

# **“Recognizing the King”**

## **Sermon 4-9-17**

### **Pastor Curtis Dehmey**

#### **Luke 19: 28-44**

<sup>28</sup>After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.<sup>29</sup>When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples,<sup>30</sup>saying, “Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here.<sup>31</sup>If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it.’”<sup>32</sup>So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them.<sup>33</sup>As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?”<sup>34</sup>They said, “The Lord needs it.”<sup>35</sup>Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it.<sup>36</sup>As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road.<sup>37</sup>As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen,<sup>38</sup>saying, “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!”<sup>39</sup>Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, order your disciples to stop.”<sup>40</sup>He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.”

<sup>41</sup>As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it,<sup>42</sup>saying, “If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.<sup>43</sup>Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side.<sup>44</sup>They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God.”

#### **Message:**

When I was 15 years old, I just started attending a new school, Lancaster Mennonite. I came from a public school. So all these born and raised private schools kids thought I was some sort of cool rebel coming from public school. For the first half of my freshmen year, I was the cool kid to many. But then, gradually, they came to realize I wasn't so rebellious. I wasn't so different than them. The new and coolness of the public school kid wore off. I found out the hard way that those who I thought were my friends, really were not my friends. I tried to do some “cool” things to regain their friendship, but did not succeed. This sent me

into a little bit of a depression. I had little to no friends. I couldn't drive. So I was stuck at home. And of course, I played soccer. But that was it. Life wasn't too exciting. At this point, I had faith in Jesus, but it was more of an adopted faith from my parents than my own. I knew this was the "right" stuff to believe. I knew that all my social interactions at church believed this. But I hadn't, at this point, really experienced the power of Jesus. One Tuesday night, my sister invited me to this worship service that she was frequently attending. In my boredom and depression, I thought, "Why not? I have nothing better to do." So I went. And I'm glad I did. Because that decision. So small and seemingly inconsequential at the time, forever changed my life. This worship service was at a mega church. I had never experienced anything like it in my hometown Brethren church. There was a massive crowd. I remember thinking, "How is it that so many people are willing to come on a Tuesday night to a worship service?" Well...I soon found out. We stood to sing. I thought this would be like my home church worship service. It was nothing like it. People were singing from the top of their lungs. Even if they didn't know the song, they were singing with their whole heart. You could see it in the eyes and body language of everyone around me. They truly believed every word they were singing. Some closed their eyes as they sang. Others lifted their hands. Others were on their knees. I knew in this moment that these people were truly connected with Jesus and were worshipping Him. I thought, "Wow! I want to be part of that!" So devoted to a faith in Jesus that it causes me to worship with my whole being. How exciting!?!? That night I recognized that Jesus was there. I recognized that Jesus deserved more of my life. I recognized the King. How did I know they were worshipping Jesus the King?

It's the same question I ask as we look at our passage today. How did the people know it was God incarnated? How did they know that this was the Messiah? How did they know that this guy riding in on a donkey was the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords? I mean this random dude comes in on a colt into Jerusalem. Now, customarily, a person coming in on a *horse*, not a donkey or colt, would be royalty or a king showing their claim to authority or rule over the people. They would be accompanied by an army. Or in this case, the disciples. There would be singing and acclamations for the one triumphantly entering the town or city. How do the people know that this is the one and only true king? I mean as we see in our passage starting in verse 36, "<sup>36</sup>As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. <sup>37</sup>As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, <sup>38</sup>saying, 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!'" How did they know to lay down their cloaks? Or as said in Matthew, they also cut branches and laid them on the ground. Why didn't

they just ignore this crazy dude making a mockery of the rulers and kings who have come into Jerusalem in such triumphant ways? Why didn't they just scoff at such a scene? Why didn't they just ignore this parade in fear of being beaten and punished by the Roman occupation? I wonder if there were others in the crowd who did not bow. People who succumbed to fear. People who thought this was some silly mockery to seek attention. Who saw King Jesus and who did not?

The crux of our message today stems from verse 41 and 42, <sup>41</sup>“As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, <sup>42</sup>saying, “If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.” Is Jesus hidden from our eyes? Have we failed as a people to recognize Jesus? Continuing in verse 43, <sup>43</sup>“Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side. <sup>44</sup>They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God.” Pretty strong words from Jesus. These things will happen, “...because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God.” This is not intended to see Jesus because you fear the alternative. But there are some natural consequences when we do not recognize Jesus. We imprison ourselves to the way of sin. We engage in thoughts and actions that are not His way. We create more problems than we need. We estrange ourselves from the King. Jesus comes into Jerusalem to liberate. To bring freedom. To free the people from the captivity of sin. But if we do not open our eyes, we will not see.

Many of you have glasses. I am fortunate enough to have 20/20 vision. But I know many of you do not. Imagine that you go in for your annual exam. They tell you that you need a new prescription. You go in to pick-up your new glasses. You put them on to find out that they are the wrong prescription. You can make out images, but they are blurry. You can see somewhat, but not fully or completely. You may know generally where things are, but you cannot fully appreciate the fine detail of things. It is like this in our relationship with Jesus. We cannot see Jesus, because we have the incorrect lens or prescription. The Pharisees couldn't see King Jesus because they could only see God through the law. The Zealots couldn't see King Jesus because they could only see the world through revenge against their oppressors and bringing back the reign of Israel. How are we limiting ourselves from seeing King Jesus in our everyday life? The kind of witness that would cause us to praise him even more and at times fall on our knees. Maybe its fear? Maybe its being too stuck on acquiring more knowledge rather than embodying the Word in our life and actions? Maybe we are afraid to trust or have faith because we have a jaded and skeptical view of the world? Therefore we have a jaded and skeptical view of Jesus. Maybe we are so

consumed by pain and sorrow that it overshadows the love and benevolence of King Jesus? Maybe we are so focused on doing things/staying busy, that we have crowded out opportunities to be intimate with King Jesus?

In 1991, the Daily Bread told this story of the Wright brothers. “It was in December of 1903, that after many attempts, the Wright brothers, Orville and Wilbur, were successful in getting their "flying machine" off the ground and into the air at Kitty Hawk. Thrilled over the accomplishment, they telegraphed this message to their sister Katherine: "We have actually flown 120 feet. Will be home for Christmas." Katherine hurried to the editor of the local newspaper and showed him the message. He glanced at it and said, "How nice. The boys will be home for Christmas." He totally missed the big news—for the first time in human history, man had flown!” We often focus on the wrong things. We are lured into pathways that ignore the true focus. The true King. Jesus.

Or watch this video.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bGpVpsaItpU&feature=youtu.be>). Many of us have been there, right? We may be walking and texting at the same time and we bump into someone. Or we trip over something we should have noticed. Or we run into the corner of the table. When we lose our sight or we are too focused on something else, we miss out on what is right before us. When we lose sight of Jesus, we veer off the path. We make mistakes.

But when we focus and see Jesus, amazing things happen. When we have this intimate relationship with Jesus. It doesn't just cause us to sing, but to bring our whole body to praise and worship him. We see the king. We bow in adoration. We lay down all of who we are to praise his name. We lay down our desires. Our preferences. To worship King Jesus. We see this in Abraham, Joseph, David, Solomon and many more. We see this today in the people and the disciples as Jesus enters Jerusalem. How do we know that it's Jesus? To put it simply, “When you see [Him], you will know [Him].” That's what I found out that Tuesday night at a worship service. I wasn't expecting it. I wasn't planning for it. But I saw King Jesus that moved me to committed belief in Jesus and a desire to worship Jesus with my whole heart, whole mind and whole body. And when we see Jesus, it not only causes us to worship with our body, but it moves us to an exciting and vibrant faith that is worth sharing. Providence Church, I challenge you today that if you see Jesus, to not just stand-by acting as if you don't know Him. I challenge you today, that if you see Him, to worship him with your body in some way. That may be with your eyes. That may be with your hands. That may be on your knees. But I challenge you in some way to worship Him with your body today. Do you see King Jesus? Check out this video.

(<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/66484/good-news-easter-invite>) If you see Jesus, worship Him with your body today. If you see Jesus and it carries any

excitement, share the good news. This Easter season is a perfect opportunity to invite someone to church. To show them the good news that we have in Jesus. To share the story above all stories. To expose them to see King Jesus. Amen.