

Preparation For The Journey – Luke 19:28-40

Today is Palm Sunday; Day when Jesus entered Jerusalem to the waving of palm branches and the praises of his followers; Followed a few days later by his death, burial, resurrect God's people have been reflecting back on the events of Palm Sunday now for 2000 yrs
This morning I not only want to reflect back, I want to go back

Idea of time travel has been around for at least hundreds of years

It's certainly nothing new in our day; Popularized by HG Wells in 1895 with his book *Time Machine (photo)*

More recently in the 80's movie *Back to the Future*

In addition to that, a few years back, *Focus on the Family* produced a radio series called *Adventure in Odyssey* for kids, based on the same premise of time travel

Remember listening to those stories with our girls, as the characters entered a time machine called *The Imagination Station*

Idea was to get kids to consider how they were living and thinking in the current day, by transporting them back in time to see how they would live and think then

That's what I want you to do this morning – step into your own imagination station, and put yourself in a different time and place in order to make an honest assessment of your life in the here and now

The place – Mt of Olives overlooking Jerusalem

Mt of Olives just east of temple in Jerusalem about ½ mile across the Kidron Valley Just beyond that, Bethany – small village on E. slopes of Mt of Olives, Near Bethphage With Jericho – about 15 miles Northeast of Jerusalem

The time – April 2nd, AD 30; 5 days before the crucifixion of Jesus

Population of Jerusalem was starting to swell from 25k to 125k on the eve of Passover One of the 3 major feasts when people from all over Palestine would come to the temple in Jerusalem as commanded in the OT

Interest and tensions were high with all the talk and mystique surrounding Jesus, and the possibility that he might show up

For the setting – Luke 19:28-40

Interesting to note that *these things* (28) refer the parable of the minas (money) he had recently told in Jericho; recorded in the previous chapter

Parable paints a stark contrast between what Jesus had just said, and what happens next He said that the culmination of the kingdom of God was not going to happen any time soon; and in the meantime, that it's ruler would be rejected

As you transport yourself back to that place, at that time, in that setting –

I want to ask you 5 questions to help you make an honest assessment of your life

Would you have followed where he led? (28-29)

If you lived *then* like you live *now* – conducted yourself in Jesus' day like you do now

Would you have followed where he led?

Jesus was all over the countryside; From Galilee in the north to Jerusalem and Jericho in the South

His closest disciples followed him everywhere he went

Would you have done the same? Faithfully?

Even though you didn't have a place to sleep often times; Inconvenienced by the people, the schedule, the weather, and the terrain?

If you lived then like you live now, would you have obeyed when he spoke?

Would you have heard, trusted, and done it his way?

Do you now?

Do you do things his way according to what he's already said in his word?

Or do you rationalize *your* way?

Do you ignore certain parts of the Bible because your way *feels* right?

Or because really good people/friends are doing it that way? (Prov 14:12)

Or do you obey as God has already spoken in his Word?

Make an honest assessment

Would you have given what he needed? (33-36)

The owners of the colt gave it up – at least for a time

Disciples who put their cloaks (coats) on the colt, gave them up for a time

Those who put them on the road probably gave them up for good

All of them sacrificed and gave what was needed in order to roll out the red carpet and give this humble king a fitting entry into what they thought was the city of his reign

They gave whatever was needed to glorify Jesus as the long awaited deliverer that the prophets had spoken about hundreds of years earlier

Would you have done the same? Would you have given him the shirt off your back?

Or would that have been a little over the top? A bit much; A little out there

Come on – he's God right?

He just raised Lazarus from the dead the last time he was through here

Obviously he can get whatever he needs whenever he wants it; So what does he need *my* stuff for?

Would you have given him the shirt off your back?

Do you now?

I know, you haven't seen Jesus crossing the river on a donkey recently

But you *have* seen him; Question is – Did you give him what he needed?

Jesus said in **Mt 25:35-40** (read)

As you feed the hungry, house the homeless, clothe the poor, and visit the sick/prison

As you give what is needed to one of the least of these, you give what is needed to Jesus

Would you have given what Jesus needed? The answer lies in whether you do so now

We have a growing number of CO's for you to get involved in the lives of those who are less fortunate, and give what is needed

Ministries like – Lydia Home, Crisis Pregnancy Center, Worship services in prison

More opp's coming through Christian Friendliness; World Relief; Assisted living

Make an honest assessment of your life

Would you have worshipped like he deserved? (37-38)

To do so, you would have had to recognize him for who he is

You can't worship what you don't know

The multitude of disciples saw him, obviously recognized him for who he was (at least partially so), and worshipped him

Would you have been in that crowd?

Or would you have been off to the side with the ruling authorities who 4 days later needed someone else like Judas to finger him, because they didn't know him when saw him

Narrow it down – Would you have followed him from Jericho? That's where coming from Knowing that . . .

The *religious* authorities were looking for him and wanted to kill him

The *political* authorities were edgy and quick to crush what they perceived as religious uprisings that threatened their rule

That as one of his faithful followers, *you're* life was at risk

The road from Jericho to Jerusalem was one of the most treacherous, thief-ridden, and

physically difficult roads in all of Israel

You were associated with one of the most controversial figures in all of history, and he's leading you into the heart of the enemy camp

Would you have followed in the face of those difficulties?

You answer to that question lies in your answer to this question – Do you now?

Do you follow him today despite the obstacles – by living like he lived, thinking like he thought, speaking like he spoke, and loving like he loved?

Make an honest assessment of your life

Would you have obeyed when he spoke? (30-35)

Would you have heard/listened in the first place?

When he spoke saying, *Go into the village in front of you* (30) . . . Would you have heard him?

Or been so busy sightseeing, taking pictures, or finding the best place to eat from the locals, that you failed to hear Jesus?

Jesus – *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me* (Jn 10:27)

If you did hear him and listen, would you have trusted what he said?

Obedience requires trust

If you were one of the two disciples he spoke to, would you have trusted . . .

That *the Lord has need of it* (31) would be sufficient to convince the skeptics, owners of the colt, or those who might object

Notice that Jesus is not suggesting they steal the donkey

It was a culturally acceptable practice for a dignitary to procure the use of property for personal reasons; But for a wandering Rabbi?

Would you have trusted him and done it his way? (32-35)

Or thought – “Ya, ya. I'll get a donkey. Relax.”

There's a dealer right around the corner

And I'm pretty sure some money will go a lot farther than just waltzing into town and untying someone else's animal

I mean, give me a break – *The Lord has need of it?* Please. Like *that's* going to fly

Would you have done it his way, or yours?

His way is summed up in 4 words –

Go (31a), Explain (31b), Release (33a), Bring (35a) – Read 30-35a

Go – *Go and make disciples* (Mt 28:19)

Explain – *Always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you* (1 Pe 3:15)

Release – *Proclaim liberty to the captives and set [free] those who are oppressed through faith in Jesus Christ* (Lk 4:18)

Bring – God says *to the north, Give up, and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth.* (Is 43:6)

Would you have exalted him given the chance?

Like disciples who *set him on the colt* (35); Giving him place of prominence

Or would you have been jockeying for position and attention for yourself?

Would you have worshipped him *openly*?

In public – with *the whole multitude*

Or hid behind the “my faith is private” excuse?

Our faith is personal, yes – between you and the Lord; but it's not private

It is meant to be lived out as a blessing to others; enhancing their life like salt enhances the taste of food

It's meant to overflow and shine to all those around you

Jesus – *Let your light shine before others* (Mt 5:16)

Would you have worshipped him *freely*? (38)

Loud voice *for all the mighty works* he had done (37)

Or like a mouse in the corner? Content to stand in silence

Rejoicing and Praising him – overflowing with happiness and joy, expressing your admiration and honor for who he is and what he does

Or would you have been all stiff and reserved, self-conscious about what others think God forgive us for worshipping like we're at a funeral

Would you have said it like it is?

Calling him a blessed (exalted/favored) *King*

That he *comes in the name of the Lord* – with all the authority/power of *God* behind him *Peace in heaven* – that he's the one to remove all enmity and restore peace between God and man

Because of that, all glory, top to bottom, belongs to him (*glory in the highest*)

Knowing full well that to call someone other than Caesar king, was considered treason, punishable by death on a cross

Isn't it interesting that Jesus ended up suffering the very death they deserved for calling him king

Would you have spoken truth and said it like it is?

Or looked for words that wouldn't offend? Words that would placate and appease

Words that were safe and politically correct

Would you have worshipped like he deserved? Make an honest assessment of your life

Would you have buckled under pressure? (39-40)

Would you have – Followed where he led; Obeyed when he spoke; Given what he needed

Worshipped like he deserved; Or buckled under pressure?

Pharisees – those who saw Jesus as a threat to the law, and the purity of following God, and their hold on the religious establishment

I can see them scurrying around, scolding the people, trying to get them to be quiet; and getting more and more frustrated

Finally going to straight to the top, saying –

Teacher – implying with that title that if you're really in charge, if you're really their leader and they really follow you – exercise some of your authority here

Tell them to be quiet because what they're saying is blasphemy

Those words should be reserved for *God*, and God alone – and they were right!

Jesus responds (40) – My praise and glory is so inevitable, if I were to tell them to be
quiet, nature itself, inanimate objects, would take up the cause
I'm not going to do it; I'm not going to stop them

Where would you have been in all that drama?
Would your worship have lasted, or been a flash in the pan?
Would you have quit at the first sign of resistance?
Or remained silent because of their scrutiny? Or given up because of doubts?
Or continued to offer a sacrifice of praise to the King of kings and Lord of lords?

Your answer depends on which more important to you – *man's approval* or *God's praise*
If it's man's approval, you would have buckled; And you will today
But if it's God's praise, you'll never buckle, no matter what the pressure

Summary

Make an honest assessment of your life
And whatever changes you need to make in order to –
Follow where he leads; Obey when he speaks; Give what he requires
Worship like he deserves . . .
Make them