Mar 29th, 2026
Pastor Dave
The Way of the King

I have flyover passages in my Bible reading

Passages that, when I get to them, I skim over quickly.

I don't mean to, but it kind of happens.

A flyover area is a traveler's term. It's basically all the land mass you fly over to get to your real destination.

You're going from Toronto to Miami or from Toronto to Vancouver.

A flyover area is something you glance at but don't really take time to slow down to appreciate.

A flyover mentality makes us miss things for one reason

Familiarity.

We assume we already know, so we pass by it quickly.

Instead of valuing something, it becomes familiar and taken for granted.

Marriages, work, relationships, church, and parenting become familiar and

We drift into passiveness.

It's our spouse saying, "Why does everyone else get your attention but not us?"

It's our mom saying, "Why don't we talk like we used to?"

It's our boss saying, "You meet requirements.

It's our parents saying, "Why are you always on your phone but never talking to us?"

And underneath all of it is the same drift:

Familiarity… without attention.

Presence… without engagement.

Knowing… without caring.

And if we're not careful,

we don't just do this with people

We do this with Jesus.

Show me your Palm branches, wave them up.

For a lot of us, Palm Sunday is a familiar flyover passage because we assume we know.

Jesus gets on a donkey, cheering crowds, Palm branches,

Hosanna, and on the way to the real thing,

The Cross and the Resurrection of Jesus

It's leading to one of the most significant moments in Christianity, yet we miss the last few feet.

The most dangerous moment for a tightrope walker is the last few feet.

When walking on the rope, they are careful

But at the end, they relax and assume they got it

because look how far they've come and how familiar it all is.

Most fall at these last few steps, sometimes fatally.

We want to carefully examine and come to the end of our sermon series

On the Way with Jesus

where we have journeyed with Jesus as he moves closer to the last few feet of his destination,

Over the last few weeks, we have heard about

Jesus, making his way from the desert in testing, calling, love, and grace,

with one destination in mind, towards Jerusalem.

Jesus' entry and celebration into Jerusalem is the focus of our passage

Today is Luke 19:28-44.

Open your Bibles and let's move through this area together.

Luke 19:28 After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. (NIV)

Jerusalem is called the City of Peace.

The people didn't have the same challenge we have of familiarity drifting into passiveness.

Jesus is brand new to them.

We know the celebration and excitement that is coming.

But here's the tension:

The King is bringing peace on His terms,

while the people are expecting peace on their terms.

Let me say that again, the King is bringing peace on His terms,

while the people are expecting peace on their terms.

In Jewish tradition, that peace is called Shalom.

Shalom is a hugely important word, from the Sabbath of resting on the 7th day,

To greet each other daily

Shalom speaks to a peace that settles the heart

and restores the world.

For the people of Jerusalem, that's the hope.

That's the prayer.

And as Jesus comes near,

That hope is finally being fulfilled.

But peace is not just something to hope for

It's something to recognize.

We're going to walk with Jesus through

The Way of the King as

Peace Arrives to the City of Peace (28-36)

Peace Meets Hope and Resentment (37-40)

Peace Rejected – and Missed (41-44)

Jesus brings shalom to the people of Jerusalem and the world,

and it's a powerful time of celebration.

They want so badly freedom from the oppression of Roman and economic struggle.

The expectation is that the Messiah will give them peace through violence and power.

It's the same peace Rome used on them, at the edge of a sword.

Continuing our passage of v.29

Jesus is about 2 miles outside of Jerusalem in a place called

Bethphage and Bethany

He sends his two disciples to find a donkey with these instructions.

30 "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. 31 If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'" (NIV)

Why a donkey? Not a horse or an elephant or something grander?

Kids, in your pages, if you could choose any animal for Jesus to ride on, what would it be?

Draw a picture of it and show your parents later.

The biblical reason is a mix of things,

One of them is that God likes to use the foolish to frustrate the powerful. As the Humble King.

Second, Jesus is fulfilling a prophecy from the Old Testament

where the Messiah will enter Jerusalem on a donkey as the rightful king.

The disciples go on to find the donkey as Jesus had mentioned.

I've noticed that people like to make a lot or a little of this.

Did Jesus know where the donkey was from his divinity?

Or did he just see it as he was walking by?

The Bible doesn't say either way,

But what it does say is when the owner of the donkeys asks the disciple to reply with

"34 They replied, "The Lord needs it." (NIV)

Let's pause and look at the landscape here.

The Lord, the Messiah, the Maker of the Universe.

Needs.

The Lord Needs It.

A donkey.

Jesus has put himself in a position of needing something.

Willingly, he is taking on dependence.

Why?

Because I think this goes to a truth of Scripture.

God alone creates, but He invites us to make.

God invites us into His purpose and His story.

He needed a coin to illustrate a point,

He needs a donkey to ride into Jerusalem.

He decides to need us to be his body on earth as the church.

Need is not weakness.

He willingly uses things to reveal much more.

God has chosen to say, “I need you.”

Jesus could do things more effectively and better without us

But he willingly takes on a posture that invites us to come alongside.

[36] As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

It’s an honoring of a kingship,

It’s an expression of respect,

The ruler owns the property of all they step on.

As they neared the city,

The disciples and the crowds hit a new level of excitement.

This also moves us into our second area of

Peace Meets Hope and Resentment (37-40)

Kids and grown-ups.

Show me those palm branches again, as I read,

Every time Palm branches or Hosanna shows up, I want you to wave them high.

v.37 When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:
38 "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" (NIV)

Wait a minute!

Make sure we all counted the same number of Hosannas and Palm branches on Palm Sunday.

How many?

Zero

None.

Luke makes no mention of Palm branches or Hosanna,

And before people start angrily throwing out your palm branches.

The other gospels, Matthew and John, both make mention of Palm branches, and shouting the word, Hosanna.

Palm branches and Hosanna are Biblical.

But not in this mention of Luke.

Because Luke wants us to focus differently

He wants us to zoom in on these two phrases and titles.

38 "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!"

During this time of Passover, the messianic excitement ran high.

They call him King.

The King who will overthrow the Romans and lead them into a Jerusalem-Centric Kingdom.

Both the crowd and the disciples are rightfully calling Jesus the King who has come.

But what they are doing is letting their expectations of Jesus decide Jesus.

Tom Wright says it this way

“As we arrive at Jerusalem with Jesus, the question presses upon us.

Are we going along for the trip in the hope that Jesus will fulfil some of our hopes and desires?

Are we ready to sing a psalm of praise, but only as long as Jesus seems to be doing what we want?

The long and dusty pilgrim way of our lives gives most of us plenty of time to sort out our motives for following Jesus in the first place.” Tom Wright

The disciples and the crowds in this moment are cheering Jesus

because He will be the King who makes them Powerful.

Cheer the King, when he makes me strong.

Cheer the King, when he heals sickness.

Cheer the King, when he blesses my work.

Cheer the King, when my family is right.

Crucify Him, when he doesn’t.

Next phrase

“Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

Shalom is here.

Jesus is coming as the Prince of Peace.

Shalom has arrived at Jerusalem with Jesus.

At the same time, two responses collide with each other.

The crowds are full of hope.

The Pharisees are full of resistance.

v. 39 “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”

What one group calls worship, another calls a problem.

Peace stands in their presence.

And the thought is “Silence them.”

The leaders of Israel are fearful of Roman retribution,

They can’t silence the people, but they can try to command Jesus.

Peace isn’t only a comfort, it also confronts.

Jesus doesn’t move to silence but declares louder

v.40 “I tell you, “He replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.” (NIV)

Whether men praise Christ or not

Jesus will, and shall, and must be praised

Even the rocks will cry out.

When people call for Jesus’ irrelevance, or to be disregarded as a fairy tale

Or by some other mystical thing like a genie who grants wishes,

Jesus might have needed a donkey to ride on, but He does not need us to praise.

He is the only one to worship truly,

But if we don’t.

The rocks will cry out instead of us.

The rocks will be better worshippers of Jesus if the followers of Jesus fail to praise him.

The disciples and multitude wished their master to claim a kingdom.

The Pharisees wished him to silence his kingdom.

Jesus claims his kingdom, but unlike any earthly kingdom before or after it.

At the entry into Jerusalem, no one maintains neutrality towards Jesus,

Only enthusiasm on the one, and hatred on the other

It is impossible to stop his Messianic journey.

God’s reign will be established without earthly struggle.

Both are looking at the same Jesus.

But they probably misunderstand what Jesus sees.

41 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it

There are a few instances of Jesus weeping, one was the death of Lazarus, and now.

He wept.

Jesus weeps as we come to our third Peace or lack of it.

Peace Rejected – and Missed

He weeps for a city and its leaders

He looks at Jerusalem and sees a city that missed her King.

He looks and sees hearts filled with hypocrisy and attempts to control God.

He looks and sees a city lost because the people lost their way.

Jesus wept.

Not because He was rejected

but because they did not recognize what would bring them peace.

42 “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace…”

Peace was here.

Peace was offered.

Shalom was within reach.

If only we had seen He who had come to establish his heavenly Kingdom.

That his Kingdom is not about a single city or a single people,

But all people and all tribes, all nations, bridging across differences to do one thing together,

Praise the King of Kings.

42 …but now it is hidden from your eyes.

They missed the King

Jesus looked around and saw religious activity that accomplished very little.

The temple had become a den of thieves, and the religious leaders were out to kill Him.

The city was filled with pilgrims celebrating a festival,

but the hearts of the people were heavy with sin and life's burdens.

They missed that his burden was light, and they missed that peace had arrived.

Because they wanted their expectations, and powers, and hopes more than they wanted shalom.

43 The days will come upon you when your enemies…

Jesus speaks how the days of death and destruction of the city of Jerusalem are coming.

It would take another 40 years for this to come true,

where nearly a million Jewish people lost their lives in a war of rebellion against Rome.

The city, together with its magnificent temple, will be demolished by its enemies,

And the cause of the failure is

44 "because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you"

There are some graphic images mentioned in these verses, because this is a time of weeping.

The tears of Jesus show us the heart of God towards us and those caught up in the ways of sin

He weeps over the injustice of death and war.

He weeps as little men use his name to rule and conquer others.

He weeps as churches and people harden their hearts to each other and to His Way

Our hard hearts that reject him for the sake of power, or fame, or pride, or passiveness.

Jesus is not condemning them for not following Him,

He is weeping over them because they trust anything else except Him to save themselves.

My friends, do not miss that.

Jesus is not here to destroy you; he is for you.

But not for you to build your personal kingdom of expectations and desires.

He is inviting you to join a heavenly kingdom,

Join a family and a nation beyond any borders or walls, or single people.

The twist is that at first, people were with him

because they wanted him to destroy their enemies.

We failed to see that Jesus' kingdom is not of this earth,

Not shaped by the movements of this world,

but stands above and independent in heaven.

Yet at the same moment, so intertwined in earth, he weeps over it.

He was not here to establish a Jewish-Messianic Kingdom with violence,

but to establish a universal and spiritual kingdom of God based upon Himself.

If you haven't joined in The Way of the King, come to him today.

Praise him rightly as the one who brings peace and put your faith in him

The people lost faith in him, so they turned to execution.

The city of peace rejects the Prince of Peace.

And in doing so, moves from celebration…

to blindness…

to loss

Peace isn't something we celebrate; it's something we recognize.

It's someone we recognize.

The question is not whether Jesus brings it

but whether we recognize Him as the One who does.

Because we aren't different from the crowd or the Pharisees.

We know the story.

We know the songs.

We know the language.

And yet, familiarity dulls our response.

We can cheer Jesus…

as long as He meets our expectations.

We can follow Jesus…

As long as He fits our plans.

But the moment He confronts us,

The moment He doesn't meet what we want

We drift.

Not always into rejection,

but into something just as dangerous:

Passive Familiarity

Jesus sees the danger.

Standing over Jerusalem.

Looking at people who are celebrating…

and completely missing what matters most.

He's not shouting or judging them in condemnation.

He's weeping.

Because they don't see it.

They don't recognize Him.

They don't understand what would bring them peace.

And the question for us is simple:

Are we seeing what they missed?

Or have we become so familiar with Jesus

that we no longer recognize Him?

Because peace is not found in getting what we expect.

It is found in receiving who He is.

The King who comes humbly.

The Savior who brings a different kingdom.

That goes across all differences to unite us under Him.

The Lord who goes to the cross—not to meet our expectations,

but to rescue us from our sin and establish a new kingdom.

Don’t let this be a flyover moment.

Slow down.

Look again.

Recognize Him.

Accept Him.

And He’s still inviting us

not just to celebrate Him,

but to truly see Him.

Don’t miss Jesus…

because you thought you already knew Him.

Jesus didn’t give up on Jerusalem,

No one else would weep for a people He knew would not only reject Him but also crucify Him

He doesn’t give up on me; and He won’t give up on you