

**Luke 19: 28-44; “The Approach to the Cross”, A Palm Sunday Sermon
Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on April 1st, 2012, in the Morning
Worship Service, before the Lord’s Supper was taken.**

Luke chapter 19 is the chapter of visitation. In verses 1-10 we find the Lord Jesus visiting the house of Zacchaeus and visiting him with salvation. In verses 11-27 we have the parable of the minas. We find the Lord Jesus visiting his servants to look in on whether they had been faithful with the spiritual resources entrusted to them in the Word and the grace given to each servant. In verses 28-44 we find that Jerusalem, the Jewish nation taken collectively under that city's name did not know the time of their visitation. What was it that Christ came to bring that Jerusalem did not recognize? We find the answer in the verses that we have just read. But the time of Christ's visitation is important not only for the people of that day but for us here this morning as well. In verse 42 Jesus says, "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." This tells us that Christ's visits are not to be taken for granted or ignored. For each of us has a day called life. In this day we have the preaching of the gospel and the blessed truth of God all around us. If we do not respond to the promptings of God's Holy Spirit urging us to obey the gospel and obey His Word, we must understand that the day of grace will someday come to an end, and only judgment will remain. But Christ visits men with His teaching and His grace that we might recognize our need for salvation. And, for those of us who are Christians, He visits us that He might evaluate what we have done with the grace and the truth that He gives to us. If we do nothing we will prove ourselves to be wicked servants. If, however, we believe in His words and act upon them, then He shall be pleased with us and when He returns we will hear the "Well done, you good and faithful servant." "Enter in to the joy of your Lord." What then, does the Lord want us to recognize even in this our day, that Jerusalem did not recognize in that day? When Christ came to do His greatest work, His work of redeeming men; in His drawing near to the time of His suffering work on the cross, He visited the people of that day with 3 attitudes which deserve our recognition of them and our response to them. As we will be coming to the Lord's Table in a few minutes, let us pray to have Christ by His mighty grace give to us these same attitudes in the way that we go about to live our life before Him and before other men.

1st of all – We see that He visited men with a true humility.

(Verses 28-36)

He said to His disciples in verse 30, "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." "And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you losing it?', thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.'" The Lord knew all of these things

without ever having to go there Himself. He knew all things and yet He used His knowledge humbly and wisely. We see His humility evidenced in the choices which He made on this particular day. We see it in His deliberate choice to humble Himself with regard to His prescience; that is His Omniscience with regard to the future, and His ability to know beforehand all about various situations of things and people. He knew that the colt was tied where it was, and the question that would come from the owner. If anyone might have been able to show off His knowledge in this regard, it was the Lord Jesus. But it never was so with Him. And in speaking and acting humbly in this way, He set the perfect example for His disciples. He had more knowledge of things and people than any man ever had, yet He used His great knowledge by making it subservient to His obedience to God. Let me ask you if this is true of you? Does your knowledge of the Scriptures, your knowledge of the things of this world and people around you, lead you to a greater humility? Does it lead you, further yet, to think more about what it will mean for you to do God's will in the various situations that you encounter? If you are pursuing righteousness, and Jesus was perfectly righteous and therefore the highest example of this to you, you will pray to visit others with your humility and not with your pride of knowledge. His humility on this day led Him ultimately to choose to come into Jerusalem not on a war horse, but on a colt the foal of a donkey. Jesus, coming into Jerusalem, would fulfill the scripture in Zechariah 9: 9 which says, "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold your king is coming to you - lowly - sitting on a donkey.'" Yes, He was just and endowed with salvation." And, yes, He knew the purpose for which the Father had sent Him into the world. But He went about to fulfill God's purposes in perfect humility. He knew that the only way for sinners to be saved was by humbling Himself and becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Ask yourself this morning whether you humble yourself to become obedient to the things which are written in the Bible which the Lord would have you to keep and to do?

The people who were following Him it says in verse 11 of this chapter "thought that the kingdom of God would appear immediately." But Jesus knew that suffering must come to Himself so that He could atone for the sins of God's people. And so, Jesus sent two of His disciples into the village of Bethpage where He knew they would find a colt tied. This was the foal of a donkey on which no man had ever sat. Jesus knew all these small but important details. His coming to Jerusalem must picture what His intent was, and what His kingdom was to be like. He made the choice of this animal because His intent was not to set up an earthly kingdom, but to bring men into the heavenly kingdom. This could only be accomplished by His humbly submitting to the cross; not riding up to it on a horse or in a chariot, but upon a colt, the foal of a donkey. He came to establish His kingdom by fulfilling all the righteousness of God's holy law. He the king would in this holy way become the servant and die for His subjects. He would be meek and lowly and submit to the punishment which they deserved. This was His passive

obedience. He was endowed with salvation because He was and had been righteous in all His ways before God and men. He would submit to become the sacrificial lamb who would take away the sins of the world. He would ride on toward Jerusalem on this lowly animal. It would be His active obedience to move deliberately, but humbly to the cross. The Lord Jesus had been actively obedient all through His life; everything that He had done before this had qualified Him to be passively obedient at the cross, to submit to these sufferings on behalf of sinners like ourselves.

As you will soon come to partake of the bread and wine, will you not remember this truth? Remember what great humility it took for the Lord Jesus to willingly and lovingly humble Himself to purchase your salvation; to ride on the donkey on which no man had ever sat. No one could have humbled Himself like this, either before or since. No one has ever been born sinless but Jesus. No one has lived sinlessly except Jesus. No sacrifice on any man's part could purchase the forgiveness of sins and an eternal inheritance, but that of Jesus. No righteousness of mere man could be imputed to us as a robe of righteousness to cover all of our sins and all of obedience where it falls short of the glory of God, except that of Jesus. The Lord had need of this donkey. He had need of him to show forth the fact that His kingdom would be for those who would receive Him as the meek and lowly One, going to the cross to die for sinners, even though He was the King of glory. When you behold the glory of His humility, you can see where the grace to save you comes from. You also see where the grace to change you, in the attitudes of your heart, comes from. He who came in this lowly fashion would have you, when you receive His grace, to pray to come to embrace and live out this same humility in your life. You who are Christians have come to know that Jesus is your Savior for He was willing to take the lowly place for you. Those of you who may be unsure of your salvation or perhaps lacking in assurance; What is your response to Him now, when you see that He rode into Jerusalem on this lowly means of conveyance? Will you not this day cry out in your heart, "Hosanna to the Son of David?" Hosanna means, "Save Lord, I beseech Thee." You are saying, "I approve of your having taken this lowly position for me." Are you waving the palm branches of surrender in your heart? Are you willing to spread your garments in His way as He passes by? Are you giving Him the glory that is due His name? Are you saying, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." "Blessed Jesus, come to my heart. Jesus visited men with a true humility then, and He can visit your heart today, right now, and lead you by His grace to a true humility.

Secondly- we see that Jesus visited men with a true willingness.

(Verses 37-40)

The willingness of Jesus was a willingness to be recognized for who He was and what He had done. This did not conflict with His humility. His humility caused Him to always seek for the glory of His Father. John 8: 29 says, "He who sent me is with me, the Father has not left me alone, for I always do those things

which please the Father." It was not pride or a desire for recognition or to obtain the approval of men that motivated Jesus. It was a desire to see God praised and God glorified. He approved of the whole multitude of the disciples rejoicing and praising God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen. He was willing to be praised as the blessed King who comes in the name of the Lord. The crowd saw His willingness to teach them and to heal them. They did not know of His willingness to die for them. His humility concealed it from them. His love would prove it very shortly. But He was unwilling to rebuke His disciples when they praised Him and when they praised His Father. "Teacher- Rebuke your disciples," say some of the Pharisees. They think that to praise God for Jesus and His works is wrong. A legalist always will. The legalist does not see His need of a humble suffering Savior. He believes that his being religious in a moral sense, will justify him before God. This man Jesus cannot claim deity they think. He is just a teacher. He is not God made manifest in the flesh. He cannot bring in the Kingdom of God. He cannot take away sins. He cannot give eternal life. But Jesus' reply is a rebuke to them. He does have a true willingness to rebuke error and unbelief. "I tell you, that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out." A heart that knows Jesus must praise God. Charles Spurgeon once said: "A proud heart will never praise God, for it hoards up praise for itself". A true heart cannot keep praise back, and the Lord Jesus commends it Himself. Let me ask you this morning, do you have a heart to praise God? Do you praise the Lord Jesus for coming in the name of the Lord to fulfill prophecy, to make an end of transgression and sin by willingly going to the cross on your behalf? Do you have a willingness to praise God? If you do, it is because you have seen the willingness of Jesus to be your sin-bearer. If we will not praise Him, the stones will cry out. Let us now come down to the front and partake of His Supper remembering these things.

Then 3rdly - Jesus visited men with a true compassion.

(Verses 41-44)

Here we find exhibited before our eyes something of the tender mercies of our God toward even the non-Elect. We see His sympathy and His love toward the lost, the perishing sinners who had rejected Him or who were about to reject Him. Jesus, who had just been praised and blessed by the multitude of the disciples knew and perceived how fickle the human heart is and how quickly some who praised Him that day would perhaps be crying "crucify Him" tomorrow. And yet, His tears are not for Himself. Not one tear of Jesus is shed for Himself. They are all for perishing sinners. When it says He wept, the English translation doesn't convey well what the Greek means. It means that He sobbed, He cried loudly, He lamented the fact that they had not believed in Him. They had not received Him as a nation. He cried because they did not know the things which made for their peace. What brings peace to our souls is when we listen to the words of Jesus and act upon them. When we shut our ears to His teachings, when we neglect to act

upon what the preacher and our Bibles tell us will bring peace, then the time will come when the things of peace will be hidden from our eyes.

There may be some here this morning who have not entered in to Covenant with Christ. I plead with you not to continue to think that gospel preaching is boring and has no relevance to you. You will not think it boring if you perish in your sins and are crying out in hell. No it will be of excruciating and tormenting interest for all eternity to realize that Christ wept over perishing sinners; that He would have gathered you under His wings, but you would not. Will you not see that this gospel is set forth for you, even, in the Lord's Supper? We show forth His death til He comes. If you do not know Christ you should not take this Supper, but even now, if you believe in Him He will save you and you shall dine with Him spiritually in your soul. This gospel which I preach to you today comes to you from the crucified hands of One who intends it for your everlasting good in His offering it to you this day. Christ Himself has a greater care and concern for the soul of each one here than all of us put together. He was and is a Divine Person. He felt with the perfect feelings, the anguishing consequences of the rejection of these people, and He knew that Jerusalem would be destroyed, that it would be leveled to the ground. He knew that even the mothers and the children would die as well because they did not recognize the day of His visitation to them. God was with them, and many would refuse Him and would not listen. They would finally agree that it was right that Jesus be crucified. It was not right, but Jesus knew that it was most necessary for you who will have Him as your Savior and Lord.

What will your response be today, my hearers? Will not those of you who know the Lord see how deeply compassionate our Lord was towards sinners? Will you not pray, even now, to learn to feel for perishing sinners and learn to weep over their lost state? Some of us are far too intellectual about our perishing relatives and friends. We coldly wonder if God has not chosen them before the foundation of the world, but if we are to be more like Christ, and truly see and feel where their sin will take them; will it not cause us to weep for them? I can remember in the height of my rebellion in sin, when my opposition to my Father's trying to tell me about Christ was the greatest; that was when he cried over me the most. He cried over me when I did not deserve to be cried over. He prayed for me when I was not worth any further consideration. As you partake of the Supper and are confessing your sins and asking for grace to live more for Christ's glory, also ask Him for the strength to speak to those around you about Christ, the only way to eternal life; the only hope for those who are perishing. Let not your faith be silent and hidden. Let your lips speak the praise of our text, "Blessed be King Jesus who came in the Name of the Lord." He came in humility, He came willingly, He came compassionately to your heart. He came to bring you peace, and to bring you to heaven. He came to show you His glory and change you to live for it. Praise be to the Savior!