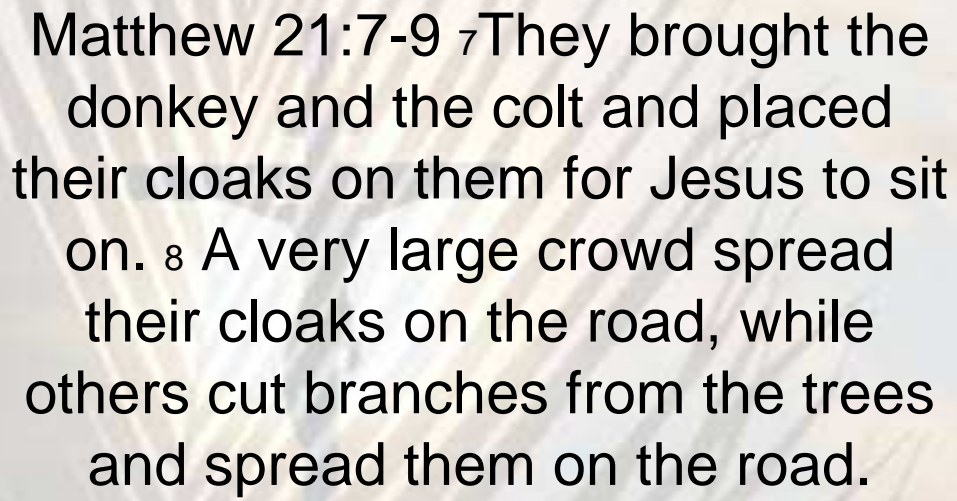
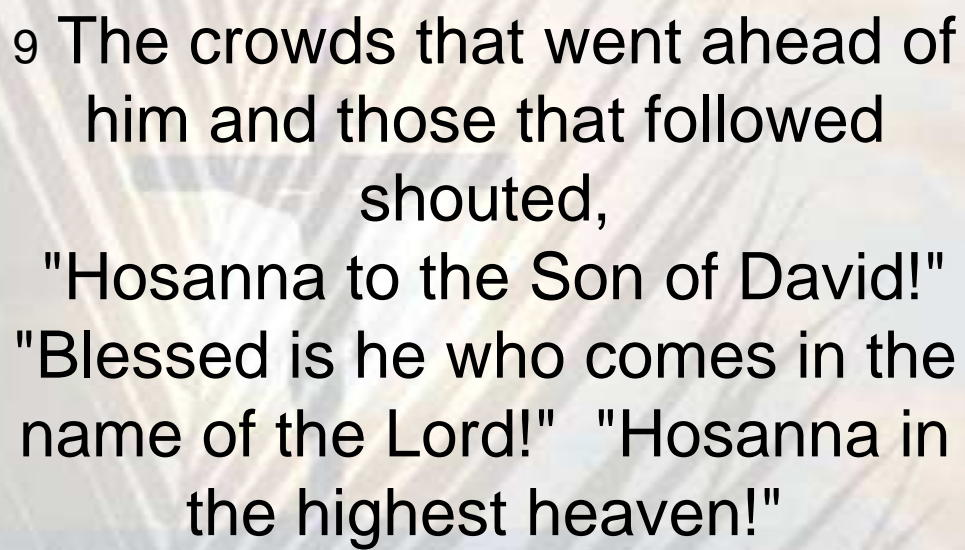


What's
Wrong with
this
Picture?

A background image showing a row of palm trees against a light sky, with the text overlaid in the center.

Matthew 21:7-9 ⁷They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.



9 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 heaven!"

10 When Jesus entered
Jerusalem, the whole city
was stirred and asked, "Who
is this?" 11 The crowds
answered, "***This is Jesus,
the prophet from Nazareth
in Galilee.***"

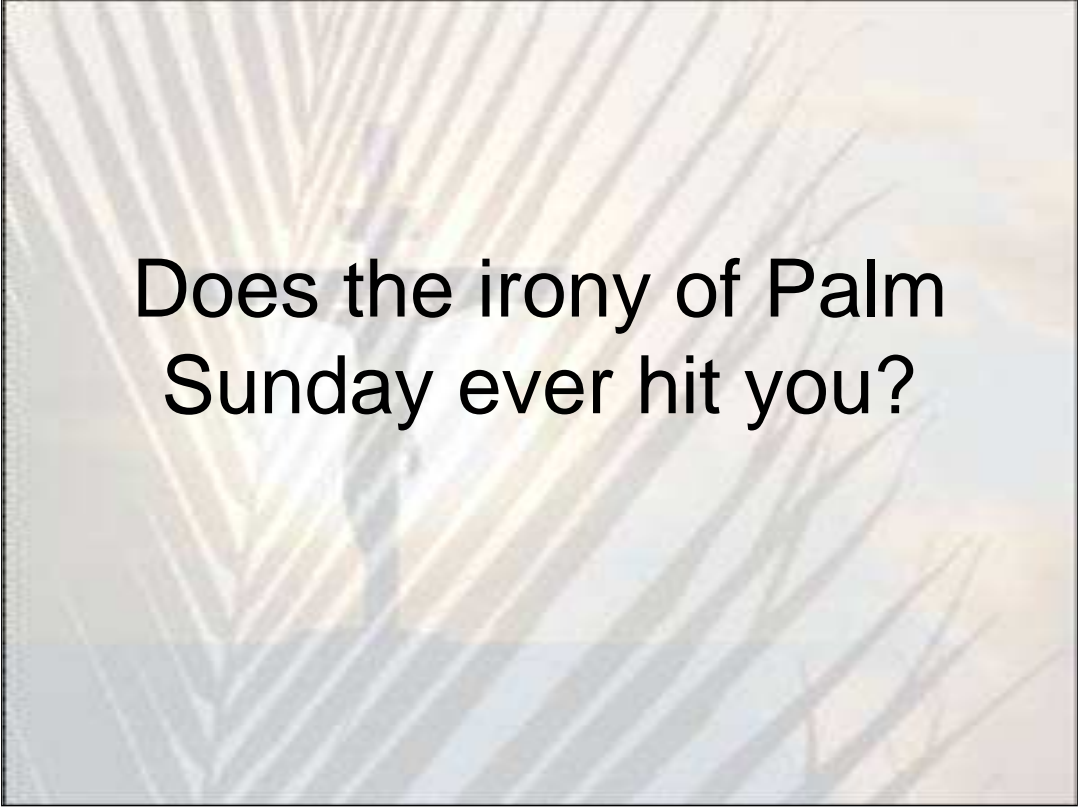
This fulfilled one of the prophecies of the Messiah.

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.***

Zechariah 9:9

1 Kings 1:33-34

³³ he said to them: "Take your lord's servants with you and **set *Solomon my son on my own mule*** and take him down to Gihon. ³⁴ There have Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel. Blow the trumpet and shout, 'Long live King Solomon!'




Does the irony of Palm Sunday ever hit you?

On Sunday Jesus is entering Jerusalem like a triumphant king.

In Old Testament style like he entered with the people putting their cloaks down like a red carpet.

Just 4 days later – on Thursday night – he's being betrayed, and by Friday morning, being crucified.



There's a *eerie tension*
about this event.

You almost don't want him to go into Jerusalem.

You want to warn – don't do it – it's a trap!

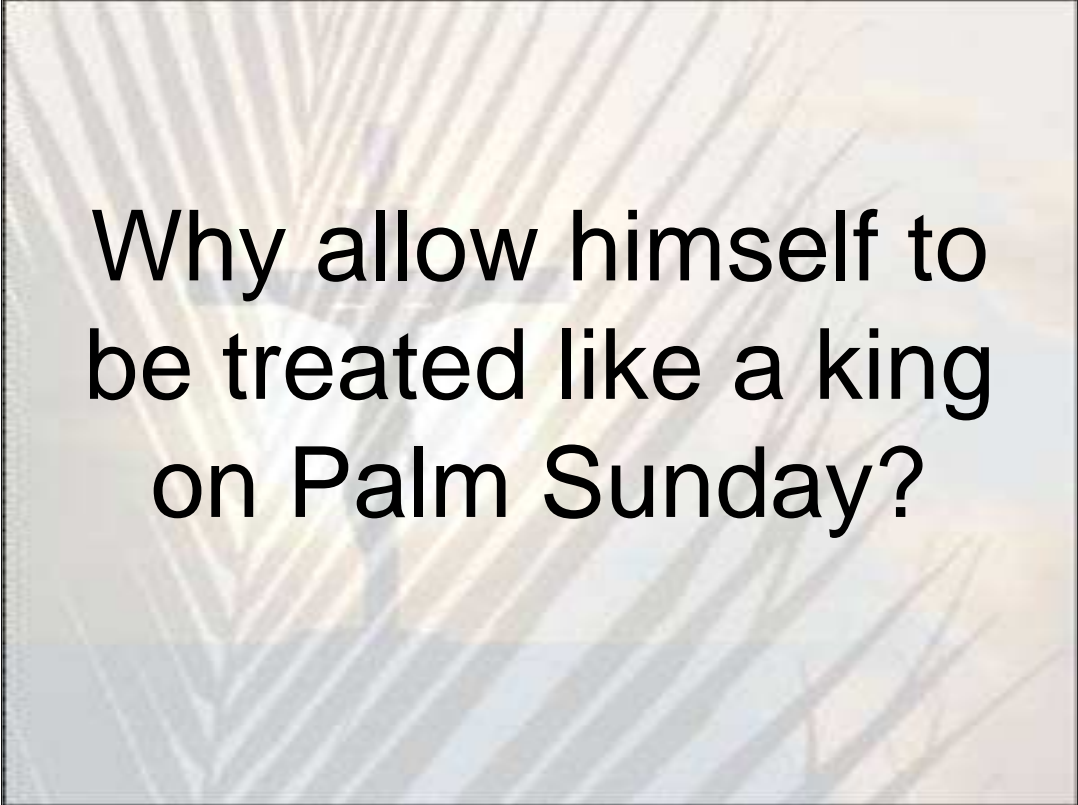
It's like [Leonardo DiCaprio](#) at the beginning of Titanic. The happy-go-lucky Jack Dawson wins the pair of tickets in the card game. You almost want to shout – “Don't get on that boat!”

Matthew 20

¹⁷Now as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside and said to them,
¹⁸"We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death
¹⁹and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!"

Jesus **knew** that he was going to Jerusalem to die and then be raised on the third day, although his disciples couldn't comprehend this.

Why go through this sort of mock parade?

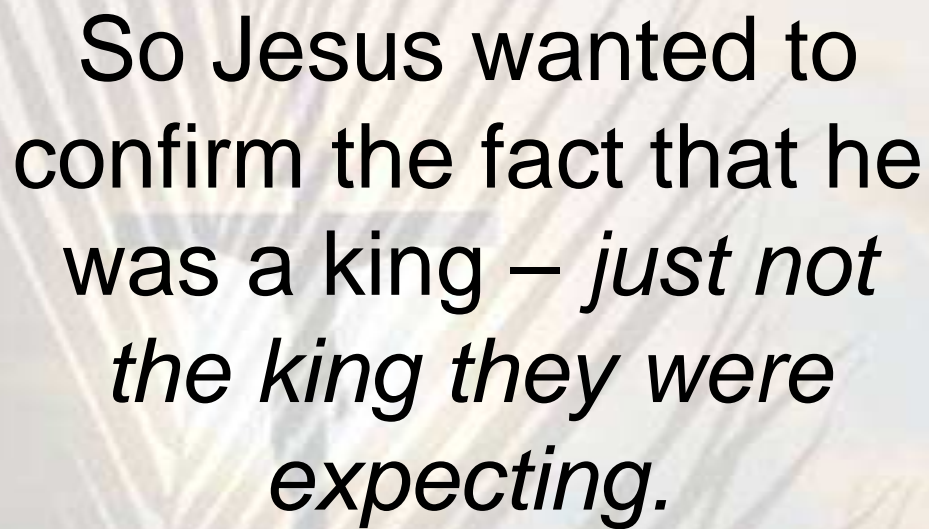


Why allow himself to be treated like a king on Palm Sunday?

Kings commonly would ride on a donkey – part of the royal image.

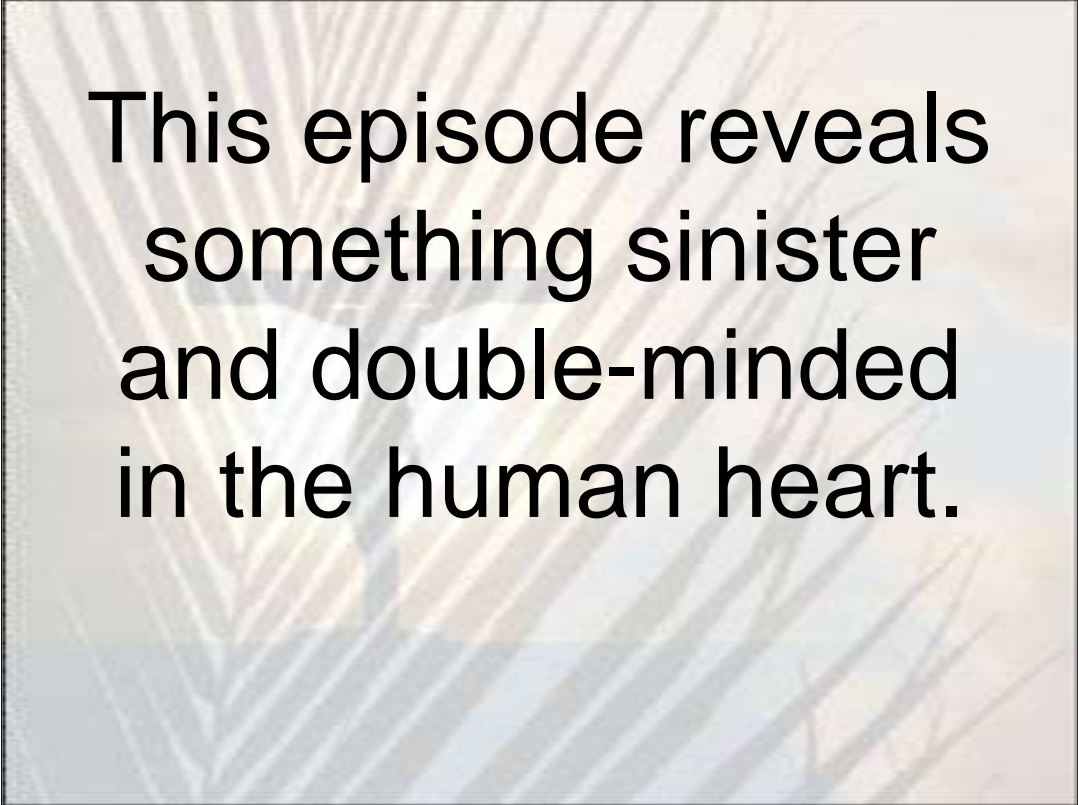
Yet Jesus turns this around in that he rights on the foal of a donkey while the mother walked alongside.

Perhaps to signify his nature as a different kind of King. One identified with the meek and lowly.



So Jesus wanted to confirm the fact that he was a king – *just not the king they were expecting.*

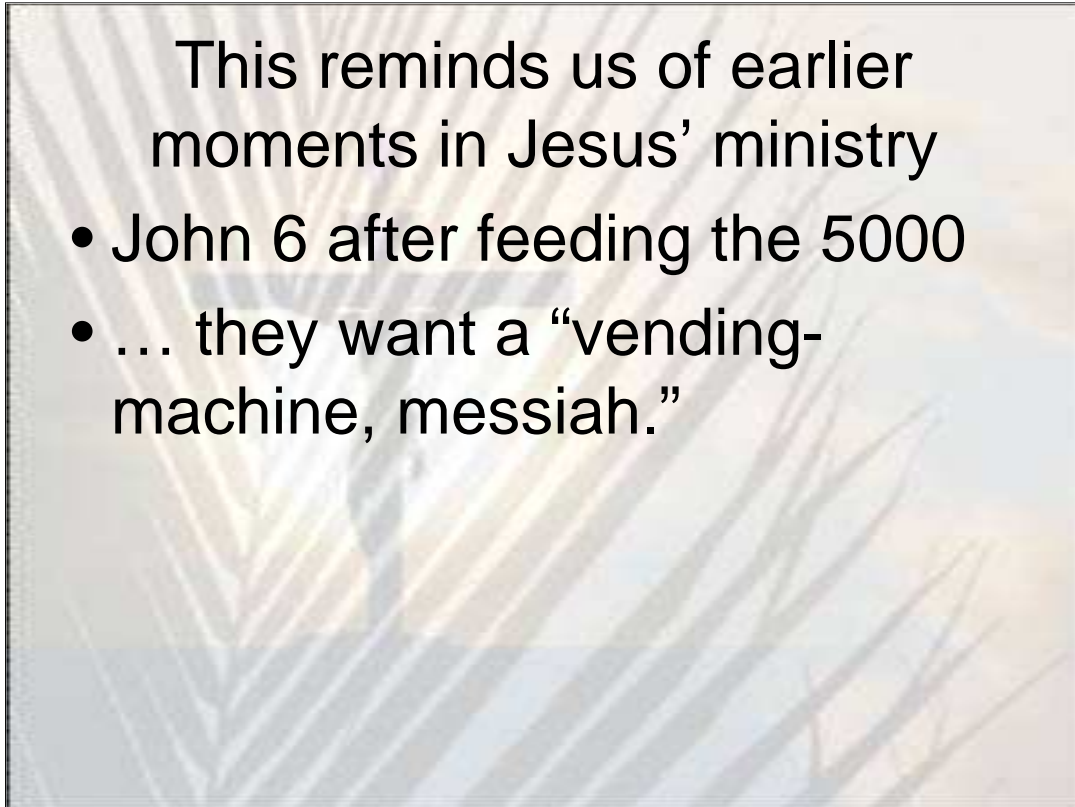
Luke tells us that gave him the royal treatment because of the miracles he was doing.



**This episode reveals
something sinister
and double-minded
in the human heart.**

Sure, there were perhaps different sets of people involved in the parade as compared to the trial and crucifixion.

We are easily two-faced – one way with one crowd, a different way with another.

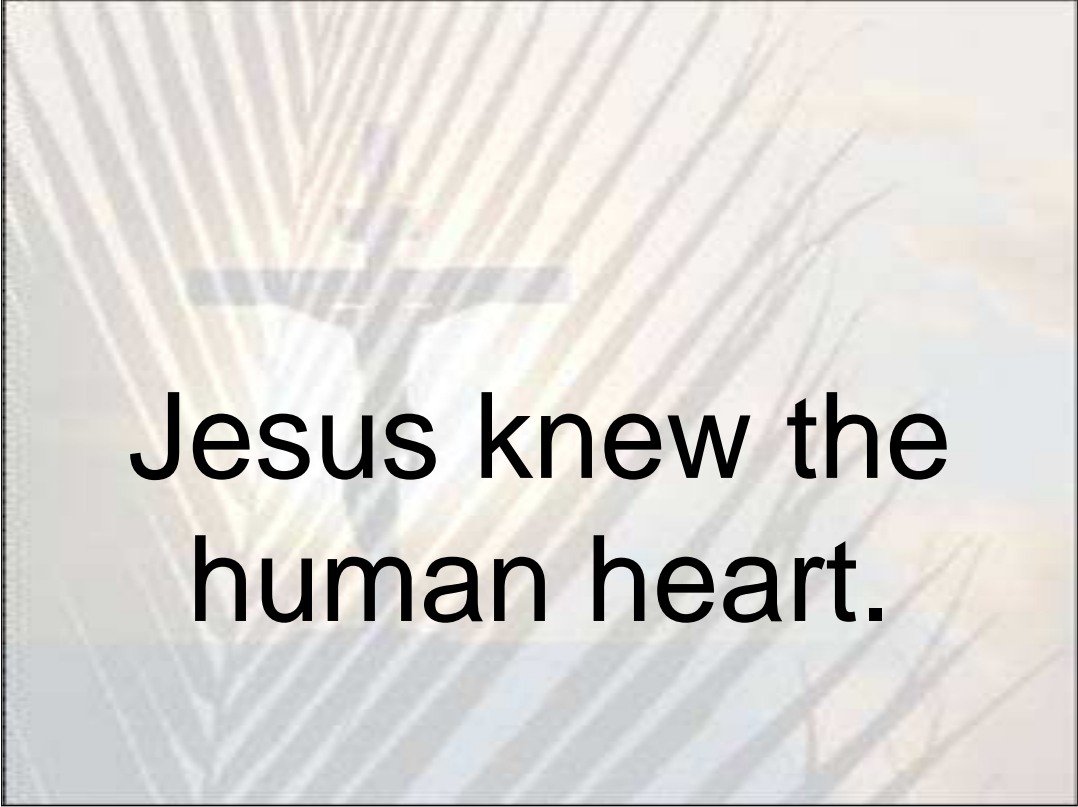


This reminds us of earlier moments in Jesus' ministry

- John 6 after feeding the 5000
- ... they want a “vending-machine, messiah.”

He responded by telling them the main thing God wants – **“to believe on the one he has sent”** – “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.”

They just wanted someone to feed them on a regular basis – **a sort of vending-machine Messiah.**



**Jesus knew the
human heart.**

23In Jerusalem during Passover many people put their faith in Jesus, because they saw him work miracles. 24But Jesus knew what was in their hearts, and he would not let them have power over him. **25No one had to tell him what people were like. He already knew.** John 2:23-25 CEV

At different points in his ministry, the crowd swelled with approval.

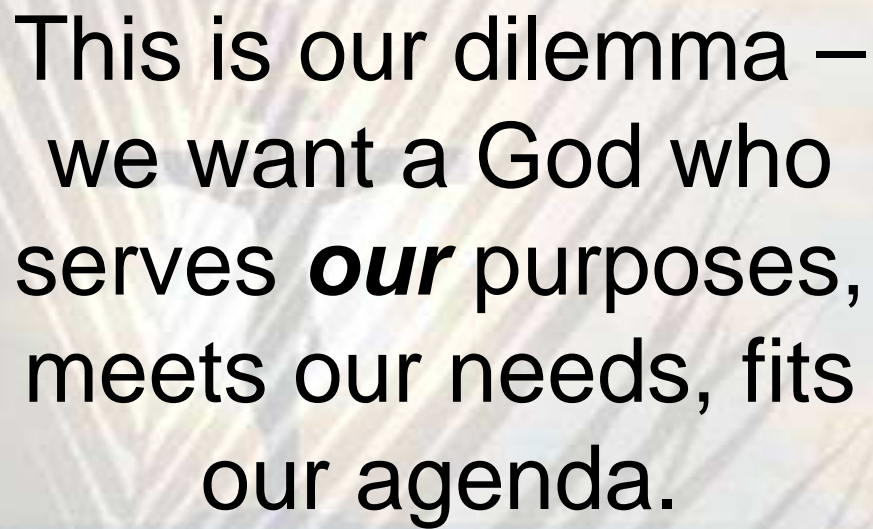
But scripture tells us that, “Jesus did not entrust himself to them for he knew what was in the heart of man.”



*Choose Something
Like a Star*
by Robert Frost

Frost reminds us not to rely too much on popular praise or blame that can easily change.


Oh Star the fairest on in sight,
we grant your mystery the right to some obscurity of cloud,
It will not do the say of night, since dark is what brings out your light.
Some mystery becomes the proud, but to be wholly taciturn in your reserve is not allowed.
Say something to us we can comprehend. Speak Fahrenheit, speak centigrade.
Tell us what elements you blend. It gives us strangely little aid, but does tell something in the end.
And steadfast as Keat's Eremite, not even stooping from its sphere, it asks a little of us here.
It asks of us a certain height. For when at times the crowd is swayed to carry praise or blame too far,
we may choose something like a star, to stay our minds and be staid.



This is our dilemma –
we want a God who
serves **our** purposes,
meets our needs, fits
our agenda.

God won't have this. He knows the human heart, and aims to transform it – to change it. He knows this is the only real cure.

He came that we might be “born again”.



What is God's heart toward us?

Just look around you, what do you see?

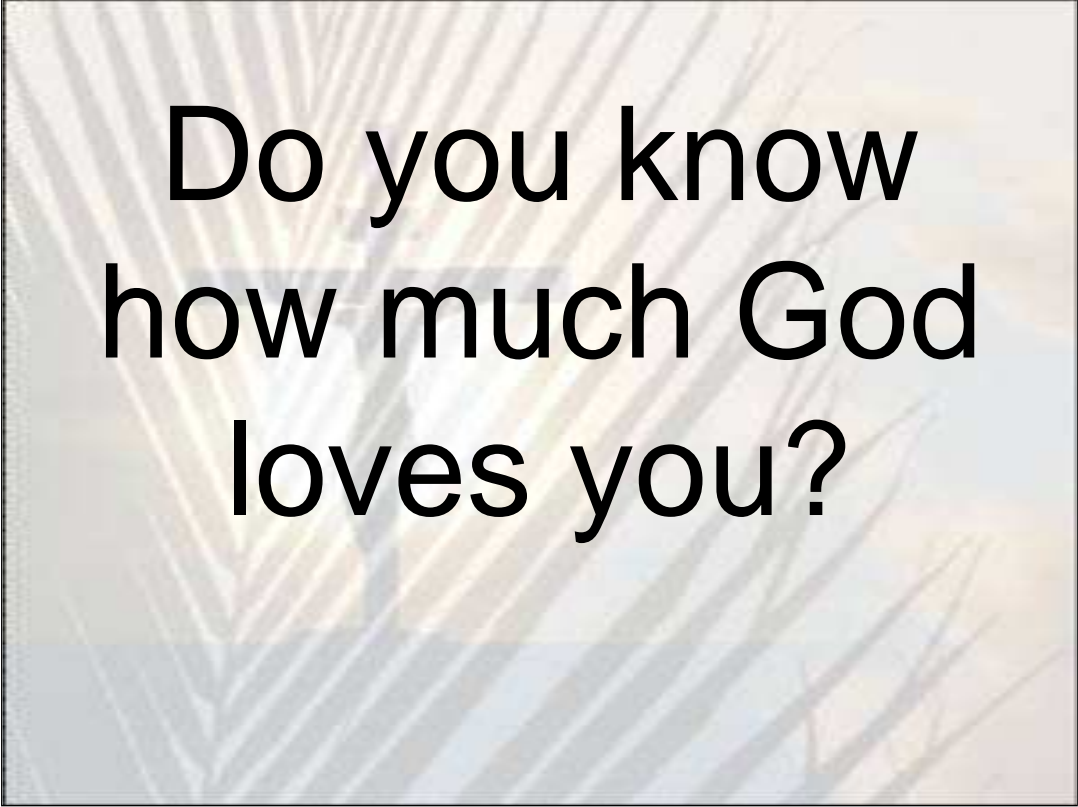
Broken lives, broken marriages, broken homes.

People ensnared with addictions of all kinds.

Apathy, hatred and violence.

Luke 19:41,42,44 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he ***wept over it*** ⁴² and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.... ⁴⁴ *because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.*"

Mark 6:34 When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt ***compassion*** for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.



Do you know
how much God
loves you?

To be one that starts to feel compassion for the lost like Jesus feels compassion.
As Jesus told Peter in John 21, "If you love me, then feed my sheep."