

Palm Sunday / April 5, 2020

# The Reason for Doing

By Caroline Ferdinandsen

for use as  
**STEP 1**



### Palm Sunday

#### Focus:

Whatever you do,  
do it for the Lord.

### Palm Sunday

#### Bible Basis:

Luke 23:46;  
Colossians 3:15—4:6

### Palm Sunday

#### Memory Verse:

And whatever you do, whether in  
word or deed, do it all in the name of  
the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God  
the Father through him.  
—Colossians 3:17

**Students will view a series of famous protest photographs and discuss what often motivates people to act.**

#### Materials:

Internet access

Everywhere we look, we can find protests. Big or small, local or global, if there's a controversial issue out there, we will likely find a group of people pushing back to create change. Let's look at a few famous photographs throughout history and see if you can recognize some of them.

Access the following photos. After viewing them, discuss the questions that follow.

Women's Voting Rights

<https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/national-womens-party-demonstration-front-white-242816689>

March on Washington 1963 ("I Have a Dream" speech Dr. Martin Luther King)

<https://www.washingtontimes.com/multimedia/collection/famous-protest-riots-and-marches-1/?page=3>

1970 Student Riot, Kent State University

<https://www.washingtontimes.com/multimedia/collection/famous-protest-riots-and-marches-1/?page=7>

Boston Tea Party

<https://www.nps.gov/bost/learn/historyculture/osmh.htm>

➤ **Has anyone ever attended a political rally or protest? What was it like?** (Let students share their experiences.)

➤ **What are the big "causes" that young people are protesting today?** (Some current issues in recent years include gun laws, climate change, political platforms, gay rights, racial injustice, and so forth. Let students share their observations without commenting on the issues—you don't want to start a protest!)

➤ **What might cause someone to step out of his comfort zone and fight for a cause? Is it human nature to fight for things we believe in?** (The stronger a person's belief system, the more likely it is that he will fight for it. Sometimes people might be looking for their own personal benefit. Other times, they might be fighting against some perceived injustice.)

➤ **Is it important to examine the motivation behind someone's protest?** (Our reasons for doing something are complex and varied. Our motives aren't always pure; sometimes they might be selfish or be mixed motives. Other times we might be motivated by a more noble purpose.)

➤ **If you truly believed in something, do you think you could sacrifice something for that cause?** (Let students share their thoughts.)

**It's sometimes difficult to examine the reasons behind our actions. Believers in Jesus Christ have more than just selfish reasons behind their behavior. Whether big or small, our actions should be motivated by our love for Jesus.**

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

Palm Sunday / April 5, 2020

# The Reason for Doing

for use as  
**STEP 4** 

**Palm Sunday****Focus:**

Whatever you do,  
do it for the Lord.

**Palm Sunday****Bible Basis:**

Luke 23:46;  
Colossians 3:15—4:6

**Palm Sunday****Memory Verse:**

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. —Colossians 3:17

**Materials:**

- Paper or journal writing material
- Pens/pencils

It's difficult for adults to get a correct read on their motives, no less a teenager. But it's a good reflective practice to examine which parts of our lives might be motivated by selfish pursuits and which parts are genuinely motivated by our allegiance to Jesus Christ.

**Let's take a few minutes alone to reflect on the most important pursuits and goals in your lives right now. Write down the top five things you're putting energy into, whether it be related to school, relationships, activities, or talents. These may have changed in the last few weeks as you've had to curtail certain activities during this COVID-19 crisis. Include both realities on your list.**

After giving students time to reflect, prompt some further writing.

**Now that you've written some of your biggest energy investments, be honest with the reasons—the motivations—that might be behind those pursuits. For example, if someone spends 40 hours a week going to a job, why do they do it? Providing for their family? Hoping to get rich? Looking for recognition from peers?**

Instruct students to write down the possible motivation for each activity or pursuit they listed—even if they might not sound spiritual or noble. Let them know that no one else will see their responses. When they've had enough time to think and write, discuss the following questions together:

➤ **Should we stop doing something good—just because our motivation might be less than perfect?** (If an activity is inherently good, like going to school or helping your grandmother, we shouldn't stop just because "we aren't feeling it." Instead, we should try to see God's purpose within the work rather than making excuses.)

➤ **Can we find genuine pleasure in "Kingdom work"? Should it always feel like an act of duty?** (We should seek pleasure and happiness from doing God's work. While we sometimes need to discipline ourselves, obedience often brings satisfaction and real joy.)

➤ **Do all of our pursuits need to be directly spiritual in order to be valuable to God? Can you think of an everyday activity that can glorify Him?** (Students might reference the importance of education, employment, physical exercise, daily chores, enjoying nature, and other non-spiritual activities.)

➤ **What are some ways that you might find to do “Kingdom work” during this COVID-19 crisis?** (Challenge your students to find ways to reach out to others who are sick or discouraged even though they have no physical contact. They could text, send snail-mail notes of encouragement, video chat, etc. Depending on restrictions in your area, some of them—with their parents’ permission—might be able to run errands for people such as picking up medications or shopping for groceries. Remind them of the unique opportunity they have for sharing the gospel with people who might never have listened before.)

As you close, remind your students that even mundane activities can be God-honoring with the right attitude and motives. Encourage them to be intentional this week about pruning back self-centered pursuits and cultivating God-centered ones.

Close in prayer.

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