came with love, sacrifice, and eventually a cross.”

Question 2:

“What are some ways we can welcome Jesus into our lives?”

Possible Answers:

- Pray
- Be kind

- Follow Him
- Trust Him

“Palm Sunday reminds us that Jesus is our King too. But welcoming Jesus doesn’t mean just waving palm branches—it means letting Him into our hearts and lives every day.

- When we pray, we talk to Him and let Him guide us.
- When we are kind, we show His love to others.
- When we follow Him, we try to live the way He taught us.
- And when we trust Him, we remember He is always with us—even when things are hard.

Just like the people in Jerusalem shouted *Hosanna*, we can celebrate Jesus in our hearts, words, and actions. We can tell others about Him, share His love, and let Him be the King of our lives today!”

Demonstration with the rocks and sand:

“Okay, I need your help. What do I have here?”
(Hold up bottle, rocks, sand)

“These are rocks... and this is sand.”

“Let’s pretend something for a minute...”

“The **sand** is all the fun things we like to do—video games, sports, hanging out, watching shows,

hobbies.”

“The rocks are the important things Jesus asks us to build our life on—
loving others, helping people, praying, being kind, doing what’s right.”

“What do you think will happen if I put the sand in first?”

(Let kids answer) Do it the “wrong” way

- (Pour sand into the bottle first. Then try to add the rocks)
“Uh oh... what’s happening?”
“They don’t all fit!”

“Even though the rocks are important... there’s no room left.”

- “Sometimes our lives are like this.”
“We fill our time with all the stuff we to do first...”
want
- “And then when it’s time for what really matters...”

“There’s no room left.”

(Dump it out)

“Let’s try it a different way.”

Put the rocks in first

Then pour the sand in

“Whoa—look at that!”

“It all fits!”

“When we put the important things first—the things Jesus teaches us—”

“Everything else can still fit around it.”

“Jesus teaches us to build our lives on the right foundation.”

“Not just doing whatever we want first...”

“But choosing what matters most.”

“What are some ‘rocks’ in your life?”

(Let them answer: kindness, prayer, helping, etc.)

Then say: “This week, let’s try putting the *rocks first*.”

“When we put Jesus first, we start to care about others more.”

“We notice when things aren’t fair...”

“And we want to help—like giving someone a box... or even helping take down the fence.”

“Let’s build our lives with the right things first—because that’s how we live the way Jesus teaches us.”

Now, you’re going to want to stay to hear from a friend of mine:

Donkey Perspective: “I Was Just A Donkey”

(Donkey walks slowly to center stage, maybe holding a

rope.)

I was just a donkey. Not a war horse. Not fast. Not strong. Not impressive. Just a donkey... tied up. That was my life. Tied up beside a house in a small village near Jerusalem. People walked by me every day. No one looked twice. I carried loads. I pulled carts. I did ordinary donkey things. And then one day... everything changed. Two men came and untied me.

I thought, "Wait! What's happening? Where are we going?"

They said, "The Lord needs him." The Lord? Me?

Surely they had the wrong donkey.

There were stronger animals. More beautiful animals. Braver animals.

But they chose... me. They led me to a man named Jesus. He didn't look like a king. Kings ride tall horses into cities. But He gently sat on my back. And suddenly, I wasn't just a donkey anymore. I was carrying a King. As we walked toward Jerusalem, people started shouting.

They waved branches. They laid coats on the ground. "Hosanna!" they cried.

And I thought... "They're not cheering for me." They were cheering for the One I carried.

And that's when I understood something. I didn't become

important because of how strong I was... or how impressive I looked. *(Pause.)*

I was important because Jesus chose me. And Jesus chooses you. It's not about being the biggest or the best. It's about being willing. All I had to do... was carry Him.

Maybe you feel ordinary sometimes. Not the strongest. Not the most important. Not the most noticed. But Jesus chooses you...When you carry His love... His kindness... His peace...

Your ordinary life becomes part of an extraordinary story. I was just a donkey tied up. Until Jesus chose me. And today, and every day...He's choosing you too.

Interactive Prayer: Each person has a palm leaf. When I say "Jesus our King," everyone responds: "Hosanna! Save us!" and you can wave your palm branch. See if you can count how many times we wave our branches in the prayer.

Practice once. "Jesus our King" "Hosanna! Save us!"

Jesus our King, Hosanna! Save us!

Today we welcome You. We wave our branches and open our hearts. Help us not just to cheer for You, but to follow You.

Jesus our King, Hosanna! Save us! When we feel afraid — remind us You are with us. When we feel lonely — show us we are never alone.

Jesus our King, Hosanna! Save us! When our world feels broken, bring Your peace. When people are hurting, make us helpers. Show us how to bring kindness into our homes, our schools, and our community.

Jesus our King, Hosanna! Save us! When we want things our way, teach us to trust Your way. When we don't understand what You are doing, help us remember that You see the whole story.

Jesus our King, Hosanna! Save us! Thank You for loving us even when we make mistakes. Thank You for the cross. Thank You for Easter morning.

Jesus our King, Hosanna! Save us! Today we praise You loudly —And we promise to follow You not just today, but every day. Hosanna in the highest! Amen.

What do these things remind you of? (Have party supplies)

Who enjoys a party? I do!

When you go to a party, what are some of the sounds you might hear?

- People laughing or talking
- Happy music
- Cheering or singing

Now... what would you think if you walked into a party and

it was totally silent?

No one talking, no laughing, no cheering... that wouldn't be a very good party, would it?

When we're excited about something, we usually make some noise about it—our favorite songs, funny jokes, or when we see someone we love.

Well, worshiping God is like that too!

We're going to hear a story from the Bible about what Jesus said might happen if people were silent and didn't praise Him. This story is about his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, like we read in Matthew this morning, but this one comes from the Book of Luke.

Jesus was traveling down the road when a group of people started singing songs about how awesome He was. But there were some people who didn't like how loud they were praising, and they told Jesus to make them stop.

Do you think Jesus listened to them?

Nope! He said: "If people weren't allowed to sing praises to me, then the rocks would cry out and sing praises instead!"

Hear what it says in Luke 19:37–42 "As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, "Blessed is the king who comes in

the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!” Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, order your disciples to stop.” He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.” 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.”

Wow! That sounds kind of crazy, right? Rocks talking? But Jesus wanted everyone to know how good it is to praise God out loud.

Singing is just one way we can worship God. You can also cheer, clap, dance, or shout!

Let’s try a really loud cheer together. On the count of three, let’s go all out:

1... 2... 3... WOO-HOO! 🙌

See? That’s how we can celebrate God—loud and joyful!

Have you ever been to a sports game where your team made an amazing play? Maybe a home run, a touchdown, or a buzzer-beater three-pointer?

When something exciting happens, we can’t help but cheer and shout. That’s exactly how Jesus’ followers felt. They had seen Him perform miracles and teach wonderful lessons. They wanted everyone to know He was the King—

they were praising Him for who He is.

And that makes me wonder... do we shout and celebrate what God has done in our lives often enough? Do we share with others how great He's been to us?

Our main idea today is:

We can worship God out loud!

I want to share Scripture from Psalm 30:8–12:

I cried out to you, Lord. I begged my Lord for mercy: "What is to be gained by my spilled blood, by my going down into the pit? Does dust thank you? Does it proclaim your faithfulness? Lord, listen and have mercy on me! Lord, be my helper!" You changed my mourning into dancing. You took off my funeral clothes and dressed me up in joy so that my whole being might sing praises to you and never stop. Lord, my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

God is so great! He can turn our sad days into happy days, our worried days into peaceful days. All we have to do is call on Him and praise Him. Remember the story we talked about, where Jesus said that if people weren't allowed to praise Him, the rocks would cry out instead? That's a pretty wild idea, right—rocks praising God! But Jesus wanted everyone to know how amazing it is when we worship Him out loud."

So today, we're going to do a little activity to help us

remember that story. First, I want you to hand out rocks to everyone.

On your rock, I want you to write the word the crowd said as Jesus was entering Jerusalem, do you remember what that was?yeah Hosanna

As you write, think about all the ways you can praise God out loud—not just with your voice, but with your actions and your heart too. And just like Jesus said, we don't want the rocks to have to do all the praising for us—we get to do it ourselves!"

Leader:

“See, the crowds cheer, but even as they praise, some hearts are choosing rejection. Jesus is still the stone that must be reckoned with. What will you do with Him?

Let's take a moment to think. Hold your stone quietly and ask:

‘Jesus, will I follow You? Will You be the cornerstone of my life?’

(PAUSE)

We're going to do something with the rocks at the end of the service so hang onto them.

We don't want rocks crying out instead of us, so we need to praise God every day—in happy times and in hard times.

Let's pray:

Father God, Thank you for this awesome opportunity to celebrate you. Thank you for our families and for the peace and health you give us. Help us to praise you out loud, to be bold in front of others, and to share the great things you've done in our lives.

Lord, don't let us depend on rocks or trees to cry out for us —help us to do it ourselves! We love you, Jesus. Amen.

As we're preparing to sing our last few songs, there's a couple of things I'd like you to do during this time, while you're singing.

I want you to write on your palm branch the name of someone or situation that you would like prayer for. Place the palm branch at the foot of the cross.

I would like you to bring your rock forward and place it as a pathway to the cross with the word Hosanna facing upwards. If either one of these are not easy for you to do, you can put your hand up and the kids will come around and collect your rock and palm branch for you and place them up here.

So, let's praise God: with some songs:

End the Service with:

Hosanna

Hosanna (Praise is Rising)

The Blessing

As we go from this place, God, we lay some of our prayers at your feet. We know you are with us every step of the way. As we leave, remind us of this path of praise, Hosanna, with our prayers at the foot of the cross. May God hear and hold them.

So, go now in peace,
carrying the branches of joy and the cross of sacrifice.
Walk the road with Jesus,
from the cheers of Palm Sunday to the shadows of the cross.

May the love of God the Father surround you,
the grace of Christ go before you,
and the power of the Holy Spirit strengthen you—
now and always.

And may the Cornerstone guide your hearts this week. Go in joy and trust the Stone who saves.

Hosanna in the highest! Amen.