

"Walk Securely"

Luke 19:28-44

Palm Sunday – as we call it – is a fascinating study of the character of Jesus from a human perspective. John tells us in I John 2:6 ⁶ *Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.*

There are several things we can learn from Jesus about how to walk like Him from this day. How did Jesus handle the praises and accolades of people? How did He handle the criticism of the religious leaders? How does he live with the heavy knowledge of knowing what happens in the future to those who won't believe Him? We see Jesus' response to all these situations in just a few hours on Palm Sunday.

We too, are faced with all these situations and emotions, even in the course of a day. We are emotional beings – God made us this way – and Jesus was fully human so He experienced all these emotions too. And emotions impact our words and our actions. The author of Hebrews reminds us of this in Ch. 2:14

¹⁴ Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. ¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Jesus suffered when He was tempted but He didn't sin Jesus experienced the same emotions we do, that's why He can relate to us and we can go to Him with our emotions and struggles.

Jesus has just experienced some high points in the last few days. While going through Jericho, Jesus gave sight to a blind man named Bartimaeus (18:35-43) who believed Jesus was the Messiah based only on what he heard about Jesus. Then Zacchaeus, a notorious chief tax-collector, who also had only heard about Jesus, wanted to see Him too. Jesus sees Zacchaeus and invites Himself to Zacchaeus' house, where the spiritually blind Zacchaeus places his faith in Jesus. Now Luke points out right after the Zacchaeus meeting in 19:11, as Palm Sunday approaches,

¹¹ While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.

Jesus then spoke about a nobleman who goes away to be appointed king but He is coming back. In his absence, he gives 10 of his servants minas/money to invest in. Meanwhile, there are people who hate him and don't want him to be their king. When the newly crowned king returns and asks the 10 servants to report on what they did with his money. One of them does nothing with it and the king harshly rebukes him. Then Jesus ends the parable with this point:

²⁶ "He replied, 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away. ²⁷ But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.' "

Now, Jesus quietly arranges to procure a donkey so He can make a clear statement that He is Israel's king. The riding on a donkey with crowds waving palm branches and laying down a carpet with their cloaks into the capital of Israel, was clear coronation language.

Doesn't Jesus know what He's doing, that He's going to stir up the religious leaders who want to kill Him? Yes, He knows. And Jesus can do this and walk securely because He knows who He is.

He Sees Himself Clearly as God Sees Him **(19:28-36)**

²⁸ After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

After He said what?

²⁷ But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.' "

Jesus knows who He is, the Son of God. He clearly knows what Scripture says about Him and so He lives accordingly. He now acts in such a way that people will make these connections and have to decide for themselves whether he is the Messiah or not, Israel's prophesied son of David, king.

The riding of the donkey is a direct fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, where we read,

⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Also, the 'Hosanna' verses are quotes from Psalm 118, which is a celebration song about the return of Israel's king from a successful battle. Psalms 113-118 were sung traditionally at the Passover with prayer and expectation for what God would do one day for Israel. And the riding on a colt is symbolic of the coronation of a king as we see in 1 Kings 1:33 when David orders that Solomon will ride on David's colt with great shouts and trumpet blasts, announcing he is going to take over the throne of David.

^{1:33} 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!' ³⁵ Then you are to go up with him, and he is to come and sit on my throne and reign in my place. I have appointed him ruler over Israel and Judah."

As well, Judah Maccabee, who led Israel in a revolt against the Syrian ruler Antiochus Epiphanes in 165 BC, returned to Jerusalem triumphantly, with the people waving palm branches in celebration. Many people were seeing Jesus as the one who would deliver them from Rome. Back in 19:11, we read that the people "supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately". How does Jesus respond to all this attention and accolades? He silently accepts it but He also doesn't let it change Him or change what He's about to do.

So if we're to walk as Jesus walked we can learn from Jesus how to respond to people when they compliment us but not let it change who we know we are from God's perspective. And how do we stay focused on who we are in God's eyes?

Listen to who God says we are (19:28-34)

Do you know who you are according to the Word of God?

Rom. 8:15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

When we accepted Christ as our Saviour, we were adopted by God and treated as His children and now we are co-heirs with Jesus, meaning whatever He gets, we get. Where is Jesus now? Seated in God's presence. Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:4

⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Jesus intentionally identified Himself as the Son of God by the way He lived and gave people a clear word picture of who He would be one day. But Jesus knew that the blessings of His reign were not arriving yet and that He would die on the cross. And that helps us too when we're going through challenges. We have to remember to read verses like we just read and

Listen to who God says we will be (vv.35-36)

Even though we're 'not there' yet. The knowledge of the future changes how we live in the present. All these bible verses they were quoting were specific references to the coming Messiah from Ps. 118:25-26 or Zech. 9:9-10. The people were looking for freedom from oppression. An overthrow of the Romans. Jesus didn't come the first time to bring in the physical kingdom but that doesn't mean it won't happen. Zech. 9:10 is just as true as Zech. 9:9. V. 9 speaks about His coming here but v.10 looks forward to His future return and rule:

⁹ 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. ¹⁰ I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

If v.9 is literal, then so is v.10. Same with Is. 9:6-7,

⁶ For us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, Establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Jesus knew these things weren't going to happen then & the accolades from the people would only last until they didn't get what they wanted, but that doesn't change the truth that He will rule the earth one day. So He could walk with God securely while riding on the donkey down the road, awaiting the cross.

Jesus is hearing accolades and being praised by one group while others are going to criticize Him. Another way Jesus helps us here emotionally is

Don't Let Others' Opinions Control You **(19:37-40)**

³⁷ When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: ³⁸ "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" ³⁹ Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" ⁴⁰ "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

Being confident in who we are in Christ, we can receive compliments in a God-honouring way and

Not let them inflate us (vv.37-38)

Jesus doesn't let the flattering words of the crowd change anything about Him. He also let's them praise God for who He is, which is always a good way to handle compliments, thank God for anything that He does through us. But the comments don't alter His plans or purpose and He knows this will be short-lived. God records their words in His eternal word as a witness against them that you acknowledged these things about Jesus but you didn't believe them. So thank people and the Lord for well-wishers and compliments but we are fallible human beings and if we let them go to our head, we will get puffed up and fall down hard in pride one day.

However, some of the Pharisees approached Jesus asking Him to stop His disciples from using Ps. 118 to proclaim Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus says, 'If they keep quiet then the stones will cry out.'

We usually assume Jesus means creation. But Jesus may be alluding to Hab. 2:11. Let's look at Hab. 2:9-11 where God uses a prophet to confront Israel's leaders here:

"Woe to him who builds his realm [lit. 'house'] by unjust gain, to set his nest on high, to escape the clutches of ruin! ¹⁰ You have plotted the ruin of many peoples, shaming your own house and forfeiting your own life. ¹¹ The stones of the wall will cry out, and the beams of the woodwork will echo it.

Jesus is not threatened by their rebuke and unbelief and neither should we when it happens to us.

Don't let criticism deflate you (vv.39-40)

Jesus essentially says, "You can criticize and reject Me or what others say about me but God will produce other witnesses." God will come to our defense and use other voices to show people they are wrong.

Words do hurt us. If 10 people speak well of us and one complains, we'll empower that one person and let their words control our life. That's why it's so important to remind ourselves we are children of God, co-heirs with Jesus, our future hope is eternally secured by the presence of the Spirit in us. Which is also a good reminder to watch our own words and to speak encouraging words more than critical words. Words are like toothpaste. Once they come out we can't put them back in.

Instead of wishing the neigh sayers would be gone who don't believe Him and seek to do Him harm, Jesus cries over them and prays for them. Another good reminder to us when we're being maligned is to

Be Burdened for the Lost Like Jesus **(19:41-44)**

⁴¹ 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. ⁴³ The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. ⁴⁴ They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

Because Jesus had a healthy biblical view of Himself, He has a healthy biblical view of others. He isn't affected one way or the other by praises or putdowns. His focus is not on Himself since he's secure in God but on those who are not. This is why we also should be burdened for the lost.

Since we know what the Scriptures say (vv.41-42)

The most amazing thing about vv.41-42 is that the peace Jesus is referring to is something they should have recognized because His coming was prophesied in the Old Testament. He emphasizes 'you' and 'this day' meaning He's talking about the people who were there that very day in Jerusalem. They should have known because the angel Gabriel told Daniel all about this day in Dan. 9:24-25

24 "Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy. 25 "Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. 26 After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing.

Daniel was told that 69 x 7 years after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (445 BC in Neh. 2) that the Anointed One would come only to be cut off – killed after this had been fulfilled. This is what Jesus was referring to. They should have known from Scripture. Jesus weeps over their spiritual blindness because they did not recognize that in Jesus they could have peace.

Jesus also weeps for people ...

Because He knew and we know people are unprepared (vv.43-44)

Vv. 43-44 is a reference to 70 AD, Jerusalem's destruction, which was also prophesied in Daniel 9:25-26. Jesus knows innocent people are going to suffer and die because the religious leaders especially failed to believe this passage and recognize the time of God's coming, the time that could have brought them peace.

All calamities act as God's reminders that people everywhere need to make sure they are spiritually prepared before they die. Jesus is weeping over people who are unaware of their need to be ready to handle suffering or the afterlife. Jesus and God weep at the effects of sin on the world

and on individuals. The warning by Jesus about 70 AD is also a warning about future judgment in general. God is longsuffering but not eternally so. A day is coming when He will send Jesus to come back, right the wrongs, punish the wicked and establish His rule on earth. Many of the people who live around us, work with, go to school with and play sports with are unprepared to face's life's calamities without the power and peace of God and are not ready to die. Do we grieve for them? Do we pray for them? Are we willing to share Jesus with them?

We will be more ready to be God's witness to people when we're spiritually secure in who we are in God and not controlled by the opinion's of others. Which again means, knowing what his Word says. Jesus walked securely in God knowing what the Word said even after His death and resurrection. Return to God's presence. Being secure in who we are in Christ helps us be prepared to give an answer to the hope that is in us, knowing that people's opinions and threats carry no eternal weight.

* * * * *

If you have any comments or questions about this message please
contact us at olivet@rideau.net