

Who Art Thou, Lord?
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Purpose:

The majesty of Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem should be recreated in our lives as we recognize just who the Lord really is. This is a pageant very appropriate for Palm Sunday.

Characters:

12 children are needed. 1 for each of the individual banners and 2 for the "Jesus" banner.

Any other children available may be used for in-fill pennants. Our nursery class preceded the "Jesus" banner playing rhythm instruments.

Narrator 1, Narrator 2 (*Both adults*)

Props:

Banners are carried in to coincide with narration. As the first banner comes in, it proceeds up the center aisle to the pew closest to the platform, where the child carrying it stops and turns to face the aisle. The children carrying small white in-fill pennants (if any) line up behind the first banner and also turn facing the aisle. The next banner comes to the head of the aisle and stops on the other side, with white banners filling in behind. The rest of the first ten follow suit, alternating from side to side, until the entire aisle is filled with equally spaced banners on each side, separated by white in-fill banners, with all banners held over the aisle to create a corridor. It is down this aisle that the banner of Christ will be carried.

See details on banners at the end of the play.

Narrator 1: Welcome into our house of worship, into this place where we have gathered to give praise to our Lord. Our children giving a presentation we call, "Who art thou, Lord?" It was a question Paul asked, lying on the road to Damascus. It is no less valid today. **Who** art thou, oh Lord?

...music of "Battle Hymn of the Republic" begins playing softly..

Narrator 2: (*Banner 1 enters, followed by in-fill*) For those who come seeking a God to put first in their lives, let me introduce Alpha, the beginning, the author of our faith. He who in the beginning created heaven and the earth, the Word who existed from the beginning. The God who said, "Before Abraham, I was." "Before the foundations of the World were laid, I was." This is the same God who has loved you from the dawn of time and from before you ever knew him. Alpha, the beginning. That's what God is, but that's not **Who** God is.

Narrator 1: (*Banner 2 enters, followed by in-fill*) For those who come seeking a God as a resting place for dreams. For an end to their search for life's meaning. Let me introduce Omega, the end, the finisher of our faith. He who came as the Ancient of Days and promised to be with us always, even till the end of the earth. In Him, the Godhead is complete. Of his government, there will be no end. And it is unto him that every knee will bow and every tongue confess. This is the God who promised he who endures to the end **will** be saved. And he is the last one to whom you will ever give an account for your life. That's what God is, but that's not **Who** God is.

Narrator 2: (*Banner 3 enters, followed by in-fill*) For those who come looking for a God to fill an aching hunger and void within, meet the Bread of Life. A man may eat thereof, and not die. The God who said whosoever would believe on him would never hunger. The staff of bread broken in Jerusalem. The manna from heaven, given freely and without justification. The one who multiplied for the feeding of the multitude. This is the God who gave his flesh as bread for the life of the world. He said, "This is my body, take and eat."

That's what God is, but not his **identity**.

Narrator 1: (*Banner 4 linters, followed by in-fill*) For those who come seeking a God to satisfy thirst for righteousness in a land of drought, meet the Living Water. Upon whom we can believe and never thirst again. The one who said from our bellies would flow rivers of living water. Cold water to a thirsty soul. Refreshing for the weary. A well springing up within. This God, who had compassion for the woman at the well, is also the deep that calleth unto the deep. That's what God is, but that's not his **name**.

Narrator 2: (*Banner 5 linters, followed by in-fill*) For those who have come looking for a sure foundation to build their lives upon, he is known as the Rock of Ages. This is the cornerstone rejected by the builders, the rock that was Christ. It will break you if you fall upon it. It will grind to powder that upon which it falls. Yet when trouble comes, it is under this rock we can hide. It is this rock upon which we build our houses. And it is this rock in whom I will trust. A rock that is higher than I. That's what God **is**.

Narrator 1: (*Banner 6 linters, followed by in-fill*) For those who have come hunting refuge from storms of life and turmoil within, my God is a Strong Tower. A refuge in the time of trouble, into which the righteous run and are saved. This is He who said, if he were lifted up, he would draw all men unto him. He is the wall upon which the watchman stands. A lighthouse in the distance, a strong and a mighty fortress. He is the strength of my salvation, my high tower on which I am lifted above the shadows. That's what God is, but **Who** is he?

Narrator 2: (*Banner 7 linters, followed by in-fill*) - For those who come for a God of judgment and power, he became the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. To both chastise and defend his people. This God crouched and lay down like a lion, and what is stronger than a lion? He destroyed cities for disobedience and laid them waste without inhabitants. He will not lie down till he eats his prey and drinks from blood of the slain. This is the God who hunts for our souls as a fierce lion. The king's wrath is as of the roaring of a lion and as a lion, he comes in judgment. That's what God is, and will be, but **Who** is God?.

Narrator 1: (*Banner 8 linters, followed by in-fill*) For those who have come for a God of grace and mercy, He became the Lamb of God, slain before the foundation of the World, to save his people. The lamb without blemish or spot, led to slaughter, to take away sin. This is the lamb, who in the end will lie down with the lion. This is the lamb, by whose blood we overcome. This is that lamb, who was slain and yet is worthy to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing. This is the lamb who stood dumb before his shearers, but before whom all nations will someday stand. Still, we seek to know him for **Who** he is.

Narrator 2: (*Banner 9 linters, followed by in-fill*) For those who come desiring an end to strife and calm in the midst of the storm, meet the Prince of Peace. Righteousness, peace, and joy are his kingdom, and of this kingdom, there will be no end. This is the God who said "My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled." He said, "Peace, be still" and the wind and water obeyed. This is he that restores souls in the valley and leads beside still waters. The peace that passes all understanding. Now, may the God of Peace be with you all. Amen

Narrator 1: (*Banner 10 linters, followed by in-fill*) For those who come seeking an awesome God, one of radiance and power and majesty, I present to you the King of Kings, the blessed and only potentate, the Lord of Lords. The conqueror, who has on his vesture and on thigh a name written. King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He came to the daughters of Zion, meek and sitting on a colt. At the end of time, he will come back in power. They that are with him shall be called chosen and faithful. In death, he was mockingly called the King of the Jews. In eternity, he is the King of Kings. And blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. That's what God eternally **is**.

Music abruptly stops...add slight reverb.

But **who** - art - thou - Lord?

Throughout time, men have desired to see the face of God. To meet him on our level and know him as a friend. God also desired this, so he came. Some recognized him and God forever changed their lives. Most did not. Little has changed. But on a level we can understand, he wrapped miraculous flesh around his glory so it wouldn't blind us. The life of Jesus gives us our insight into the character of God. Not the attributes, but the personality and heart of God. When we know our days are numbered, everything we do becomes desperately important. We make time count. The trivial is set aside. And we strive to finish what gives meaning to our existence. Jesus did the same.

Make no mistake about it. From the first bite of forbidden fruit, God started down the path to Calvary. Jesus was not a victim of circumstance, nor a pawn in a power play. He described his upcoming death in detail, and then walked to meet it. Look at what was important to Jesus, as his time here came to an end. Then maybe we can touch him and for the first time, behold his face as that of a friend.

Listen to Him Jesus tell the story of chosen workers to his disciples. The story we think of as a tale of equal wages. It is. But don't miss the hidden story of mercy shown to castaways. With so little meaning left in life they still wait in the unemployment line at the **end** of the work day. Don't miss his passion for the forgotten. What society discards, God treasures. Listen to disciples tell two blind men Jesus is too important for their problems. After all, he's headed to Jerusalem on serious business. More than they know. But on the way to accomplish the saving of all mankind, God takes time to do what only he can do. He forever changes the lives of those who cry out to him in faith.

Listen to this man called Jesus, praying in the Garden. He's afraid. He wants out. He knows before long, those he calls friends will all betray him. The people he came to save will spit upon him, mock him, torture, and then kill him. He'll be betrayed by religion, and ultimately abandoned by the spirit of God. How many of us find ourselves somewhere in there? So he prays for release from the will of God. And like us, cannot find it. So instead, he prays for, and receives, strength for endurance.

Finally, we leave Jesus. He's dead now. The work he came to do seems destroyed. Satan won, the disciples are scattered, and the church is probably finished. He was born in a miracle and died in thunder and lightning. But he died and it's over. He came in swaddling clothes in a borrowed manger. We leave him swaddled in burial clothes in a borrowed tomb. But we could all learn from his example. He was a good man.

Pause here

For some, that's good enough
They're content to leave him in his tomb
But the story does not end there

All Hail the Power of Jesus Name begins playing softly

You see, Jesus was **who** God was, which meant that God was **what** Jesus was. Which is why,

The cross is empty
So is the tomb
And our hearts and our lives are not

Isaiah said "Unto us a son is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of

Peace. But those are attributes. The angel told Mary to **name** him "Jesus." Because he would save his people from sin. Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, his train filling the temple. Jesus said if he were lifted up, he would draw all men to him. He's been lifted up. His name is higher than any other name. Do you want to know **who** God is? Learn his name. Pay close attention to his life. Listen closely to his words. Especially as he tells how to take authority over, and gain victory over, problems that so easily beset us. His instructions are simple. "**In my name**"

Banner of Jesus name begins moving through the honor guard.. By the end of the following narration this procession should be on the platform and turned to face congregation. As this banner passes each of the other banners, they turn to face forward.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father might be glorified in the Son"

Peter, to whom keys to the kingdom of heaven were given, declared it. There was no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. It's a mighty name.

For those who came seeking a God who understands you. Who knows the loneliness within. Knows your faults and failures and still loves you, we present JESUS. Everything, God is, he is. For he is Emmanuel, God with us. Everything we are, he was. For he was the Son of Man. He is **who** God is, the point at which we meet God face to face. In his name, we claim power over sickness. Demons tremble at the name of Jesus. In his name, we have power over sin. Jesus, the name that is above all other names.

Would you stand to honor that name today? And join your voices to ours?

Congregation and musicians sing "All Hail the Power of Jesus Name."

Making the banners

These banners and their appliques were made from a cotton/polyester blend cloth with a light to medium weight interfacing. (Parachute cloth would also be nice, but it was rather expensive) The appliques can be applied using double sided iron-on interfacing. The edges can be sealed with either satin stitching or fabric paints. If satin stitching, you will get a smoother stitching line without puckers if you place a coffee filter on the underside (This will tear away very easily when complete). The appliques are sewn on after the banner is put together. You will have the applique showing on one side and the outline of the design showing in stitching on the other.

Individual banners should be sized to be easily carried by small children. The *Jesus* banner was twice as wide and the bottom came down to a point (opposite of the other banners). There was just one 1" dowel rod going through this which had large yellow tassels (drapery tassels) attached to each end of the rod. The final banner was royal purple satin with bright yellow tassels and fringes, and had the name of Jesus emblazoned across it, also in bright yellow.

Add enough for seam allowances, and then cut two panels for each banner. Place right sides together and sew edges leaving seam open at top where dowel rod slides through. Turn right side out and press. Center applique and satin stitch around edges.

Material: allow for one yard of fabric per banner (two for Jesus banner). When we did this, the colors of the banners graduated chromatically from pale blue to dark blue in pairs (five different colors), leading to the banner for Christ. The symbols on the banners were bright yellow and were as follows:

- Banner 1 - the symbol for Alpha
- Banner 2 - the symbol for Omega
- Banner 3 - a stylized loaf of bread
- Banner 4 - a graphic for a glass of water
- Banner 5 - the rock of Gibraltar
- Banner 6 - a tower, similar to a chess rook
- Banner 7 - a stylized British lion, as from a crest
- Banner 8 - a lamb
- Banner 9 - a dove
- Banner 10 - a large crown over a pile of small crowns

Fill-in Pennants - Straight sturdy wire (coat hangers will work) with a plain white paper triangle glued around end.

We also attached round hooks in the platform wall so when this was complete, the banners were placed on the back wall of the platform. The *Jesus* banner was placed in the center and the other banners were stair stepped down moving towards the outside walls. Later, the 10 banners were hung down the sides of the sanctuary from the beams. The *Jesus* banner was not hung.

This was an awesome production. You felt like it was really *Jesus* coming down the center aisle and could well imagine actually being there in Jerusalem 2000 years ago. I believe it would be safe to say, no one was left untouched that Sunday morning.

