

## "When Heart Meets Mind" 04.01.12

Scripture: Luke 19:37-48

**Intro:** This weekend we celebrate Palm Sunday. This is the day that Jesus and his followers triumphantly entered Jerusalem. On the one hand it was a day of spontaneous celebration. On top of all the other miracles of healing people and feeding people by the thousands, Jesus had just raised a man from the dead! A man who had been dead for 4 days! You can imagine that word spread fast and people came from miles around to see Jesus. On the other hand it was a day of planned activity. Jesus purposefully re-entered Jerusalem even though he knew that the religious leaders there had it in for him and was planning on killing him. Jesus deliberately planned to ride on the back of a donkey to fulfill prophecy about him being the messiah. There's lots happening on this day we call Palm Sunday.

Yet as I read the account in Luke 19 this week in my study time, I discovered something new... at least for me. I discovered an emotional Jesus. **That's the first thing we learn today...**

### #1. Jesus served His Father with all of his EMOTIONS.

This was not a Jesus who was going through the motions. Nor was this a Jesus who was unaffected by everything going on around him. He knew what was happening better than anyone, and yet he allowed and focused his emotions in such a way that he could serve his heavenly Father with all of his heart. **We see 3 examples:**

**"The whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen." (Luke 19:37b NIV)**

It would be impossible to believe that Jesus wasn't impacted by the joyful praise that was going on around him. We see several things about this verse that had to have a powerful impact on Jesus - and could be a great model for us today as well. **1st** - there was a "whole crowd of disciples." This is not just the dozen apostles. There was a whole crowd - perhaps hundreds. They all considered themselves followers of Jesus. There's something really great that happens when a large crowd of disciples come together. One of those great things is worship... **2nd** - they all began joyfully to praise God in loud voices. There was deep joy that Jesus was coming. Notice the joyful praise was NOT directed toward him but toward God! This is how it always is when we celebrate what Jesus does. And not secretly or ashamedly but LOUDLY! And why? because **3rd** - for all the miracles they had seen. Blind men see. The hungry eat. The crippled walk. Adulterers are forgiven. The dead made alive! Surely Jesus himself felt the emotional joy of people praising God.

**"As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it." (Luke 19:41 NIV)**

But it wasn't all joy. He knew what was in store for Jerusalem in 70 short years. Not a pebble would be left. And he wept over it! Interesting that if he could see 70 years into the future, surely he knew what would have in 7 days! But he didn't weep for himself!

**"When Jesus entered the temple courts, he began to drive out those who were selling." (Luke 19:45 NIV)**

From joy to sorrow to anger. Jesus walks into the temple and sees the crass merchandizing, the profiteering, the commercialization of his Father's house, which he sees as sacred.

What I'm interested in exploring today is that Jesus displayed wide ranges of emotion on this day we call Palm Sunday. Who among us would ever suggest that Jesus did not serve his heavenly Father perfectly? Yet he did so with great emotion. **2 lessons we learn:**

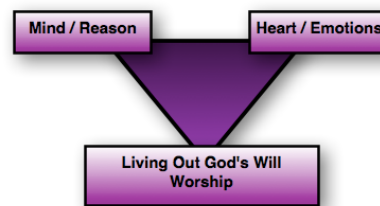
**#2. Worship with only my Mind (no Heart) is DRY.**

It's possible to become book smart with Christianity. We can memorize all the verses and the prayers. We can know the theology. We can study the history. And yet our faith can be completely dried up, with no emotion. Our faith is more academic than experienced. This was not the way Jesus modeled his worship/obedience/serve.

**#3. Worship with only my Heart (no Mind) is UNSTABLE.**

It's also possible that our Christian faith can be based purely on emotion, on the felt experience of spirituality. How we feel rather than on what we know. This is unstable because sometimes we just don't "feel" very Christian.

**We Must Balance Heart & Mind.** I've given you an illustration that I hope will help you understand how mind and emotion together help you best worship the Lord. That, after all, is our goal. And what is worship? Not just what we do here on Sundays. Not our singing time. Worship is how we serve God. How we faithfully live out God's will for each one of us. If we rely only on our mind, our reason, our understanding - then we will miss God's will for us. Our direction will be misguided. We need the heart of worship to help us stay on target. The same thing is true with our emotions. If we try to serve God only with our emotions and without the discipline of our mind, we will miss on the other extreme. It's the combination of both mind and heart, reason and emotion that guide us into an authentic, spiritual relationship with our Heavenly Father. **In other words...**



**#4. It takes all my heart and mind to be FULLY DEVOTED.**

Our personal mission statement in life should be to live as a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ. And fully means both heart and mind. Each of us has a tendency to err in one direction or the other. One might be more of a thinker. Another might be more of a feeler. Jesus taught that we love God best when we love not just with one or the other but **with our whole being, our whole self!**

He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind.'" (Luke 10:27a NIV)

Jesus didn't just "teach" this. He modeled it as well! Especially on this day of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

**#5. Jesus is our heart + mind model for EFFECTIVE SERVICE.**

I don't know about you, but I know that if I had a day like Jesus - fulfilling OT prophecy by riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, hearing cheering crowds, palm branches, weeping over Jerusalem, throwing

out the money changers... I'd be emotionally spent. Drained. Finished. Not Jesus! What do we read about him before we get to the end of Luke 19?

"Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words. (Luke 19:47-48 NIV)

The next big event for Jesus' plan was to die on the cross, every day one day closer. But until then his service to his heavenly Father, literally his worship of God, was to teach. And we read here that he did it every day. And he did it despite the fact that he knew the chief priests, teachers and leaders were trying to kill him.

Jesus found a way to balance his rational thinking mind with his internal gut and raw emotions. He didn't sacrifice one for the other but used them both in balance to serve his heavenly Father well. And he used both mind and emotions to serve other people well.

### 3 Questions I Should Ask Today:

- 1. What Do I Get Emotional About? What Does This Say About My Faith?** Isn't it fascinating to learn that Jesus DID get angry. But what did he get angry about? His Father's house being misused. When did he weep? Over God's people losing their homeland. This isn't meant to suggest that we only show emotions over godly things - but we should be asking if we become at least as emotional about the things of God as we become over the events in our own lives. Are we emotional about the things God is emotional about?
- 2. Are There Times When My Emotions Take Over?** If you find yourself in a place where you do things or say things you later regret because "your emotions took over," you are out of balance. You literally have surrendered your rationale, your thinking to how you feel. You need the discipline of your mind to control your emotions - your anger, your grief, even your giddy experiences of joy. Sometimes we need help and help is available. Christian counseling is an option. **Illustration - Discussion with other pastors. "Spiritual maturity cannot happen without Emotional maturity!"**
- 3. Have My Spiritual Emotions Run Dry?** Spiritual dryness is also a reality. Sometimes we just don't feel as close to God as at other times. We go through "dry spells." This is normal. What's not normal is to stay "dry" forever. Our Christian experience should never be academic. It should never be about ONLY ROUTINE. If you seem to have lost the joy of your salvation, you need to get out of your rut. You should take a step (a leap?) of faith out of your routine. Find a way to help someone else who is worse off than you. Serve meals to the hungry. Serve in the prison ministry. Pray with the sick and the dying. Take a missionary trip. Do the things that Jesus did and see if your heart and your passion doesn't begin to change. When we begin to do the things Jesus does, we'll discover that we also begin to feel the way Jesus felt - about other people, about our faith, and about our heavenly Father.

**Prayer and Communion.**