

Jesus' Triumphant Entry Into Jerusalem?

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We're gonna try something a little different today. See how two people who are used to getting all the time do it splitting it. So that may be interesting sermon, may be twice as long today, who knows?

We got 15 minutes, I don't think we're gonna make it. We'll do our best to our best.

Have you ever been misunderstood? Right? You're trying to get something across. And it's just, it's just not working. Nobody's intentionally being difficult. It's just not working. Right? That's happened to you. I see lots of heads shaking. I think that happened to Jesus a lot. And that's kind of what we're going to be talking about today. But before we dive into that, you know, I want to talk a little bit of what happens during Jesus's final week. Because a lot happens between his triumphant entry into Jerusalem and his trial and crucifixion. I mean, a lot. And we often forget it all. And we are not going to cover it all. In fact, today, we're only going to cover three little stories out of all of those. But let's take a look real quick. We got a timeline here. That's in your notes as well. So first of all, Jesus enters Jerusalem, right? We know that. Then Jesus curses the fig tree and clears the temple courts. The authority of Jesus his question? To me, these, those ones are just amazing. I mean, somebody who can work miracles, you see them work, the miracles. You've seen the blind and the lame, get better. How do you question that? That's tough. They're haters. They're haters. We have the parable of the tenants. We have paying the Imperial tax to Caesar, we have the question about his their marriage at the resurrection. We have the greatest commandment, whose son is the Messiah. And then the warning against the teachers of the law. All that happens in that week, and then is the the trial and the crucifixion so that I mean, that's a whole big event in of itself. So this is just a jam packed week. Like I said, we aren't going to begin to get through that all we're just going to look at three little things today.

But you know, maybe sometime pastor, we should have a sermon on the living our lives, like Jesus did during his last week or so with either better title. But something like that, for sure. Like that should be a good sermon. So this morning, we're going to be looking at a couple of the story is in Jesus's last week, we're going to be looking at it from two different points of view. Okay. One point of view is the religious leaders, and those people, and one is the disciples. So pastor is a religious leader,

I finally get to play a villain.

So let him handle that side. Because I'm a disciple of Jesus. Don't read too much into that, but we're gonna have some fun, we're gonna have some fun. So, you know, it's kind of like the old black hat and white hat and the old westerns, you know, that's who the good guys and the bad guys where I get to wear the white hat for once. All right. But I think it's going to be instructional to look at both sides. Because sometimes we tend to say, I'm not like those religious leaders. I love Jesus. But how many times do we put ourselves first before others? And how many times do we do things like that? Right? And so sometimes we can be a lot more like those religious leaders and think, and sometimes we think I'm not like the disciples. Now they were kind of dense, they didn't get it, I get it. But when we go home, we don't always act like we get it. So it's going to be instructional to look at this from from kind of both sides this morning. And obviously, we don't know exactly what these people were thinking, but we can

make a few assumptions. So as we go forward to that, that's what we're going to be doing today. So pastor is going to start us off by talking about our first event here.

Okay, so the first event is when

I didn't get through all the things. More things have happened that first week. I missed some of them, sorry.

All right. So Jesus enters Jerusalem. This is also called Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem and I kind of initially titled this Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem?, because those of you who know the story know that when Jesus enters, there is no great red carpet, there is not 1000 people lined up. It's actually, in many ways anti-climactic comeback, as it says, Okay, so last couple of chapters, Jesus was headed to Jerusalem, now he's there. And as they approach Jerusalem, he tells a couple of disciples to run ahead, and to get a goat, I'm sorry, not a goat, a colt, a big difference. And, and they're like, and Jesus says, hey, you know if, if any have anybody has a problem, just say, The Lord needs it, and they will send it back here shortly. So the disciples go there, grab a colt. And what's it colt? Is it old horse or young baby? Baby, okay? They come back, then Jesus cruises into Jerusalem. And by the way, he had no fancy saddle, you notice that it was the cloaks of the disciples. And as he enters into Jerusalem, other people take their clothes off, and they lay it forward. So instead of a red carpet event, it is just this anti-climactic. Jesus's entering, there's no entourage, people are saying Hosanna, which is great. But no, I'm assuming no, no trumpets, no great fanfare. And then there had to have been the Jewish leadership. And now it doesn't give their recorded reaction, but one surmise based on their relationship with Jesus, they're probably thinking, how embarrassing and by the way, he had to borrow a colt, you know, he also had to borrow, he had to borrow a boat, had to borrow room, had to borrow a lot of stuff. Well, this is not the great conquering hero that the Messiah is supposed to be. Well, what is happening here? No respect. And who does this guy think he is? We are in charge. So everybody's saying praise. And actually Hosanna could also be a form of praise or even save now. So this is a perspective of how ridiculous Okay, so Bill, what's the perspective of disciples?

So the disciples are almost feeling some of the same things. I think that the religious leaders are, why does Jesus tell us to go get a colt, you know, why not like a fine White Stallion with the fancy saddle? And you know, ribbons draped off it and the tail braided, whatever they do to make horses look cool and Regal, right? Why not one of those. But at least Jesus is doing something. It's been three years. And finally he's coming into Jerusalem. And man, we are gonna kick us some Roman behinds all the way back to Rome with those guys, because the only thing they can think about is what's right directly in front of them. And how many times are we like that? Right? If you're hungry, what is Jesus? The provider of food. If you're sick, what is Jesus? The healer! If you need money, what is Jesus? The banker. If Rome is invaded your land, what is Jesus? He's the protector. He's gonna He's gonna send those Romans packing. And that's all they can see. And all they can understand. And I think the leaders are little making fun of Jesus because of his humble entrance. And I think the disciples are a little worried about Jesus's humble entrance. But Jesus's humble entrance has a lot to do with what Jesus is trying to announce of who he is. You don't follow Jesus, because he's got a cool White Stallion, or a fancy army, or a marching band or trumpets or whatever. Following Jesus is an act of service and humility. And Jesus is trying to send that message and I think 99% of the people standing around, don't get it at all. Okay.

So moving forward, moving forward. So the next act after all of that happens, Jesus, the next day as they're leaving Bethany, Jesus is hungry. So Jesus is human, he needs food. And he sees that there's this

fig tree but there is no fruit on it. And when he gets there it of course, you know, it wasn't the season for big figs. But when he sees the tree, he sees the leaves. He says, May no one ever eat fruit from you again. And the disciples heard him say it. Of course Pharisees are not there. But kind of given Perspective Perspective. This is also the only time that Jesus actually you could say curse is something. So, we don't have Pharisee account. But Bill, why don't you take over?

So again, the disciples don't we don't know a lot about what the disciples are thinking, but I think they're probably looking at Jesus going like, why didn't you just do? You walked over to the tree and there's no figs on the tree and Jesus, you know, he tells it never to bear fruit again. I mean, go to that tree, there's figs on that tree. Right? What? What's up with Jesus, he must be having a bad day. And it got worse.

So later on. Believe it or not the stories you tie together. So later on, we find Jesus goes to the temple. And this story is in every account in the synoptics, Matthew, Mark, Luke, it's towards the end, John places at the beginning. But here, Jesus goes to the temple. And what does Jesus find? They're selling things. They're disrespecting, essentially desecrating the temple. And so what does he do? He goes and flips the money table over any of you grew up in the church, and maybe your mom or some well meaning member says, to walk softly in the sanctuary to not run to be respectful. I see. All right. So Jesus says the complete opposite he goes, and he flips the money table over. Now, he says, essentially, you've made this. You're a den of robbers. Now, who does this Jesus think he is in the minds of the Pharisees? He comes in here we have the authority where the religious leaders, the high priest says, it's cool. And if he says, it's cool, it's good to go. But there's so much more Jesus is not just calling them out for their, their thieving ways, essentially, because essentially, they were, they were running a racket. Some additional backstory, the place that the people were at, was in the court of the Gentiles. Now, when somebody who has been traveling far away to come and worship at the temple, they had to exchange the rate. Okay, the they were using the Tyrian currency, versus the current currency. And so, look, the people thought, oh, let's just charge a little extra, and they were making money. Not only that, you could bring a potential animal for a sacrifice. But if it didn't meet the kosher requirements, guess what? Oh, it's not gonna work out. Here's some animals that you could buy. But how much are they charging? So it was extortion. And Jesus is also extremely angry with the Jewish leadership because the cattlemen, the money changers, are set up where the non-Jews could come and worship. Wait, there's other people that could worship here. So verse 17, there's actually a quote from Isaiah 56. Seven, it says, If, where it would this would be a house of prayer for and a place for all what? All Nations? That's worldwide. Right? So it wasn't just the Jews who could come those who believed in God could come and worship there. And so Jesus is basically saying, Hey, you guys are not only set up, you're running a racket. And you're, you're not eight people are not able to even come and worship. Imagine having cattle back there or even in Sanctuary, and they're doing their business and everything. Is that a great, wonderful place to do worship? Horrible, you can't concentrate. So in the eyes of the Pharisees, the teachers of law describes, they're angry with Jesus, how dare he come in. And that's where it really ramps up to now, all of a sudden, they really, really want to try to get rid of Jesus, not just get rid of but they want to kill him. Okay, so,

So, the disciples are probably a little confused by this too, right? Because they grew up in the temple is a holy place, and Jesus is making a holy mess at the moment. Right, amen. And so, you know, they don't understand I don't think what is going on fully. But the interesting point here is that nobody from the religious leaders or the disciples or anybody in the temple, appears to try and stop Jesus. Because every buddy knew what was going on was wrong. Right. You ever done something wrong? Yeah, you have. Did

you know it? Yeah. Yeah. Somebody calls you out on it. You can't say but I was..... I knew it. It was wrong. It's like when the police officer stops you for speeding. You know what I stopped you for? I hate that question. If you don't know, I'm not gonna volunteer it. Right. But you know, this is what's going on. And so they're very confused by this, and what's happening. But everybody knows what Jesus is doing is the right thing. And when Jesus gets all done, Jesus sits down and teaches the people and Mark records that the people were amazed by the things he said, and we don't know exactly what he said. But I bet it had something to do with the temple and being a house of prayer. Right. And I think they began to think about the temple up to now has been a place where you go, you take an animal, you transfer your sins to it, it gets killed, you wash your hands, and you leave, bang, bang, bang, done. And all of a sudden, the temple is different. And it's something different is going on. And so I think that's, that's a, the light is starting to dawn here for some of them.

Okay, so they left the temple and their cruising. And who was it? I think it was Peter, they go back by the fig tree. And within a day, what happens to the fig tree and withers away? Has anybody seen a plant die within less than 24 hours? A big tree, for instance? No. So what's happening here, Bill?

Again, you know, it says, weathered from the roots. I don't know about you, when I was a little kid we had we lived on kind of this corner, and a car hit a tree, kind of a big tree hit a tree, and my parents said "Oh no, they've killed that tree. We lived there for like five more years, that tree never died in the five years. We live there. Maybe it was starting to I don't know. But trees take a long time to die. And this tree dies overnight. And Jesus didn't curse it didn't say, May you die. He said, May you never bear fruit again. But if a fruit tree can't bear fruit, what good is it?

Is Jesus picking a point here?

I think so.

Does he make an a point?

Remember how the Levites were chosen? What happened when the Levites were chosen to be the priest? Remember, Aaron's rod did what? It sprouted, grew almonds overnight. I've had a walking stick at home for 15 years. It has never sprouted. Okay. And the Levites begin their ordained ministry by the act of a dead stick coming to life. And it ends when a living tree dies.

I mean, you've ever thought of that. That's deep, isn't it? So Mark's being intentional here. All right, let's go ahead. Time is waste. Our last point that we want to point out is that of whose son is the Messiah. So a lot of times Jesus has been harassed by the teachers of the law scribes and the Pharisees. But in the temple courts, Jesus goes on the offensive. And he he asks a question, and he says, Why do the teachers or the laws say that the Messiah is the son of David, David himself declared by the Holy Spirit said, The Lord said of my lords, that of my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet. David himself calls him Lord, how then can he be his son? And this is the last kicker, the large crowd listen to him with what? The light? So Jesus is in the temple courts, the Pharisees again, should have been able to overhear him if, and if they couldn't directly, I'm sure they had spies. But this Jesus, in the eyes of perspective of the Jewish leadership is like, dude, this guy will just not go away. And essentially, he's calling them out for what they are. They can't answer they can't respond. You know the thing about the Pharisees, when you are entrusted with responsibility, and especially with leadership, how should you lead? If you are a

servant of God, we know you should lead with what humility, and yet we're the leadership whom humble at all, did not act like it. In fact, it says a lot that when you have to try to control the narrative, and when you actually have to try to kill somebody, because they're not aligned with your views. Should that be a moment of self reflection? Am I doing the right thing. And then we're the experts on Scripture. They were supposed to know who the Messiah was. And yet the Messiah was right in front of them. And they couldn't understand. Nicodemus and John three have the ability to humble himself and go ask Jesus and ask questions, but not to these guys. And so in the eyes of perspective of the leadership, what was at stake? Everything, because everybody was being drawn to Jesus, their livelihood, their authority, their prestige, who they are was all on the line. And they were afraid of that being taken away. And so instead of giving opportunity to say, hey, go check this Jesus out, they close their fist, can you give when you have a closed fist? You can't. So their perspective, we need to get rid of this guy quickly. All right.

The disciples knew exactly what Jesus was doing here, right? I think this is probably one time the disciples kind of understood what was going on, that Jesus has finally exposed, the religious leaders not only is selfish and greedy, and you know, in it for themselves, but they can't even explain the Scripture. See, they knew how to point out that Jesus was in the lineage of David, that was easy. That's just, you know, get on ancestry.com and do the trace. Right? But how can David call Jesus Lord, that didn't make sense to them. And when Jesus pointed out instead of being humble, like Pastor said, and said, We don't understand, please teach us. Instead, they plot to killing. And that tells you everything you need to know about that group of people. Right? And it was, they were weak and defective in their preaching. They claimed to be experts in the law, but they didn't know much about it. So moving on reflection for this week.

What is your response to the hearing about Jesus teaching? Question? Are you more like me, the religious leaders? Or are you more like Bill, the disciples? Or could you be both at different times? I think it probably decide probably is on season of your life or even in when in your faith experience, could be a little bit of both it changes. So that's something that we have to be mindful of my friends. It's so easy to make fun of the Pharisees. It's so easy. But how often do we act like them? I grew up in a part of a church where I was a Pharisee. And guess what, my life was miserable. When I was judging everybody thought that person didn't dress correctly. Or, oh, that person's not faithful. Yeah. When you're trying to be a Pharisee, what's the problem? You're, you are so full of pride. You're no longer perfect for sure. Right? Okay, so that was a reflection.

The challenge, maybe take an extra moment when you're reading, studying the Bible, ask God for understanding and clarity. Right? That's one thing the disciples didn't have. We have the advantage of looking back and having all this stuff written down for us. We've had pastors and, and theologians explain this stuff to us. We have better understanding. I think, than in the moment when stuff was happening, it's it's hard to catch on. Right? If you ever sat in a difficult college course, and the professor is just going on a roll and you know, I'm not keeping up. But you know, later you go back you study, and then it starts to make sense, we have that advantage. So take advantage of that. Read the extra books, read the commentaries, look at other sources and look for understanding and clarity of certainly ask God for understanding and clarity.

Sometimes it doesn't, you don't get it the first time. Sometimes it takes a couple times. I mean, look at the disciples, how many times did it take him to get it. And sometimes God is going to plant the seed in your, your mind or heart. And you're not going to get it for a long time. Even the disciples that was their

case, that's why he told parables leave a little nugget in their mind. And a couple years later, especially as the church was growing in Acts. That's when it literally says, ah, that's what he meant. So may you as you read, maybe you have to reread it a couple of times. Maybe you have to, don't be afraid to ask questions when you don't know. Just say I don't know. I do that, if the pastor can do that, you should be able to do that. All right, so

let's pray. Heavenly Father, thank you so much for the stories that we have that record not just as a history lesson, not just so we know what happened. Not so it's just some tidbit in our brains, but something that affects our lives and helps us live to be more like you. Something that will change us to be better followers of you to understand the purposes that you have for us more fully, to be able to reach out to our friends and neighbors, Lord. Help us to remember that the Earth is not our home. We're just here recruiting for heaven, Lord, because that's our final destination. And help us to be the kinds of people that are dragging as many people along with us as we can be with us now in Jesus name, and everybody said, Amen.

Grace and peace, everybody.