

Between \$5.1 and \$5.3 million – that’s what one 30 second ad costs for the big game tonight. It’s a stunning number. Some of us will watch the Super Bowl for the commercials or to maybe, see the Patriots lose.

When the Patriots face the Rams tonight, hungry sports fans in the Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta will have plenty of food options but Chick-fil-A (**picture**) won’t be one of them...in spite of the fact Chick-fil-A has a location right inside the stadium. Chick-fil-A won’t be open today, standing behind a decades-old policy that its stores close on Sundays in order to observe a day of rest. As Chick-fil-A’s website states, “*Our founder, Truett Cathy (**picture**), made the decision to close on Sundays in 1946 when he opened his first restaurant in Hapeville, Georgia. Having worked seven days a week in restaurants open 24 hours, Truett saw the importance of closing on Sundays so that he and his employees could set aside one day to rest and worship if they choose — a practice we uphold today.*”

It’s not a smart business decision. Failure to capitalize on the opportunity to sell food during a blockbuster event like the Super Bowl, when all 71,000 seats will be filled, means that they’re missing a major business opportunity. It was a decision though made by a humble Christ-follower early in his life.

Truett Cathy (**picture**) was a model of what a Christ-follower in business should be like. He often spoke of how, having very little as a child, was a blessing and taught him to value simple things. He had reasons to grow up embittered at his lot in life, but he didn’t. As a believer, he had a biblical worldview which creates a humble heart that seeks to serve others. It was manifested in his life not only at Chick-fil-A, but demonstrated through the many philanthropic efforts he established and led. You can’t describe his life without the words “*service to others.*” You can’t truly serve others without an attitude of humility. His Mom ran a boardinghouse. Seeing her care for her boarders sowed seeds of caring for others in his heart. He had a reputation for having a huge heart for his employees and others.

Just one example – Eddie White, a teenager working in the Dwarf House, Truett Cathy’s 1st restaurant, in the 1950s, hoped to attend college, but couldn’t afford it. Waitresses put an empty mayonnaise jar labeled “Eddie’s College Fund” on the counter for customers to fill up. In the fall of 1955, when it was time to start college, the jar hadn’t collected enough, so Truett wrote a check for the difference, his first scholarship.

Eddie White (**picture**) completed college, then went on to become an educator and ultimately an assistant superintendent in a local school system. Truett Cathy always had a heart for young people. For 50 years he taught a Sunday School class of 13-year-old boys at 1st Baptist Church of Jonesboro, and became a mentor to dozens of them. He was a humble servant of God.

A humble leader, whether in business or politics, is highly unusual. Today we’re studying **The Triumphal Entry of the Humble King**, as we continue our series in Luke’s Gospel, please turn to Luke 19:28-48 (p. 878).

Jesus was a new kind of leader, a new kind of King. He’s a humble king. Pilate or Caesar wouldn’t have entered Jerusalem as He does. He operated from a different plan, a divine one. While Luke’s account of the Triumphal Entry has a kingdom touch, the Lord Jesus rode into Jerusalem as a humble king—a king who just six days later would be crucified on a Roman cross.

Our Lord is at the end of His journey, one which began nine months earlier as he purposefully began a zigzag through Galilee, Samaria and finally Judea and Jerusalem. During this final journey Jesus ministered in at least 35 localities, timing His journey just right to end up in Jerusalem for the Passover. There’s divine design in His Triumphal Entry. Jesus is fulfilling the promise of the Old Testament Scriptures.

In his book, *And the Angels were Silent*, Max Lucado (**picture**) writes, “*Forget any suggestion that Jesus was trapped. Erase any theory that Jesus made a miscalculation. Ignore any speculation that the cross was a last-ditch attempt to salvage a dying mission. For if these words tell us anything, they tell us that Jesus died...on purpose. No surprise. No hesitation. No faltering. No, the journey to Jerusalem didn’t begin in Jericho. It didn’t begin in Galilee. It didn’t even begin in Bethlehem. The journey to the cross began long before. As the echo of the crunching of the fruit was still sounding in the garden, Jesus was leaving for Calvary.*”

The Messiah was to be a Prophet, Priest and King. Three different kinds of people in the Old Testament take center stage in the story of God’s salvation for His people Israel: **Prophet, Priest** and **King**. Jesus fulfills all three offices. All three are found in this passage in Luke. For some of you though, this is unfamiliar turf, so let me briefly unpack it for you.

In the Old Testament these were three offices filled by real people. **Prophets** rebuked sin, proclaimed mercy, prophesied and interpreted events. Moses occupied the office of a prophet, bringing about genuine redemption. **Priests** functioned as representatives of the people, offering sacrifices for sins on behalf of them to God. Aaron, as the 1st High Priest, offered up sacrifices for forgiveness of sins. **Kings** exercised judicial power in the civil realm and were often military figures who led military campaigns. King David established a dynasty and his descendant would someday rule again. Jesus is that descendant (Matthew 1), the promised coming King and Messiah. He’s Prophet, Priest and King. But Jesus isn’t what we

expect. More importantly, He wasn't what the Jews were looking for. It's **The Triumphal Entry of the Humble King**. If you're taking notes...

1. Jesus comes as the humble King, vss. 28-40. When a conquering king entered a city after a war, he'd ride on a horse or something more impressive. Julius Caesar returned to Rome in 45 B.C. in a golden chariot harnessed to 40 elephants. But whenever a king entered a city on a donkey, it was a sign that he was coming in peace.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, Israel was occupied by Rome. The Jews were looking for a military Messiah to overthrow the Romans. Jesus intentionally rode a donkey to show that He was coming in peace. He wasn't a revolutionary; He's the Redeemer. A *revolutionary* kills others for his cause, a *redeemer* dies for others.

Jesus sent His disciples to fetch a particular colt. This young donkey had never been ridden. The fact it didn't react or attempt to throw Jesus off demonstrates His power over creation. I'm not sure if it was Jesus' omniscience or some miracle that He knew exactly where this donkey was. It could have all been pre-arranged with the owners knowing His plan. Ironically, this animal that'd never carried a burden was carrying the One Who'd carry on Himself the full weight of all of the sins of all mankind.

Until this point Jesus has avoided public acclaim. Not anymore. Now He embraces it. He's at the front of this "Easter Parade," making a blatant and unambiguous statement to the world—a claim that He is indeed the only Son of God—sent to usher in His eternal kingdom.

A colt was chosen in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy about the Messiah. 500 years earlier the Prophet Zechariah predicted, "*Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! See your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey*" (Zechariah 9:9). Jesus was from the royal tribe, the Tribe of Judah. As the Patriarch Jacob was dying, he prophesied of Judah's descendants, the royal tribe, "*Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine*" (Gen. 49:11). This is that colt.

Yet, it's just one of 456 Messianic prophecies found in the Old Testament. In His birth, life, death and resurrection Jesus fulfilled not only this prophecy, but every single one of the Messianic prophecies. Through His prophets God made sure we'd know exactly who the real Messiah is.

If you're a skeptic, let me challenge you – you must find a way to somehow answer all of Jesus' "*prophetic DNA*." It's a lot of "chance" that you have to answer in one person, that one individual matches all of these prophecies. It's like an episode of from a TV crime show where the police find their killer by matching his DNA to the victim. That matching removes all doubt.

A poorly dressed Jesus is on a borrowed donkey with a tattered coat as His saddle with crowds of peasants surrounding Him. Catholic theologian Romano Guardini (**picture**) says the very thought of this image hurts, but that's how it was. **Jesus comes as the humble King**, when the Son of God came to die on the cross for the sins of the whole world.

Not only does Jesus show his humility in the way He *rides* into Jerusalem, His humility is seen even more emphatically in the *reason* He rides into Jerusalem. Throughout Luke, Jesus has said that He must go to Jerusalem (9:51; 13:22). The reason He "*must go to Jerusalem*" was that He must die on the cross. He's going to Jerusalem so everything written about Him in the prophets would be accomplished, He'd be delivered to the Gentiles and crucified. On the 3rd day He'd rise again. Jesus' humility is mind boggling. The promised King came to Jerusalem to suffer for our sins. What a different kind of king than the world has ever known.

Do you love a parade? Last October after the Red Sox won the World Series, there was a parade through Boston (**pictures**). After the Super Bowl today there will be a parade and a celebration (hopefully, in L.A.).

Jesus entry is a huge parade. The time of His entry into Jerusalem is very significant. It's an important week in the Jewish calendar. It's Passover when the Jews sacrificed a lamb and remembered God's deliverance from Egypt. Jesus as God's Lamb was going to be sacrificed to deliver us from sin.

Crowds of traveling pilgrims came to Jerusalem for this annual event. Religious fervor was high. Jerusalem and the surrounding area were packed. A million slept in the open air. As many as 100,000 may have been lining the streets as Jesus enters the city. Part of the Messianic hope was that God would send a Deliverer for His people. Here comes Jesus, a prophet widely known for His miracles and teaching, riding a donkey on the road to Jerusalem with His disciples and a growing crowd. There was already wide conjecture that Jesus might be the Messiah. As He enters Jerusalem at the beginning of holy week, Jesus presents Himself as Messiah.

It's amazing how Jesus is greeted. The throng cries out, "*Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!*" Let me suggest **three gifts noted in our text**.

The first one was the colt. The owners didn't question the disciples after they were told the Lord needed it. They gladly gave what rightfully belonged to Him in the first place. A donkey was a prized possession. It functioned like a tractor, a family car and even a shopping cart. A person's wealth was measured by what livestock he owned. But Jesus created this colt. It was His already. God wants us to release what is His back to Him.

A donkey is a plain, kinda ugly animal. Nobody calls a donkey beautiful. Back then, horses were the Ferraris; a donkey was a Kia. Maybe you think, “God doesn’t need me. I’m just an ugly, old mule.” My friend, you don’t know 1 Corinthians 1:27: “*God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong—so that no one could boast before Him.*” God loves to use what the world disdains to serve Him, so that He receives all the glory.

What made this donkey special was, “*The Lord needs him.*” Today Jesus is looking at you with eyes of love, saying, “I need you.” As He created this colt for a special purpose, He has a purpose for your life. You’ll only discover that purpose in Jesus. Please surrender and let Him use you!

They gave what they had. The disciples put their cloaks on the colt as a saddle. “*As He went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.*” The crowd laid down their own cloaks for a donkey to walk on for Jesus. It’d be like rolling out the red carpet today. They didn’t have a red carpet but they gave what they had. That’s all that ever God asks – give what you have!

The crowd gave their praise. This is the only time that Jesus permitted a public demonstration on His behalf. Before He’d stopped followers from publicly praising Him. It’s similar to what the angels said when Jesus was born. Yet, now it’s not “*peace on earth*” but “*peace in heaven.*” Jesus came to die so we could have “*peace in heaven.*” It’s only when we accept Him as our King that we have peace with God, so there can ultimately be peace on earth. It’s a direct quote from Psalm 118, which was part of the *Hallel*, a section of the Psalms sung during the Passover meal.

The phrase “*comes in the name of the Lord*” means the arrival of Jesus is according to the promise of God. By shouting this psalm, they’re declaring that Jesus is the sent King who comes with the authority of God. Matthew 21:9 tells us they included the word, “*Hosanna*” which means “*save now.*”

As this celebration takes place, the *grumpy group*, the Pharisees go to Jesus telling Him, “*Teacher, rebuke your disciples!*” It’s the last time the Pharisees are mentioned in Luke. They knew the crowd was declaring Jesus as the Messiah, so they tell Him to reject the claim and rebuke His followers.

I love our Lord’s answer, “*if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.*” In the Greek to “*cry out*” means “*to shriek, scream or exclaim.*” If the disciples don’t praise Him, all of creation will break out in a chorus of praise. Jesus is saying, “*If I stop them from singing, then a rock concert is going to break out!*” When sin entered this world, all of creation was cursed and groans, waiting for Jesus to restore it (Romans 8:22). Creation longs to praise God!

Are you living a life of praise? Or, have you allowed someone to silence your praise? Praising the Lord isn’t just for church. Praise is to be a constant attitude. In fact, if you don’t praise the Lord *out* there, and come *in* here and praise the Lord, you’re a hypocrite. A life of praise must be a daily attitude. Determine to praise the Lord, even if some Pharisees tell you to pipe down.

2. Jesus comes as the brokenhearted Prophet. Pick it up in vs. 41-44. Recently, elected Congresswoman, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortes (**picture**) said she thinks that there’s a needed urgency to address climate change, warning it will “*destroy the planet*” in 12 years if we don’t address the issue. Many blew it off as a silly rant. The fact is that she doesn’t know, but neither do we. Yet, when Jesus prophesied about the coming destruction, He knew exactly what He was talking about.

Jesus doesn’t weep. This is what we’d call a “*lament.*” He literally sobs. He’s brokenhearted over what’s going to happen. The coming destruction of Jerusalem is inevitable. It will be a complete destruction. The use of the pronoun *you* or *your* 15 times indicates that it’s very personal for Jesus.

The more spiritual light that you have, the more responsible you are. The Jews had a completed Old Testament. They should have known that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Not only did they reject Christ, the murdered Him – committing Deicide. John 1:11, “*He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him.*” That’s why they fell under God’s judgement.

Jesus sobbed over Jerusalem. He knew they were on a collision course with judgement, but so are we. Western Civilization has had more spiritual light than most places in the world. America has had much more spiritual light, than most of the globe, but we’ve rejected it.

Many of you, like me, were horrified by a new law and the ensuing celebration (**picture**) in New York for the murder of children. A child can now be legally aborted in New York moments before birth. Our liberal abortion laws put us in the same category as few other countries, two of which are China and North Korea. 17 million were murdered by the Nazis in the Holocaust. Since 1973, America has aborted 60 million. How can God not judge America? Our nation’s hands are covered with blood.

In 40 years it happened. Jerusalem was under siege for 5 months. It so angered the Romans that the destruction was like nothing ever seen. The streets ran red with blood. Every Jew was killed, except leaders or strong individuals that the Romans captured to be crucified or to be used for entertainment in gladiatorial games. Caesar wanted the devastation to be so complete no one would ever believe Jerusalem had once been inhabited. It was so horrible that Josephus (**picture**)

the Jewish historian, records that Titus the victorious Roman general, *“threw his arms heavenward, uttered a groan, and called God to witness that this was not his doing.”*

Jesus sobbed over Jerusalem. God is brokenhearted by sin and man’s impending judgement. If Jesus sobbed over Jerusalem, shouldn’t we be brokenhearted for those who don’t know Christ? Shouldn’t we have a world vision and compassion? Too often our values are skewed. Let me illustrate.

Take Islam. We’re horrified by Isis and the Twin Towers, as we should be. But from God’s perspective, the greater horror is 1.5 billion Muslims in the world today going to a Christless eternity. That’s the true horror of Islam.

This isn’t the last chapter. Jesus sobbed over Jerusalem, but God always has the last Word! When Christ returns, Israel will recognize Him as their Messiah. Let me read what Scripture says will happen at the next triumphal entry at the 2nd Coming of Christ: *“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace. They will look on me, the One they have pierced and mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child...if someone asks Him, ‘what are these wounds in your hands?’ He will answer, ‘the wounds I was given in the house of my friends’”* (Zechariah 12:10; 13:6). When Israel sees the nail prints in Jesus’ hands, they’ll recognize Him as their Messiah. They’ll do the sobbing then, but it will be a time of great grace and healing as they acknowledge Him as their true King. Whatever happens in this world, don’t be afraid my friend. God is in control! Jesus will reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

3. Jesus comes as the righteous Priest. *“And He entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, saying to them, ‘It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a den of robbers.”*

Have you ever seen a table flipped over? It’s a violent act. Mark adds, *“He overturned the tables of the money-changers”* (10:15). Jesus as the God-man has strong emotions like us because we’re *Imago Dei*, “made in the image of God.” The word for “drive out” is the same word for casting out demons.

At the destruction of Jerusalem Jesus is brokenhearted. Now facing grievous sin, He demonstrates righteous anger. Jesus is the meekest, gentlest person that ever lived. He said of Himself, *“I am gentle and lowly in heart”* (Mt. 11:29). Meekness is not weakness. It’s power under control. Meekness has the strength to not defend itself, as Jesus did not defend Himself when He went to the cross, but it has the strength to boldly defend others.

Not only was business taking place, it was dishonest business, abusing those who came to worship. Special money had to be used to buy a sacrifice and the Temple authorities set the exchange rate. What made it particularly vile is that it was taking place in the Court of the Gentiles, the only place a non-Jew, a seeker of God, could worship. It was the exploitation of seekers. Instead of *praying* for the people, they were *preying* on them. This part of the Temple was designed for Gentile evangelism.

It’s very serious to be an obstacle to someone coming to Christ. It angers God. We must be very careful about being obstacles. There’s no place where it’s easier to be an obstacle than when it comes to money. In our business dealings, we blunder if we’re more focused on financial gain, sacrificing our ethical edge. We become like these money changers. It’s a dangerous place.

That’s why we must warn naïve Christians about those who minister only for the money. It’s troubling when so called “ministers,” like many of the televangelists, live in opulence. It’s why at Grace, we seek to be ethical and aboveboard when it comes to our church’s finances.

This dramatic confrontation brings Luke’s Gospel full circle. The Gospel of Luke began in the temple, when the angel appeared to Zechariah in the holy place announcing John the Baptist’s birth. Jesus was at the temple several times. Shortly after His birth, He’s dedicated there. At twelve, He dialogued with the scribes. Now at the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus comes to the temple for the last time. His coming fulfills Malachi’s prophecy, *“And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple”* (3:1).

Today we don’t have a physical temple to go to worship in. The New Testament says that our body is God’s temple. *“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body”* (1 Cor. 6:19-20). It’s why we’re to seek to be holy as He is holy with these earth suits. The Holy Spirit resides within us.

Maybe Jesus has upended some tables in your life? Has He stopped you in your tracks in a way that shocked or upset you? Maybe, you were just going about your business, making a living, providing for your family, even attending church regularly. You weren’t doing anything flagrantly sinful. But one day Jesus stepped up to your life, took hold of it, and with a sudden jerk, everything was upended. His authority suddenly confronted the self-oriented direction of your life. Perhaps, like these men, your immediate reaction was, *“Who do You think You are to upset my life like this? By what authority do You do this to me?”* We must remember Who owns our temple?

Jesus wants His temple to once again be a *“house of prayer.”* That’s what it becomes, vs. 47, *“And He was teaching daily in the temple.”* Jesus cleans up the temple and it becomes His pulpit and base for His Jerusalem ministry. The cleansing of the temple served several purposes; to honor His Father; the salvation of sinners; preparing it as a place where

Jesus could teach the people the things of God. The crowd are literally hanging on His every word. Jesus purifies and occupies the temple, using it as a place to teach Truth.

Though Jesus is angry over sin, the religious leaders are angry with Jesus. *“The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy Him, but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on His words.”*

Not everyone loved to hear Him. The religious leaders wanted to killed Him. All their religion didn't make them godly. They opposed everything He stood for. It's why today we're not interested in making anyone religious. We want to make people aware that they're sinners and that Jesus is the only Savior and is willing to save all of us from our sin. As Simeon prophesied at His birth (Luke 2:34-35), Jesus is the cause of division in Israel.

Conclusion: Jesus comes as the humble King. He comes as the brokenhearted Prophet and comes as the righteous Priest. As we tie this up, let's close with some **Take Home Truths**.

You'll never know peace until you surrender to King Jesus! The Jews thought liberation from Rome would give them peace, but only Jesus could give them peace. He's the only One who can give you peace. Peace is not the absence of conflict. It's power in the midst of trouble. Jesus said, *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled and do not be afraid”* (John 14:27)

Rejection of Christ ends in terrible judgement! The destruction of Jerusalem was the consequence that Israel experienced for rejecting Jesus as Messiah. If you spend your entire life, and never recognize Jesus is Lord and that He is your only hope for salvation, you'll experience the same kind of terrible judgement. You'll be eternally separated from God for all eternity. But God loves you and has given you many opportunities to receive His Son as your Savior. Today is another chance. Will you trust Him today?

What breaks Jesus' heart should break our hearts! Jesus saw the spiritual blindness in Jerusalem and sobbed. When was the last time you wept over our city? When was the last time you wept over a lost family member or friend? We won't have an eternal impact until we are so burdened that we brokenhearted for those without Jesus. Will you start praying, *“God break my heart for those around me that are blinded to the truth about Jesus”*?

The saddest words in this passage are in verse 44. The people of Israel didn't recognize the time of God's coming. Jesus claimed to be their King but they didn't recognize Him, so they didn't receive Him. Is that you? Is Jesus reaching out to you but you don't recognize Him?

Joshua Bell (**picture**) is one of the most gifted concert violinists in the world today. In 2007, *The Washington Post* did an experiment. They got Joshua Bell to play his violin at the entrance of a subway stop in D.C., but Bell dressed in tattered blue jeans, a T-shirt, sneakers and a baseball cap as he played his violin at the subway entrance. Without a saying a word to anyone, he put his violin case on the ground, took out his violin – a million-dollar Stradivarius – and proceeded to play some of the most beautiful music ever written for the violin.

He played for 45 minutes. Just three days earlier, he'd had played to a full house in Boston's Symphony Hall, where good seats went for \$100. But on this day in the subway he collected a mere \$32.17 for his “concert,” contributed by only 27 of 1,097 passing travelers. Only seven people even stopped to listen and only one of them recognized that it was Joshua Bell, the great violinist. His music hadn't changed. He just looked different than people expected. But they walked right on by as if he wasn't there.

Jesus didn't come in all of His glory the first time. He came as a humble king. But even His own people didn't recognize Him.

My friend, Jesus has come. He's here. He's God. He's the King. Do you recognize Him? Have you opened the door of your heart and asked Him to come in and be your King and Savior?