

Remnant Life Church  
March 28, 2021  
The Impact of the Cross  
Luke 23:35-49

Palm Sunday begins Holy or Passion Week

- It is the last week of Jesus' earthly life
- He is about to complete the purpose of His ministry by giving Himself as the final sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins
- Culminating with the Resurrection.

In the week to come...

- Sunday - Make His triumphal entry into Jerusalem as the people waves palm as a sign of victory and shouting...
  - *Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!* (Mark 11:9-10)
  - Of course, many of these very same people would be shouting again on Friday morning, but the words would be "Crucify Him!"
- Monday, Jesus returned to the temple and, noticing the Court of the Gentiles filled with traders and money changers making large profits, overturned the tables (Matt 21:10-17; Mark 11:15-18; Luke 19:45-48)
- Tuesday – a day of teaching from the Mt. of Olives while dealing with the Pharisees trying to ensnare Him in a theological trap (Matt 21:23-24:51; Mk 11:27-13:37; Luke 20:1-21:36)
- Wednesday – a day of rest (no biblical references)
- Thursday – The Passover meal in the upper room with His disciples; He washes the disciples' feet as a final demonstration of serving one another; the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:7-23; John 13:1-30)
- Friday – sometime during the night hours between Thursday and Friday Jesus is arrested; taken through 6 illegal trials; crucified beginning at 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.; placed in the tomb before 6:00 p.m. when the Sabbath began (Matt 27:1-66; Mark 15:1-47; Luke 22:66-23:56; John 18:28-19:42)
- Saturday – laid in the tomb all that Sabbath day
- Sunday – the women come to the tomb and find it empty; an angel tells them that Jesus is alive; Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, to Peter, 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus; and later all the disciples except Thomas (Matt 28:1-13; Mark 16:1-20; Luke 24:1-49; John 20:1-31)

He came into the city a conquering king but not in the way the people or even His disciples expected.

**READ** – Luke 23:35-49

Throughout the entirety of this final week, there are four groups of people who will be impacted by not only what they see but how they respond.

Each group can be found at the foot of the cross -

1. The Scoffers

- a. **V 35** – the rulers or religious leaders sneered at Jesus
  - i. Even in their “victory” they could not evoke or feel sympathy as “men of God”
  - ii. Their true natures continued to show
  - iii. Seen most clearly in times of extremes: great defeat and great victory
    1. Jesus in His hour of greatest despair continued to show kindness and concern for others
    2. Of the seven last words spoken by Jesus the first three were about others
      - a. Forgiving the people who were doing this to Him; the thief; His mother
- b. Peter writes of this as well in **I Peter 2:23**
  - i. *When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.*
  - ii. Jesus demonstrates His righteousness by His actions in the most horrific of scenarios
  - iii. Are you capable of that same response or do your circumstances determine your actions?
- c. Do you scoff at the things of God?
  - i. Things you do not understand
  - ii. Things that make you uncomfortable
  - iii. Things that do not fit within your box of reason
- d. The scoffers continued to insult Him yet He still forgave them (**23:34**)

2. The Spectators

- a. **V 48** – the ones that came just to watch; the curious
- b. Crucifixions were public events for several reasons
  - i. The guilty man was stripped of his clothing to complete their total breakdown; physical; emotional; mental
  - ii. Crucifixion was encouraged as a public spectacle to act as a warning to others
    1. Often the bodies were left up for extended periods of time
    2. People would come by and hurl stones at the corpse
- c. The people began to drift away but they were effected by what they saw
  - i. They beat their breasts as they left (**Luke 23:48**)
  - ii. In first century culture it was a sign of guilt and remorse
  - iii. The first inklings of revelation were beginning to pierce their hearts
- d. How often are we content to just be spectators to the misery and the lost around us?

- i. God provides us with opportunities to speak into someone's life, perform an act of kindness, or even help heal a wounded heart and often we just stand by and watch
- ii. It is easier to just be a spectator
  - 1. It requires no effort
  - 2. There is no risk
  - 3. It does not invade my world

**READ – Matt 25:31-40**

- iii. To simply be a spectator is to deny the call of God given to each and every Christian to help those in need – get involved

### 3. The Seekers

- a. Out of everyone that had come to the crucifixion, and conservatively it would have been several hundred, we are told of only 2 who fit into this third category
- b. The first was the thief who was crucified on one side of Jesus
  - i. **V 39-43** – these men were nothing extraordinary, certainly nothing like Jesus
  - ii. They were just next to be executed
  - iii. But they, like everyone else had heard of Jesus
  - iv. After the one had insulted and taunted Him the other spoke up and told him to shut up
  - v. A moment of revelation and repentance came upon this man because of His proximity to Jesus
- c. The other was the centurion (v 47)
  - i. This was a veteran in command of as many of 100 soldiers
  - ii. He would have been present probably from the beginning witnessing what had been done to Jesus
  - iii. He probably had witnessed hundreds even thousands of crucifixions, so he wasn't bothered by what he was watching
  - iv. And certainly, he had never said anything like the words he spoke in the moments following Jesus' death
  - v. Excerpt from Max Lucado's, *Six Hours One Friday*

He was uneasy. He had been since noon. It wasn't the gruesome deaths that troubled him...he'd mastered the art of numbing his heart and his mind. But this crucifixion plagued him. Half the crowd taunted, half cried. As the hours wore on, the centurion found himself looking more and more at the one on the center cross. He didn't know what to do with his silence or with his kindness. Suddenly the center head ceased bobbing up and down as they did when struggling to draw a breath. It yanked itself erect. Its eyes opened in a flash of white. A roar sliced the silence. "It is finished." It wasn't a yell. It wasn't a scream. It was a roar...a lion's roar. He looked up into the face of the one near death. The King looked down at the crusty old centurion. Jesus' hands were fastened -- they couldn't reach out. His feet were nailed to timber -- they couldn't walk toward him. His head was heavy with pain, he could scarcely move it. But his eyes...they were afire. They were unquenchable. Perhaps that's what made the centurion say what he said...for he had looked into the eyes of God.

- vi. What were the words the centurion said?
- vii. **Matt 2:54; Mark 15:39** – *Surely, this man was the Son of God!*
- viii. What are you willing to risk to make that same declaration over your own life?
  1. His statement could have endangered his career
  2. Not only with the Romans but the Jewish leaders as well
  3. He was publically declaring something that was against the law (Caesar was god)
  4. But he was changed in that moment because, like the thief, He was close to Jesus

#### 4. The Saved

- a. These were the friends and the followers of Jesus
- b. They included John, Jesus' mother Mary, Martha and Mary the sisters of Lazarus, and Mary Magdalene
- c. They started at a distance (v 49)
- d. But they must of, at some point, moved close enough for Jesus to speak to John about Mary (**John 19:26-27**)
- e. It was dangerous for them to be so close yet they knew where they belonged and with whom, regardless of the circumstances

Which of these four best describes your life this morning?

- Are you a scoffer who denies who God really is because it does not fit into your box of acceptable thinking?
- Are you a spectator who is at all the right places but never gets involved?
- Are you a seeker – someone who Jesus is drawing to Himself?
- Are you saved this morning all the while moving closer and closer to Jesus?

Are you ready to take the next step closer to the cross?