

**Sermon:** *The King on Parade*  
**Text:** *Luke 19:28 – 40*  
**Date:** *March 28, 2010 AM*  
**Place:** *Jesup First UMC*

Parades! You either love them or hate them. Either you can't wait for it to start or you can't wait until it's over. And we have a parade for everything. We have parades to celebrate our holidays, parades to celebrate our sports teams, and even parades to honor our nation's heroes. They say, "Everybody loves a parade," but do they?

Believe it or not, the first really large parade in our nation's history took place on October 29, 1927 to honor Charles Lindbergh's first solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean. That day, 750,000 pounds of confetti fell from the windows of New York's buildings. But that pales in comparison to the parade thrown on March 1, 1962 in honor of John Glenn's first orbit around the earth. That day, New York's Sanitation Department cleaned up 3,474 tons of confetti along a 7-mile parade route.<sup>a</sup>

Well, Jerusalem had seen a lot of parades too ... like the day King David danced into town leading the Ark of the Covenant. There had been parades for Israel's Kings and for her occupying armies. And there had been parades of priests now and then, but ... there had never been a parade like this one.

Luke is careful to tell us that there came a time in Jesus' ministry when "He set His face to go to Jerusalem." And as He drew near to the city, He sent two of His disciples into a nearby village to get a donkey. And they brought it, and put their cloaks across its back, and sat Jesus upon it and off they

went toward Jerusalem. And the people began taking off their cloaks and throwing them into the road and the disciples became worship leaders, singing: *“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.”* Another version of this story says they waved palm branches and shouted: *“Hosanna to the Son of David, who comes in the name of the Lord.”*

This morning, I want us to reflect on this parade that the church has called The Triumphal Entry. ***The first thing that strikes me is: this is a planned parade.*** Now, to a casual onlooker, it seems like this parade just happened and that Jesus was a passive participant, but look again. Jesus knew exactly where to find the donkey and at no time, did Jesus stop the process. If anything, Jesus seems to be orchestrating the whole thing. This is religious drama at its best ... with Jesus acting out a very specific message. You see, hundreds of years earlier, Zechariah had said: *“Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey.”*

No, friends, Jesus is very much in control here. This is a planned parade.

***Second, this is a parade of power.*** Now, we've all seen power on parade. We've seen footage of tanks and missiles driving through Red Square in Moscow. We've seen the Red Army of China and Kim Jong III's army in North Korea and even the army of Hitler marching with strength on display. That's how the world thinks about power.

And that's what some people were thinking about in the crowd that day. They were looking at Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem as a military event, as a demonstration of His power and popularity. And they thought Jesus would ride right on over to Pilate's Palace. In fact, the disciples themselves would later ask: "Lord, are you going to restore the Kingdom of Israel at this time?" But they misunderstood Jesus' power!

Without a doubt, even with our current hardships, the United States of America is the most powerful nation on the earth. Our military might and technology is unmatched anywhere. Now, you won't see that power on parade. We don't march down Pennsylvania Avenue with guns ablazin', but when we have to the world sees our power. Most of the time, it is controlled power.

Now, friends, it might have been cloaked in an ordinary man, sitting on an ordinary animal, but this is true power on display. This is the power that spoke the universe into existence. This is the power that called Lazarus from the tomb. This is the power that walked on water, that healed the blind and the lame. Yes, the Triumphal Entry is power on parade.

***Third, this is a parade of humility!*** Now, in the past, the Kings of Israel had paraded around on white horses and Pilate and other Roman officials were known to ride around on white horses. You see, a horse communicates a very clear message, a message of strength, or royalty, and of nationalistic pride. But the Gospels clearly tell us that Jesus rode

into Jerusalem on a donkey. Now, that's a different animal all together, isn't it? Donkeys aren't parade animals; they're service animals, used for work, used to transport people and things from one place to another. And by choosing a donkey, Jesus is sending a very clear message.

Just a few days after His Triumphant Entry, Jesus was celebrating the Passover with His disciples and He got up from the table, took off his cloak, wrapped a towel around His waist and went from disciple to disciple washing their feet. Jesus was a humble servant. In fact, that's what His ministry was all about. He is the One who gave up the riches of heaven to be born in a cattle stall. He is the One who gave up the power and authority of God to sweat in a carpenter's shop, to walk the dusty roads of Galilee, and ultimately to bleed and die on a cross. *"The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many."*

Shortly after Booker T. Washington became President of Tuskegee Institute, a wealthy white woman stopped him as he was walking through town. She didn't know who he was and she asked him if he'd like to earn a few dollars by chopping wood for her. Well, Mr. Washington smiled, rolled up his sleeves, and went to work. He even carried the wood into her house and stacked it by her fireplace.

Then, a little while later, she learned about Mr. Washington at Tuskegee and she was really embarrassed about what she had done. So she went to his office to apologize. And he smiled and said:

*“It’s perfectly all right, Madam. Occasionally, I enjoy a little manual labor, and besides, it’s always a delight to do something for a friend.”<sup>b</sup>*

Jesus said: **“Greater love has no one than this, thank to lay down his life for a friend.”** Yes, the Triumphal Entry is humility on parade.

Now, the disciples didn’t realize it at the time, but this parade was a defining moment. You see, there were two reactions to the events of that first Palm Sunday. Some received Him and welcomed Him as their King. They lined the streets and shouted and sang: **“Hosanna to the Son of David.”** Or **“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.”** They are the ones He had touched. He lived among them. He took their children in His arms and blessed them. He fed their hunger; He healed their diseases; and He accepted them just the way they were – warts and all. So, they had come to see Him as the personification of all their hopes and dreams. And they worshiped Him. He was their King!

But there were others in the crowd that day and they rejected Him. Luke tells us that the Pharisees saw what was happening and they rebuked Jesus, saying: **“Rabbi, you need to stop your disciples.”** And by the end of the week, He was standing before them again at the home of Chiapas, the High Priest, and they rejected Him again. Not only that, but later they stirred up the crowd to stand before Pilate and yell: **“Crucify Him! Crucify Him.”**

You see, this parade really comes back to the same question that each of us has to deal with: *“What*

*are you gonna do with Jesus?" Here He is, power and humility on parade, King of kings and Lord of lords. And what are you gonna do with Him? What's your response gonna be? Will you reject Him or will you receive Him? The Apostle John tells us: "**He came unto His own, but His own did not receive Him. Yet, to all who received Him, to those who believed on His name, He gave the right to become the children of God.**"*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

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<sup>a</sup> [www.sermonillustrations.com](http://www.sermonillustrations.com)  
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