

GROWTH GROUPS

April 1, 2012

Hebrews 13:7-17; Luke 19:25-38

Conversation Starter –

Palm Sunday brings out special memories from childhood of the start of Holy Week. The grand entry into Jerusalem by Jesus, riding on a donkey with clothing strewn in the road in front of him and cheering crowds waving palm branches from Bethany to Jerusalem. What is your favorite Palm Sunday memory?

Understanding –

In the past weeks we have been working on the book of Hebrews as a series. Today we closed out the book of Hebrews and ask a series of questions that almost haunt us: Is it possible to be at the Palm Sunday entry into Jerusalem and miss the grace of God? Even with Jesus right there? Hebrews chapter thirteen provides a few concluding thoughts on the journey to present Jesus as the crowning glory of God's work in the lives of Hebrew believers. Jesus has been presented as greater than angels, greater than the law, greater than Moses, greater than temple and animal-sacrifices or high priests. The Old Testament is presented as foreshadowing the greater new covenant that God has wanted to give to us that encompasses the whole world and not just the Jews. Hebrews chapter thirteen speaks of God's presence never leaving us. It also describes God as our divine helper. From a new covenant perspective it is the Holy Spirit who is described in these ways.

1. When you think of Palm Sunday and Jesus riding into Jerusalem on that day what mistaken ideas did the Jews have about Jesus that caused them to miss out on something that God was up to? How do we allow mistaken ideas about who Jesus is and what he came to do get in the way of experiencing God's grace in our lives?
2. What difference does grace make in your life? How does God's grace equip or help you in what you do and who you are in God's plan for your life?
3. How does God's presence and help through Jesus and the Holy Spirit change how we experience the stresses and struggles in life?

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