

The Upside-Down Triumph

Luke 19:28-44 (Triumphal entry v28-40, Weeping over Jerusalem v41-44)

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1. **WELCOME** – whether you’re a regular Tallgrassian or you’re visiting with us this morning – we’re glad you’re here!
2. We’re heading down the homestretch of our study of God’s Upside Down Kingdom through the Gospel of Luke
3. **This week is HOLY WEEK** – today Palm Sunday, Good Friday (when Jesus was Crucified), and next Sunday Easter when Jesus rose bodily from the dead
 - a. Encouragement to audience – LEAN IN
 - b. Holidays go by so fast
 - c. The true purpose of the holiday—HOLY DAYS – is a time SET APART (HOLY) for us, to slow down and remember... to reflect and celebrate well
 - i. *My journey with holy week, cynicism, religious formalism*
 1. Personally, I’ve historically been pretty cynical about anything that smacks of religious formalism
 2. I’ve not typically leaned into things like Holy Week or Advent or Lent because it made me think about big religion and what seemed to me dead empty ritual.
 - a. And of course some of those critiques have value!
 - b. But I and I suspect many like me have perhaps committed the error of throwing the baby out with the bath water.
 - c. Especially many who might jump in on a church plant like ours would likely already be predisposed away from religious formalism.
 - i. And likely run the same risk of throwing out the good with the bad.
 3. Holidays, after all, were God’s IDEA!
 - a. He knows how people work, and knows we need help remembering and celebrating well.
 - ii. So lean in!
 - d. Really entering meaningfully into this Easter Holy-Week **will not happen by accident** this week. Inertia will carry you through with little more than blips on the radar.
 - e. **Slow down.** – Choose to set these days apart this week. With your kids, spouse, friends. Choose to hear and remember what God’s done – how he’s moved heaven and earth --- and gave everything he had – for you.
4. **PRAY**
5. Tonight we’re going to be in Luke 19 looking at the Upside-Down Triumph (of Jesus)
6. **Background**
 - a. Jesus has been ministering and teaching his disciples for a few years now. And we’re about at the end.
 - b. JC has been heading toward Jerusalem for a while, ever since Chapter 9
 - i. Jesus kicks it into high gear with his mission
 - ii. Slowly but deliberately making his way through the countryside toward Israel’s capitol city: Jerusalem
 - iii. A great crowd of his followers collects around him as he goes
 - c. **So, Messianic expectations are HIGH!**
 - i. Everyone is beginning to really believe that JC is the Christ! The long-prophesied God-King who would finally come to save Israel from their enemies and set up God’s eternal Kingdom here on earth, with Jerusalem as its capitol!

- ii. In fact, he just told everyone a parable about a king (very clearly Jesus) who leaves for a while and then returns to reward his faithful servants and to defeat his enemies

7. Try to put yourselves in their shoes.

- a. This is what every Jew had been waiting for with GREAT LONGING all their lives. All their parents lives, and their parents, and their grandparents going back generations and generations.
- b. **1000 years before, (approx. 1000BC) under King David**, God established the Jewish kingdom in glory and splendor.
 - i. But soon after, the glory days dimmed as Israel continued to stray into disobedience and rebellion against YAHWEH, their God.
- c. **Only 70 years later, in 930 BC, after a brutal civil war, God's People split into 2 kingdoms.**
 - i. And things hadn't been right ever since.
- d. **200 yrs later, around 740 BC, Northern Israel was conquered and obliterated by the Assyrians.** A slow painful process that took 18 years.
- e. And with Southern Israel (also known as Judah), things weren't much better.
 - i. **250 yrs after that, 605BC conquered by Babylon**, many exiled, Jerusalem in ruins (Daniel in the Lion's Den)
 - ii. **66 yrs later in 539BC Conquered by Medo-Persia**
 - iii. Not long after, **many Jews allowed to return and rebuild Israel.**
 - 1. But it was an inglorious time of strife and difficulty. Nothing like the glory days.
 - iv. **Then 200 yrs later, in 333BC Conquered by Alexander the Great** and the Greeks
 - v. **323 BC after his untimely death, endured fighting for control under various Generals until 305 BC**
 - 1. *First being ruled by Ptolemeic kingdom in Egypt*
 - 2. *Then by Selesucid kingdom of Asia Minor/Turkey*
 - vi. **Then in 167 BC Antiochus IV**, a Selucid King, responded to another civil war in Jerusalem by viciously attacking the city. Outlawed practice of Jewish religion under pain of death, many other atrocities, including desecrating the Temple in Jerusalem by entering into the Holy place and sacrificing a pig (unclean animal!) on God's alter to Zeus.
 - vii. **This led to the Maccabean revolt. Restored Jewish rule over Palestine. In 142 BC**
- f. **Then in 63BC, conquered by Rome.**
 - i. And stripped of autonomy, dignity, wealth.
 - ii. Under yoke of heavy taxes to Caesar
- g. **As we enter into the scene in Luke 19, somewhere around 33AD**
 - i. Israel has been beaten down and oppressed and conquered for a 1000 years.
 - ii. Know they're intended for more.
 - iii. Know God's Messiah will soon come to save them.
 - 1. The time of the Messiah had been predicted centuries before!
 - 2. **By the Prophet Daniel around 550BC**
 - 3. **Check out Daniel 9!**
 - a. accurately predicts with astonishing clarity the exact year (by date) ... and most likely even the exact week the Messiah would triumphantly enter Jerusalem!
 - b. Jews lacked some of the exact historical dates that we now have, but knew generally the prophecy was due to be fulfilled soon!
 - 4. **Even the most skeptic, liberal scholars date the Book of Daniel around 200BC**
 - a. Still More than 2 centuries before this event
 - b. So that even if they're right, and it was predicted ~250 years beforehand (rather than 600 years beforehand, Daniel's predictions are inexplicable based on a naturalistic worldview

5. Freebie book Discovering God. Chapter devoted to Dan 9

6. Also a teaching Deaver gave in 2014 at New Hope. Go to newhopeks.org and search for “SHOULD HAVE SEEN IT COMING”
- If you’re skeptical about the Bible, the Supernatural, you most of all owe it to yourself to check out the evidence.
 - What you find, if you honestly investigate, just might change everything.

h. And as Jesus nears Jerusalem

- After healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, making the lame walk, freeing people from demons, and raising the dead
- The crowds swell. The messianic hopes reach a crescendo.
- NOW – IT’S REALLY HAPPENING!
- Jesus is the Messiah. Our King come to save us from our oppressors and restore His Kingdom!

8. Read v36-40

a. So the crowds scream and shout for joy as Jesus RIDES IN TOWARD JERUSALEM

- The King!!!
- BLESSED IS THE KING
- In Mat 21 account, crowd shouts HOSANNAH**
 - SAVE US NOW!
- This isn’t a cute religious ceremony
- Not little kids waving palm branches and everyone smiling
- This is more like a political demonstration.... A riot!**
 - Rome is in charge.
 - Caesar is their king
 - And any hint of rebellion would bring the brutal swift retribution from the Roman Legion.
- Make No mistake, the crowds were on DANGEROUS ground.**
- In fact, their palm branches were a political statement.
 - They were a symbol of Jewish Nationalism
 - political rebellion
 - Minted on coins
 - This is our new king!
- This was a VERY DANGEROUS few hours**
 - But the crowds were THAT CONVINCED that JC was the Messiah King and was about to accomplish his great victory that they thought it worth the risk.
 - Indeed, they were risking their very lives on it

9. TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

- It was common in those days for kings to have a spectacular “TRIUMPHAL ENTRY” into their kingdom, a glorious celebration of their public sovereignty.
- An egregious display of the king’s power, wealth, glory.
 - And the leader would ride in on a glorious steed – a strong proud horse
 - EXAMPLES:
 - Putin on Horse**
 - Lincoln on a bear**
 - Regan on a velociraptor**
 - ALADDIN**
 - Make Way, for Prince Ali
 - He’s got 95 white Persian monkeys
 - He’s got slaves, hes got servants and flunkies

- iii. With sixty elephants
- iv. Llamas galore
- v. With his bears and lions
- vi. A brass band and more!

iii. Real life examples

1. Mansa Musa, King of Mali ~1300AD

- a. BBC article: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-47379458>
- b. Considered by many historians the richest man ever lived (including modern wealthy, inflation adjusted)
- c. Journeyed to Mecca
- d. With caravan of 60,000 men
- e. He took his entire royal court and officials, soldiers, entertainer), merchants, camel drivers and 12,000 slaves, as well as a long train of goats and sheep for food.
 - i. It was a city moving through the desert.
- f. A city whose inhabitants, all the way down to the slaves, were clad in gold brocade and finest Persian silk. A hundred camels were in tow, each camel carrying hundreds of pounds of pure gold.
 - i. It was a sight to behold.
 - ii. And the sight got even more opulent once the caravan reached Cairo, where they could really show off their wealth.
- g. So lavishly did he hand out gold in Cairo that his three-month stay caused the price of gold to plummet in the region for 10 years, wrecking the economy.

h. Now THAT'S an Entrance!!!!

2. Roman Caesars

- a. Royal robes
- b. Chariot – 4 white horses
- c. Parade
- d. Led by servants, officials
- e. Captives and slaves
- f. Musicians
- g. Flags
- h. Animals
- i. LOTS OF GOLD

10. And here was the King of the WORLD→UNIVERSE, making his Triumphal Entry.....

- a. Can you Imagine what HE'D HAVE TO SHOW???????
- b. Surely enough to make Mansa Musa look like a hobo

11. Back up to v 29-36

- a. But something was off.

b. Jesus didn't seem to have much in the way of wealth.

- i. Didn't have monkeys, servants, or flunkies,
- ii. No horse or elephant to ride on
- iii. So JC tells his disciples to go into town and borrow him.... A donkey
 - 1. A baby donkey

c. Not quite what you'd expect the Triumphal Entry of the King of the whole Universe

- i. On one hand, he was **fulfilling a prophecy** about the Messiah's Triumphal entry into Jerusalem, given by the prophet **Zechariah about 550 yrs before.**

1. Zech 9:9 **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.**
 - ii. And this wouldn't have been lost on the crowd. They knew he was making the clear claim that he was the fulfillment of that Prophecy
 1. He is the Messianic King they've been waiting for.
 - d. **But this is still a very strange scene.** The King in his Triumph – on display for all to see
 - i. A man riding on a baby donkey
 1. With no chariots, gold, silver, monkeys, or musicians
 - ii. The very picture of humility
12. **Then when he gets near the City, instead of crying aloud in victory...**
 - a. Instead of charging ahead and fighting roman soldiers
 - b. Instead of performing a divine miracle and laying waste to all romans everywhere
13. **He weeps**
 - a. **V41-44**
 - b. He bursts into tears
 - i. On the back of a baby donkey
 - c. The God of the Universe... the King of KINGS ...Weeps over his city. Jerusalem. Who would NOT receive him. Would not accept his peace. And would consequently soon be destroyed.....
 - i. AS IT WOULD BE just 37 years later in 70AD by the Romans
 - ii. **BECAUSE YOU DID NOT KNOW THE TIME OF YOUR VISITATION**
 - d. **A strange thing to say**, as the countryside is lined with Israelites Shouting his name and calling him their king!
 - i. Because Jesus knows what no one else does.
 1. That this would be the very last week of his life.
 2. And that by week's end, these same crowds would be shouting **CRUCIFY HIM – WE HAVE NO KING BUT CAESAR**
14. But that week, the crowd's expectations would be dashed, their moods cooled, as Jesus never throws off Roman oppression. Doesn't even fight them. Just keeps teaching them about God and rebuking the hard-hearted religious leaders.
15. **By week's end, Jesus would be rejected by the Jewish leaders, and by many of his people.**
 - a. **He'd be falsely accused, spit upon, mocked, beaten, whipped savagely**
 - b. **And his own people would collude with the Romans**
 - i. **To Get JC killed**
 - c. He'd be stripped naked and nailed to rough beams of wood.... With huge metal stakes driven through his hands and feet....
 - d. And in an irony that is surely divinely orchestrated, The crime he'd be executed for – written on a plaque nailed to the top of his cross --- would be for being "King of the Jews".
 - i. A cruel joke on the Jews by Pilate.
 - ii. That ended up being profoundly accurate.
 - e. **Jesus WAS their king.** But they did not recognize him. They thought they did at first. But when he didn't do what they thought he should, in the way he should, they turned on him, quickly...rejected him, and nailed him bleeding and naked to a criminal's cross.
 - i. The very picture of humility
16. **Jesus knew this was coming.**

- a. And it was his mission. What he'd come here to do!
 - b. **He had his eyes set on GREATER things**
 - i. He would INDEED save the people from oppression
 - ii. But unbeknownst to them, their greatest threat wasn't the Romans.
 - 1. It was their sinand death itself
 - 2. The mortal wound in their very souls
 - c. **And The King of the Universe knew what we did not...** that the only way to defeat sin and death without killing all in its power – namely every human on earth -- isn't through a show of force....
 - i. But through self-sacrifice and humility.
 - ii. By humbling himself to the point of death.... Even death on a cross
 - 1. Offering his very life as a ransom for others
 - d. The greatest hero of all time – who least looked like it at the time
17. **John 1:11-12** ¹¹**He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.** ¹²**But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God**
18. As we'll celebrate next week, at Easter -- Jesus didn't stay dead. He rose to life! Not some ghostly, spiritual rising. Or even a metaphorical "rising".
- a. BUT Real bodily eternal life. Proving his triumph over death and sin.
 - b. So that he can offer us forgiveness and peace with God and eternal life with Him.
19. And THANK GOD he's told us **he's coming again**. Another triumphal entry.
- a. This one much more like what we were expecting the first time. And way more.
 - i. We didn't understand that he'd come twice.
 - b. First as Humble suffering servant
 - c. **And Second as Conquering King.**
 - i. It's coming!
 - ii. **Rev 19: ¹¹Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. ¹²His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself.¹³ He is clothed in a robe dipped in^[b] blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. ... ¹⁶On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.**
 - iii. YAH, that's more like it.
20. So What? -- APPLICATIONS
- a. **See Ourselves Afresh**
 - i. Are we so different from these crowds of cheerers?
 - 1. We come to Jesus for all sorts of reasons
 - 2. Sure, we come to him for personal salvation – and rightly so. But we also come with often **subconscious demands** of Jesus
 - a. **We want him to fix our lives**
 - b. Help us get financially stable
 - c. Fix our marriage
 - d. Find us a spouse
 - e. Protect our kids
 - f. Be successful in business
 - g. Cure our cancer

- h. Heal our mental illness
- i. Keep us safe
- j. Give us a happy, healthy, stress free life of ease and comfort
- 3. Most of us don't even realize we have these expectations of Jesus – until they're not met**
- 4. Then, when he doesn't come through for us
 - a. We continue to experience financial insecurity
 - b. Our kids still make bad choices
 - c. Our spouse walks out
 - d. We lose our job
 - e. The tumor is malignant
 - f. Life in the kingdom is hard – and you experience heartache and pain and difficulty as you seek to minister
- 5. So even as Christians, we can fall into the trap of practically rejecting him as king in different areas of our life.
 - a. We can so easily let our disappointment lead us to distrust
 - b. And our distrust into bitterness
 - c. And in our bitterness we resolve to make life work apart from God – who let us down.
- 6. Have YOU fallen into that trap recently?** In what area of your life?
 - a. This evening?

b. See Jesus afresh

- i. **Isn't it incredible** that the all powerful flaming eyed Divine King of the Universe we see in Rev 19, is also the humble, self-sacrificing Messiah of Luke 19?
- ii. **It's the same Jesus!**
- iii. Have you ever seen or been around someone famous, or extremely talented or popular successful or rich, but they are also humble. Relate genuinely. Don't flaunt their power or skill. But gently and caringly engage you as if you had just as much value as they?
 - 1. We actually DO have a category for valuing Humility**
 - 2. Even in our crazy pomp culture
- iv. That's our God.
 - 1. Lean in, and see This side of your King**
 - a. **He won't make you feel like a dog, or a worm**
 - b. He's not scowling at you from heaven
 - i. Mad that you're not performing better
 - ii. That may have been your earthly father
 - 1. But it's NOT your heavenly one
 - c. You can trust him with your heart
 - d. Your hopes and dreams
 - e. Your pain, your sorrow
 - f. Your deepest darkest fears
 - g. The cesspool of your sins and failures
 - i. He's kind and gentle
 - ii. and humble
- v. **This is our God. Rev 19 AND Luke 19.**
 - 1. We need both.
- vi. He's still got his eye on the big prizes
 - 1. He is still all about trying to rescue men and women from sin and death

- a. On weeding out the sin and death that still lurks in our hearts and our relationships.

vii. But he won't force his way in

- 1. The Humble King only dwells where he's invited
- 2. And he gives to each of us the dignity of choice.
 - a. He stands at the door and knocks
 - b. But only enters when we open the door.

viii. If you've never accepted the Humble King as YOUR Savior, why not accept that free gift of citizenship tonight? Don't wait!

- 1. Why not join his Kingdom NOW
 - a. the only path toward citizenship is through his blood.
- 2. Through recognition of what he did for you on the cross.
- 3. That takes enemies of God (as we all are by default) and makes them into adopted sons! Co-Heirs of the kingdom with Christ!
 - a. INCREDIBLE!
- 4. Simply tell Jesus in your mind (prayer!) that you believe he died on the cross to save you from sin and death. And that you want in to his kingdom. And you want him to be your king – starting now.

c. Follow Jesus into a life of humble, sacrificial love.

- i. With Jesus the Cross preceded the Crown
- ii. AND SO WITH US, in this in-between time, the cross precedes the crown
- iii. So as we move into a life of mission and ministry with God

- 1. **Embrace humility**
- 2. **Embrace self-giving love**

iv. Sometimes it's not fun.

- 1. Sometimes you get hurt
- 2. Get taken advantage of
- 3. Get slandered
- 4. Get ridiculed
- 5. rejected
 - a. Often by those we love... minister to
 - b. Which can make the pain all the more – often harder when it's from fellow believers

- v. It's tough not to demand vindication when we're wronged
 - 1. To keep your mouth shut when you're slandered
 - 2. To bless when you're cursed
 - 3. To love your enemies... especially when they should be your friends

vi. I can say without qualification, that the greatest hurts from people in my life have been from those close to me...

- 1. Folks in my family
- 2. And many have come from fellow believers
- 3. Folks in the same church
- 4. Even those who I've tried to minister to.
- 5. You pour your heart and time and energy into a discipling relationship, only to have that person walk away later as if nothing ever happened
 - a. Even walk away from God!
- 6. Unkind and untruthful things spread about you ...
- 7. Behind your back

- d. Humility, and sacrificial love really sucks sometimes.
- i. **But humble, sacrificial love is what our world DESPERATELY NEEDS**
 - 1. **What your NEIGHBOR NEEDS**
 - a. #neighboring
 - ii. And our Great King has gone before us. We only step where's he's already stepped.
 - 1. **And he promises none of the pain will be wasted.**
 - a. He'll make everything worth it when he comes again
 - b. THIS time as victorious King
 - c. Finally defeating all evil and establishing his eternal Kingdom with us
 - i. Heaven and Earth merge when everything is made new
 - ii. No more sin
 - iii. No more death
 - iv. No more pain or sorrow or sickness
 - v. He will wipe away all the tears from our eyes
 - 2. So in light of all this,
 - 3. Paul says in 2 Cor 4

¹⁶So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self^[d] is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ¹⁸as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.
 - iii. What's a next step for you to lean in to humble, sacrificial love?
 - iv. Who is God calling you to love in this way?
- e. **Lean in this Holy Week**
 - i. And come back next Sunday as we celebrate EASTER!

21. QR/Testimonies

- a. What's a next step you're considering taking in response to this teaching?
- b. How have you received humble, sacrificial love from Jesus or his church?