

**THE KING OF GLORY****Luke 19:28-40**

**Intro:** Almost two months ago, on February 8 at a chapel service at Asbury University, Zach Meerkreebs, who is an assistant soccer coach at the university was the speaker. When you look up information on him, the title Reverend is often attached to his name, so he's more than a coach. But, as a preacher, at least on February 8, he was a little stiff, and his humor was a little awkward. In fact, when the sermon was done he texted his wife and said he had "whiffed" the sermon and that it was a "stinker" and he'd be right home.

But others didn't leave Hughes Auditorium when Zach left – instead they stayed and prayed and worshipped and the word spread and soon thousands showed up to tap into the revival that had broken out. The auditorium holds up to 1,500 people and for 2 weeks people waited in line 24 hours a day to go into the chapel and experience what was happening. The revival spread to other schools like Mount Vernon and Cedarville here in Ohio. Lives were changed. Hearts were renewed. I wasn't even there and I was renewed.

So, what did Reverend Soccer Coach Zach say in his 26 minute sermon that moved people?

It was simple. He was preaching from Romans 12 which he and other speakers were working through and his passage was, in part *Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.* Romans 12:9-13, and I think he read some more from that passage. And then he referred to Philippians 2 with *Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

Philippians 2:3-4

And then he said, "*Pressures off. You can't love the way this verse speaks. Do you know that? You are loved by Jesus. Stop striving. Stop wearing this heavy burden of 'I've gotta love because I'm a Christian.'* No, you've got to love because you've tasted and seen the goodness of God."

I was still thinking about this, and with what I thought was a slightly awkward bit of humor, he wrapped up the sermon by telling the Asbury students that he was praying that they would be overwhelmed by the love of God. That they would experience the kind of love that God has for them because that's the love the world needs. He told them he wanted that realization to be as obvious to them as "an itchy sweater". He wanted them to know that if they really knew the love of God then they could pass that kind of love on to a hurting world. It was a great point. WE NEED TO KNOW THE LOVE OF GOD!

Zach thought his sermon failed. The Holy Spirit knew otherwise and hearts were changed. Lots and lots of hearts were changed.

When God's plan unfolds – nothing can stop it, not matter what kind of human plans or conclusions are involved. That's what happened in Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday. Let's look at Luke's record of the event

**(Read Luke 19:28-40)**

How many Palm Sunday sermons have you heard? For many of us we can just multiply it by our age.

Me? My first Palm Sunday sermon was April 14, 1957. I'm sure I heard it because we didn't have a nursery in that tiny church building and that means I was in that service on that day at age 2 months and 2 days old. The preacher was either my dad or his senior pastor, Bishop Jacob Bowers. But, since I was an infant I have no recollection of the content of the sermon. Here's my point: we've heard lots of unpacking of the Triumphal Entry passages from various Gospels. But we continue to receive truth from each one because that is how the Holy Spirit works. He takes even faltering words and turns them into revivals. He also takes a perceived coup attempt and sets the stage for the greatest sacrifice in history.

You see . . .

**God set a trap and Jesus was the bait**

- These were Jesus's last days of his earthly ministry. Even though it looked to others like he was being carried on a tide of human hope and emotion, and he was making his own desperate attempts to rally the masses, he knew that it was all his Father's perfect plan that was unfolding. Every move that Jesus made during his last days was a conscious fulfillment of a divine plan to which the Old Testament bore witness.

- Every feature of the story shows Jesus’s intention to declare himself King. But it wasn’t a political takeover. Instead it was a holy event completely in keeping with the Father’s plan. Donald Miller writes that, “*Animals which had never been used were commandeered for especially holy purposes.*” Jesus was mounted on a donkey colt on which no one had ever sat. It oozed holiness. The perfect lamb was riding on the brand new steed. It was not an accident that it was a perfect picture of Zachariah 9:9,

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!  
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!  
Behold, your king is coming to you;  
righteous and having salvation is he,  
humble and mounted on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.* Zechariah 9:9

- It was all part of the plan. Jesus, knowing full well he was riding closer to his own tortuous death, willingly rode through the crowd. He was the bait and the adoring crowds of his disciples were playing right into the trap. As it was supposed to be. It was God’s plan. . .

### **The crowd welcomed the King of Glory**

- Jesus was welcomed as royalty because making a path for the king with their garments is exactly the way royalty was treated in that culture. As he rode in through the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem they sang the words Ben read at the opening of this service,

*Lift up your heads, O gates!  
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,  
that the King of glory may come in.  
Who is this King of glory?  
The Lord, strong and mighty,  
the Lord, mighty in battle!* Psalm 24:7-8

- This was the King! Another scripture they sang was from Psalm 118. This wasn’t unusual since it was a psalm that pilgrims often quoted as they worked their way up to Jerusalem for special feasts.

*Save us, we pray, O Lord!  
O Lord, we pray, give us success!  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!*

*We bless you from the house of the Lord.* Psalm 118:25-26

- How many times had they hopefully sung “*Blessed be the King who comes in the name of the Lord!*” and now, here he was! Here is the King of Glory. And did you notice what follows this joyful song, listen, *Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!* Luke 19:38b. Doesn’t that sound like “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!*” Luke 2:14. That’s what the angel proclaimed to the shepherds about 33 years before – and it was not a coincidence.
- God was at work then and, you bet, the crowd was playing right into it. Their songs reminded everyone what the Old Testament (which was the only scripture they had) had been saying for centuries. Everyone included the Pharisees. They knew better than anyone what scripture had been predicting and they were really worried about all the fuss. They wanted a Messiah and they wanted a king. But Jesus wasn’t their picture of who that would be.
- They played right into the trap with . . .

### **Teacher! Rebuke your disciples! (Luke 19:39)**

- Don’t you love that?! They hated Jesus, but they called him Teacher. If they’d really been able to see past their blindness, they would have called him Lord. They would have known he was King. But, then again, they were playing into the plan. Jesus was heading to the Cross and they took the bait! “Tell them to stop!”
- But Jesus stopped them with “*I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.*” Luke 19:40. And it’s true. You cannot be silent in the presence of the King. The rocks know the King and they will praise. The crowd knew this was the King and they were wild with joy. This is the King, silence is not an option.

- Well you know the rest of the story; the fickle crowd either fled or turned against Jesus within four days and it looked like curtains on the kingdom of this rabbi riding a young colt. But the Cross wasn't the end. It was the beginning of eternity and we'll talk about that next Sunday. The trap was about to spring. Who is this King of Glory? He's the bait. He is the willing sacrifice for a plan that could not fail and the defeat of Satan once and for all.

**Conclusion:** No matter how many Palm Sunday sermons you hear – it never gets old. God's plan wins. Love wins. God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. That one and only Son knew exactly what he was doing as he rode into Jerusalem. That is what happened because God's plan was and is perfect. The King of Glory ensures it and the Holy Spirit carries it out. So whether it's a faltering college chapel sermon or yet another Palm Sunday sermon – God's truth goes forth and changes hearts anyway and heaven rejoices. Amen.