

Remnant Life Church
04-02-23
Jesus' Final Week
Matthew 21-28; Mark 11-16; Luke 19-24; John 12-20
John 12:1-8

For many Christians who have gone to church their entire lives, there are events and stories, even words and phrases that have become very familiar through sheer repetition.

- And because of their familiarity, the full meaning is often missed, assumed, or in some cases completely misunderstood.

The last week of Jesus' life is filled with incredible significance, teaching, and examples of how we are to live

- From the entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to the resurrection 7 days later
- And what we read recorded in the Scripture is the culmination and fulfillment of Jesus' very purpose here on Earth.

But what might we be missing through the familiarity of these accounts?

This morning I would like to take us on a brief tour of Jesus' final week leading up to Good Friday...

Why is this important?

- First, to better understand the fullness of Jesus' ministry and how those last days had as much importance and meaning as any other time of those 3 years
- Second, to see *the way* Jesus lived in spite of being fully aware of what awaited Him leading up to the last hours of His earthly life
- Finally, to discover the lessons of how we should live using Jesus, as always, as the perfect model

- We have much to read regarding the events of Holy Week as they are recorded in each of the four gospels
 - The first 4 books of the NT, collectively known as the gospels, are divided into two parts
 - **Matthew, Mark and Luke** are the Synoptic gospels meaning "side by side"
 - The reason they are grouped that way is because we can take these three books and read them comparatively
 - Mark, most biblical scholars agree, was the first book likely written sometime in the 50's
 - His book was then used by the other two authors Matthew and Luke (both of theirs written within 5 years of each other) as a reference
 - Knowing this helps to explain the many similarities as well as their differences
 - Many of those differences can be attributed to who the intended audience was

- Matthew was writing to Jewish believers
 - Mark to Roman converts and believers
 - And Luke to the Gentile believers
 - This means that each author, while including similar accounts also focused on specific and unique elements of the life of Jesus
 - **John**, however, is written in a different manner with a greater focus on the activities of Jesus' ministry
 - John was writing to encourage and strengthen new believers
 - While also writing to convince unbelievers of the truth of Jesus as the Messiah
 - This is why his book bypasses the birth and early years narratives and begins by identifying who Jesus is as The Word who became flesh
 - John also introduces the reader to the ministry of John the Baptist as well as the calling of the first disciples
 - It is because of these differences in focus, scope, and intent, that we receive such a rich and full description of the life of Jesus through these first four books.
 - The Gospels, or the "Good News" of Jesus Christ
- The leading into Holy Week begins with Jesus' arrival in Bethany, a town located about 2 miles east of Jerusalem on the road leading to Jericho, with the Mount of Olives located between Bethany and Jerusalem
 - It is six days before the Passover, when Jesus arrives at the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus – yes, that Lazarus who Jesus had raised from the dead.
 - If it is six days before Passover, it puts Jesus' arrival in Bethany on the Friday before the Triumphal entry
- 1. **Friday** – Jesus is using the home of Mary and Martha, and Lazarus as a base of operation.
 - i. They have been invited for dinner at the home of Simon the Leper
 - ii. There are nine men in the Bible named Simon
 - 1. This one identified as The Leper
 - a. He would not still be a leper
 - b. If he was the leper, then it makes sense that Jesus would have healed him
 - c. Added speculation that this man also may have been the father of the Mary, Martha, and Lazarus
 - d. Might explain the 3's great devotion and closeness to Jesus
 - iii. And it is at this dinner that Mary anoints Jesus with oil

Read - John 12:1-8

1. Two of the Gospels present this as a sign of Jesus' authority as she anoints His head (**Matt and Luke**)
2. **John** presents it as the anointing of His feet to illustrate Mary's worship of Jesus and her humility in His presence

3. Jesus says that she has done it to prepare Him for burial – something His disciples still could not grasp
 - a. How do we know this?
 - b. Because their main concern was the cost of the perfume
- iv. The value of the oil she used would have been about 300 denarii or about a year's wages (possible heirloom)
 1. The disciples, led by Judas, spoke out against the act
 2. Judas' concern might make some sense since he was the treasurer but the Bible also tells us that he was also a thief (**John 12:6**)
 3. He was hiding his greed by saying it should be given to the poor
- v. In spite of His many warnings to the disciples of His impending death, only Mary seemed to grasp the true meaning of His words.

2. Saturday

- i. The Jewish Sabbath
- ii. A day of rest
- iii. Observing the traditional elements of the day and Jesus would have spent time with His friends

3. Sunday (Palm Sunday; the Triumphal Entry into the city)

- i. Jesus sends two of His disciples on ahead to get a colt that is tied up
 1. This act fulfills the prophesy of **Zec 9:9** written nearly 500 years earlier
 2. *Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*
 3. Riding a colt (donkey) a symbol of peace, humility, and also authority (like the kings and prophets of the OT)
- ii. Jesus would have entered the city by riding through the Golden or Eastern gate
 1. Because of the gate's proximity to the temple, this is also the same gate that the lambs to be sacrificed would have been brought each year for the festival
 2. Jesus was entering the city through the same gate the sacrifice was brought each year
 3. The date would have been Nisan 10 – the same day every year that the pilgrims presented their lambs for inspection to the priests for Passover
 4. But Jesus was coming, not as just another sacrifice, but as the final sacrifice and as the Spotless Lamb of God
- iii. As Jesus approached the city, the people cried Hosanna meaning “save us”
 1. Like the disciples, the people also believed that Jesus was coming to set them free from the oppression of the Romans

2. That is why His appearance on the colt rather than on a steed would have been confusing to those who saw Him because they were desperate to be saved
3. But Jesus did not come to save them from the Romans, He came to save them from their sins and an eternity lost without Him

4. Monday

- i. The majority of details regarding this day can be found in Matthew and Mark
- ii. He entered the temple and confronted the money changers ([Matt 21:12-13](#); [Mark 11:15-17](#))
 1. The money changers were providing a service necessary because the temple tax could only be paid with a specific type of money
 2. Foreigners could exchange their money for the temple money but at a steep cost
 3. So, too, those who needed to purchase a sacrificial animal could do so but at a steep price
 4. The vendors and sellers gouging the people and taking advantage of them is what made Jesus so angry
 - a. We, too, should be angry when we see someone being taken advantage of or cheated
 - b. Jesus came to right the wrongs of the hearts of people and one of those things was injustice
- iii. He healed the blind and lame who came to Him that day ([Matt 21:14](#))
- iv. He cursed the fig tree that withered ([Matt 21:19](#); [Mark 11:14](#))
 1. Jesus did this as a symbolic act of judgment against Israel because of their fruitlessness ([Matt 21:42-45](#))
 2. It was the sin of Israel caused Jesus to weep ([Luke 19:41-44](#))
 3. His own people, those He loved, did not understand who Jesus was or what the consequence of their actions would be
 4. Nobody was teaching them the right and wrong of the law bathed in love – only the control of the law
 5. But Jesus knew that in less than 40 years the temple would be leveled and burned by the Romans led by General Titus
 6. Not one stone on another ([Matt 24:2](#)) –
 - a. There was a rumor among the Romans of gold used instead of mortar to hold the bricks together
 - b. And so the soldiers separated every piece of marble and stone looking for it
 7. When God says something is going to happen it will happen!

5. Tuesday

1. Jesus spends this day teaching utilizing parables about love and the sinfulness of spiritual pride ([Matt 23:1-36](#); [Mark 12:38-40](#))
2. He must deal face-to-face with the Pharisees and other spiritual leaders ([Matt 22:15-20](#); [Mark 12:18-27](#); [Luke 20:41-44](#))

3. Some of Jesus' most stern and forceful teaching takes place this day, again, addressed primarily to the leaders as He weeps for Jerusalem (**Matt 23**)
 - a. This teaching includes the coming destruction of Herod's temple
 - b. Future events - including His own return
 - c. All the while He is sharing the love of the Father even as He feels so much for the lost of Jerusalem

6. Wednesday

- i. The Gospels record no activities which they certainly would have continued to do
- ii. If we maintain a count of the days, we must see this mid-day of the week and recognize it as a day that, again, Jesus rested
- iii. Jesus took time to be with those He loved

7. Thursday

- i. On this day Jesus begins to prepare His disciples and Himself for His death which is now less than 24 hours away
- ii. Jesus sends Peter and John to set up the room for the Passover meal (**Luke 22:8**)
- iii. Three primary events that happen on this day
 1. Jesus washes the disciple's feet (**John 13:1-17**)
 - a. Peter's response is interesting in that he first refuses to participate at all
 - b. He then requests to be washed all over once Jesus tells Him that to be unwashed is to have no part of Jesus (salvation)
 - c. Jesus uses two different words for wash in **John 13:10**
 - i. The first is the word *lou-oh* means to totally clean a dead body or blood from a wound
 - ii. The second is the word *nip-toe* meaning to clean one's hands or feet
 - d. Through repentance and our salvation we have been cleansed of the penalty of sin – death (**Rom 6:23**)
 - e. But we still need to continually clean ourselves of sinful actions, thoughts, and words throughout our lives
 2. Jesus eats the Passover meal with His disciples (**Matt 26; Mark 14; Luke 22**)
 - a. The Passover meal had been celebrated ever since the days of Moses and the exodus, but today Jesus gives it new meaning and significance
 - b. This Passover meal is what we will celebrate together on Friday as our communion service
 - c. Jesus changed the meaning of the Passover meal forever
 - i. Prior to this moment, it had always been to commemorate the Israelites freedom from the

*at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?
(Matt 26:53)*

Apply some simple math to what Jesus was saying

- A Roman legion is 6000 men
- 12 legions, as Jesus said in **Math 26** is 72,000 angels
- In **2 Kings** the Assyrian army was marching on King Hezekiah and the people of Israel
- The King cried out to the Lord and prayed for His deliverance
- Here is what we read in **2 Kings 19:35** *That night the angel of the LORD went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning—there were all the dead!*
- 72,000 angels would have the capacity to kill 13 billion, 320 million
- In Jesus day the estimated population of the entire world was 100 – 200 million
- In simple language Jesus was saying, ‘If I wanted to, I could wipe out the entire world’s population 10 times over.’
 - e. And in hearing this incredible news do you know what the disciples did?
 - f. **Matt 26:56** says, *Then all the disciples deserted Him and fled.*

That same Thursday night and into the early morning hours of Friday, Jesus...

- Was taken through 5 separate trials of which at least 3 were illegal according to Jewish law
- He was slapped, punched, and spit on
- Flogged – whips with pieces of metal, rock, bone, or broken pottery tied at the end
 - Stripped, tied to a post and a man would stand on either side so there was no rest
 - Many condemned to be crucified never made it past this point
 - It was this beating, the tremendous loss of blood, that caused Jesus to stumble at the weight of the cross
- Then killed in the most horrific way known at that time designed to destroy not only the body, but the emotion, spirit, and will of the person

Jesus had entered the city on the previous Sunday to a crowd of enthusiastic supporters – waving palm branches and calling out “save us!” “Hosanna!”

He came back on Thursday night to a city of hostile, murderous people with the Jewish leaders and Pharisees intent on killing Him

Which side are you on?

- That might seem like a foolish question to some
- But it bears asking again – what side are you on?
 - Are you welcoming Him?
 - Or are you a part of the mob defying Him?
- You cannot straddle the fence with Jesus and expect that to be “good enough”
- Jesus endured all that we have said this evening, but so much more all on your behave and in your place and mine