**Palm Sunday**

**The Word**

Read together Luke 19:28-48

**The Big Idea**

Palm Sunday presents us with a rich complexity as the people offer Jesus their worship that is both full of excitement and also based on a profound misunderstanding. We see Jesus in all his fullness and complexity as he displays both his heart of compassion for a broken world and the consequences of a consistent hardness of heart on the part of some.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. The story of Palm Sunday is one that is familiar to many of us. As we read it and discussed it on Sunday, what was something new you noticed or came to appreciate in a deeper way?

2. Our goal on Sunday was simply to see Jesus and experience him in all his fullness. What about Jesus stood out to you most and why? And how did you feel about what you noticed about Jesus?

3. On Sunday it was suggested that the church in America is in danger of believing in a Jesus that is very one-dimensional and that doesn’t reflect the rich diversity and complexity of the Jesus of the gospels. Do you observe this in your interactions with people? What do you notice regarding people’s understanding and assumptions about Jesus?

4. On Sunday we discussed the role of simply fixing our eyes on Jesus and letting his Spirit change us over time so that we become more like the Jesus we’re beholding. In what specific way, if any, do you want to become more like the Jesus you saw from Palm Sunday?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. Easter Week Reflections

A. Our goal is simply to walk with Jesus through the events of Easter Week and see him in all his fullness.

B. “As we behold the glory of the Lord, we are being transformed into his image with ever increasing glory” (2 Cor 3:18).

C. Easter Week Devotional Readings

Monday: Luke 20

Tuesday: Luke 21

Wednesday: Luke 22:1-38

Thursday: Luke 22:39-23:25

Friday: Luke 23:26-56

Saturday: Isaiah 53:1-12

Sunday: Luke 24

II. The Triumphal Entry

A. This represents the climactic moment of a journey that began in Luke 9:51

B. Luke’s details communicate the excitement and significance of the moment

1. Jesus riding in on a donkey is his affirmation of his kingly role in fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9-10

2. The spreading of cloaks welcomes Jesus as king (as do the palm branches)

3. The people quote Psalm 118 (see v. 38) which is a royal psalm historically used on the occasion of an annual ritual of re-enthronement of the king

4. While he has downplayed his messianic identity up to this point, here Jesus affirms his role and receives the praise that is his due. Nothing will prevent his worship—even the stones would worship him (v. 40)

III. Consider Jesus in this moment

A. This must have been a moment of complexity and tension for him

1. He knows he is going to Jerusalem to die

2. He knows that, while the worship is genuine in the moment, it is based on a profound misunderstanding of the people and is laced with their own personal agendas and hopes.

3. He receives the praise knowing full well that some of the same people will deny him, abandon him, and be disillusioned by him.

B. Consider his moment overlooking Jerusalem

1. Jesus weeps for the city (v. 41)

a. Jesus looks over the city and weeps for the city and its leadership. With Lazarus, Jesus weeps for his friends. Here he weeps for his enemies.

b. He weeps because they do not know “what would bring you peace” and fail to recognize “the time of God coming to you.”

c. See Jesus’ words in Luke 13:34-35

d. The reality is the hearts of the leaders in Jerusalem are far from God

1) There is an outward expression of religion

2) But their hearts are filled with spiritual pride, greed, love of praise, power and wealth. They neglect the deeper issues of justice, mercy and compassion.

2. Jesus prophecies judgment on the city (v. 43-44)

a. This prophecy was fulfilled in AD70 when the Roman army surrounded Jerusalem, besieged it, and leveled the temple to the ground

b. In the next scene, Jesus is filled with righteous anger and he cleanses the temple and drives out the money changers.

3. Behold Jesus in all his fullness and complexity

a. He is both pronouncing judgment and he is weeping in compassion for the hardness of heart and the judgment to come

b. He is also willing to give his life away for the city so that anyone who is willing to accept his terms of peace can receive life

c. The biblical Jesus will not be reduced to our one-dimensional pictures

1) Some people envision a God who is all love, grace, forgiveness, and acceptance

2) Other people envision a God who is a God of holiness, justice, and judgment

3) Some people create their own Jesus that fits their sensibilities

4) But the Jesus of the gospels is rich, complex, and multi-faceted

5) “Jesus unites in himself so many qualities that in other people are contrary to each other.” –John Piper

6) Jesus unites grace and truth, warmth and strength, mercy and might, salvation and judgment

7) The cross of Good Friday is similarly multi-dimensional

1) It is severe gruesome, harsh, full of judgment

2) It brings grace, mercy, and demonstrates sacrificial love

8. There is no refuge from the king, but there is refuge in the king. We cannot escape Jesus, but once we surrender our pride and turn to him, he is there with open arms longing to gather us like a mother hen with her chicks.