

What Makes Jesus Cry!

Luke 19:28-44

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Introduction to the Text: Our passage today is the traditional Palm Sunday text. The passage is Luke's account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. I want us to look at this entry, not from the eyes of the crowd, but rather from the eyes of Jesus.

Text: ²⁸ When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹ And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, *that* He sent two of His disciples, ³⁰ saying, "Go into the village opposite *you*, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring *it here*. ³¹ And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing *it*?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.'"

³² So those who were sent went their way and found *it* just as He had said to them. ³³ But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, "Why are you loosing the colt?"

³⁴ And they said, "The Lord has need of him." ³⁵ Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. ³⁶ And as He went, *many* spread their clothes on the road.

³⁷ Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, ³⁸ saying:

*"Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"*

³⁹ And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."

⁴⁰ But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

⁴¹ Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴² saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things *that make* for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴ and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Introduction: The scene is like that of a parade. It is more than a parade. The scene is one of ultimate respect to the one that the crowd thought was the military and political king coming to save them. But, in this entry are two incredible ironies. One is that the cheers of the crowd on this day are going to turn to cries of "Crucify Him" in less than a week. The second irony is that whereas the crowd thought that Jesus was coming to pronounce the glory and revival of the city of Jerusalem, He prophesied the destruction of the city. As Jesus makes His way through the crowds, Luke, alone among the Gospel writers, indicates that "He saw the city and **wept over it.**" That's what I want us to see today. What makes Jesus weep?

Perhaps it is that Jesus cried other times, but the Gospel gives us only two glimpses. First, Jesus wept at the grave of His friend Lazarus. The only other instance of the tears of Jesus is here in this passage in Luke 19.

What makes Jesus weep?

Shallow Worship of those who say they believe

Again, it is important to note that the cheers of the crowd will become silent in less than a week. Jesus' statement in verse 40 is prophetic of the earthquake that will happen at the time of crucifixion. It wasn't just Peter that denied Jesus. All the disciples deserted Him. With no one left to praise Him, I believe the rocks cried out in the earthquake.

The worship of the crowd, who Luke records as disciples (verse 37), fell silent. What happened? Several things happened, I think. First, the expectation that the disciples had for Jesus was not met by Jesus. In other words, when Jesus didn't do for them what they wanted Him to do for them, they stopped their praise. That very same thing happens today. That's why I call it "shallow worship." Just as then, many sing "Crown Him King of Kings" on Sunday, but crucify Him on Monday with their words, attitudes, and behavior. No wonder Jesus cried!

The second thing that happened was that the road required to follow Jesus became much more difficult. Everybody wants to follow behind the King to the throne; few want to follow the King to the cross.

Worship that is not worship in all circumstances is shallow worship. That makes Jesus cry then and now.

Spiritual Blindness of those who are yet to believe

The second reason for Jesus' tears revealed in our text is the spiritual blindness of those who were yet to believe. They thought Jesus' mere appearance in Jerusalem would result in peace. Jesus wept at the fact of how little they understood of what would really bring their peace. The peace that Jesus brings required His blood on the cross. Jesus wept not only at the lostness of the city but the effects of that lostness on the city.

The spiritual blindness of our world today is as strong as ever. For that reason, Jesus wept and still weeps today.

Certain Judgment of those who will not believe

The third reason for the tears is the certain judgment of those who will not believe. The result of the hardened heart of those listening that day would be the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

This judgment foreshadows the eternal judgment of those who refuse to believe today. Please note that God is not pleased to judge. He cries at the necessity of judgment. He does not celebrate judgment; He cries because of judgment. The next time that you want to celebrate the judgment of God against someone's sin, think of the tears of Jesus. The next time that you are quick to say that someone deserves judgment, think of the tears of Jesus. Judgment is not to be celebrated, but cried over.

So What?

We have learned something this morning, but we do not examine the Scriptures for information purposes, we examine the Scripture for transformation purposes. We ask the question “So What?”

This text forces us to ask ourselves two questions.

#1 Is Christ weeping over you?

He is if your worship is shallow, if you have not repented of sin and are spiritually blind, or if you are headed toward certain judgment.

Shallow worship is anything that is not authentic. Any style of worship can be sincere, but any style of worship can be shallow. Shallow worship is not about style, but rather the integrity of your heart. Somebody might say, “I don’t like that kind of worship.” You know the kind of worship that God does not like? God cries over worship that is mere lip service. That is, you can sing whatever song you like on Sunday, but if on Monday, there is not an offering of yourself as a living sacrifice to a Holy God, your worship on the previous Sunday, no matter how beautiful to you, makes God cry.

Christ weeps over you in your spiritual blindness and lostness. Somebody might say, “How could a loving God send someone to Hell?” God’s heart is broken over the lostness and the judgment.

Is Christ weeping over you?

#2 Are we weeping over the same things that Christ wept?

The same things that make Jesus cry ought to make us cry! The other instance of Jesus’ tears comes at the death of his friend, Lazarus. It seems that we learn from this portrait of Christ that the same things that make us cry (like the death of a loved one) caused Jesus to cry. If this is true, then shouldn’t it be that the same things that make Christ cry ought to make us cry? We too should cry over the shallowness of worship, the spiritual blindness of our city, and the certain judgment to come.

Colonel George Clark and his wife Sarah were part of Chicago’s Elite Society. God began to cause them to see the lostness of their city. They began a mission that for years was called Colonel Clark’s Mission. The great evangelist of Clark’s time, D.L. Moody, preached often at Clark’s Mission. When Clark bought the Pacific Beer Garden for the expansion of his mission, Moody suggested that Clark change the name of the mission to the Pacific Garden Mission. You probably have heard of this ministry that has existed since 1877. (They put out the radio program “Unshackled.”) Another evangelist of that era, R.A. Torrey often remarked at how an unaccomplished speaker as Clark could have influence on so many. One day while listening to Clark, Torrey discovered the reason. Clark never could make it through a sermon without crying. Torrey realized that it was the passion, evidenced through the real tears, that made the difference. In fact, Clark, at one point, was so embarrassed by his tears that he asked God to take away the tears. God did, but Clark soon realized that as he lost his tears, he also lost his passion. He began to ask God to give him back his tears.

William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, started his organization with the mantra, “Go for souls and go for the worst.” Once, a couple of associates were trying to start a new Salvation Army Rescue Mission in a new city. They were meeting with all kinds of problems and failures. They wrote Booth to try to convince him to shut down the mission. Booth telegraphed back the two men with two words, “Try tears!”

Now, please understand that nothing would be more offensive to God for this sermon to produce manufactured tears. In fact, it's not literal tears that perhaps are even the issue. Rather, the issue is a sense of the reality of the lostness of our world. That ought to move us, perhaps even to tears. I believe that for the most part, we are a church that believes the Gospel. I believe, that for the most part, we are a church that presents the truth of the Gospel. I believe, that for the most part, we are made up of people who love Jesus. But, perhaps, we need God to move in our heart, so that we might weep over our city—the lostness of our city, the spiritual blindness of our city.