

## COMMUNION SERIES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

### THE TRAGIC ENTRY OF JESUS

John 12:12-19

Understanding Jesus' identity is crucial because your eternal destiny rests on believing the truth about who Jesus is and what He did on the cross. That's why John wrote his Gospel (John 20:31) "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His Name".

If you understand and believe in who Jesus is, you will have eternal life. But if you have false notions about who Jesus is, or false hopes about what He will do for you in this life, at some point you will be disappointed and will fall away from your initial profession of faith.

What do we learn about the so-called "triumphal entry" of Jesus that was actually tragic – not for Him – but for his superficial followers?

#### **1. Don't follow Jesus just for the earthly benefits He provides.**

- The crowd, in shouting "save now!" (Psalm 118:25-26) had in mind political salvation from the oppression of the Romans. But Jesus showed that His purpose was peace by riding a donkey, in fulfillment of prophecy (Zec. 9:9).

*"Doubtless the scene was fraught with potential explosiveness. Jesus could have begun an armed revolt then and there."*

Dr. Donald A. Carson (The Pillar New Testament Commentary)

- Christians individually and churches corporately mobilize politically for this cause or for that personality; to change our government or to change our economy. But very few are interested in a Cross that speaks of dying to self. It's one thing to shout at a rally, and something else altogether to stand at the foot of the Cross.
- John never accords a high place to the crowd's initial positive response to Jesus (Jn. 12:37; 2:23-25; 6:60; 8:30). It is still the same today. Huge crowds are never an indicator that what is being followed is right.
- Your faith will be shaken and perhaps even destroyed if you follow Jesus because of what you think He can give you in terms of financial prosperity, good health, and other temporal benefits. We shouldn't follow Jesus because we think He will give us all the things we want in this life.

## **2. Follow Jesus because He is Savior (Messiah) and Lord (God).**

- a) Fulfilled prophecies prove that Jesus is Savior and Lord: Psalm 118:25-26; Zech. 9:9; Daniel 9:24-27.
  - b) His works of power prove that Jesus is Savior and Lord: John 11:43-45.
  - c) His control of His circumstances prove that Jesus is Savior and Lord.  
Jesus was in control even over His own death. He did not die a helpless victim, but as the willing sacrifice for our sins: Acts 4:27-28.
- Despite all these and in the midst of all these, He who was Messiah and God was weeping (Luke 19:41–44). The nation had wasted its opportunities; their leaders did not know the time of God's visitation. They were ignorant of their own Scriptures.

## **3. You can resist Jesus and succeed temporarily, but you'll lose while He wins eternally.**

- After Jesus' resurrection, the disciples understood for the first time many of the prophecies that they had missed along the way.

Are the Scriptures confusing to you? Do they make no sense? Keep reading; keep studying—for as Jesus is glorified in your life, you will have a greater understanding of Scripture.

- The Pharisees were anticipating some kind of civil revolt during the Passover festival. They did not realize that Jesus was “forcing their hand” so that they would act during the Passover festival, although they wanted to arrest him after the Festival (Mark 14:1-2). The Lamb of God had to give His life simultaneous with the sacrifice of the other Passover lambs (1 Cor. 5:7).

In the future when He enters as King of kings and Lord of lords – that will be His real Triumphant Entry (Revelation 7:9-10).

## **Final Thoughts:**

This entry was tragic not for Jesus, but for His superficial followers. Following Jesus for the wrong reasons can have eternal repercussions.

A superficial relationship with Jesus Christ is one of the most dangerous situations you can ever find yourself in. Of the three groups that were there – a small group with Him, a huge group who heard about Him, a small crowd who disliked Him – only one is in heaven today. Where do you belong?