



the Source

Let anyone who is thirsty come to me...

As a third grader, my father was transferred from Austin to a church in San Angelo. We moved from a parsonage that was just a few years old. My sister and I shared a bedroom, and the church had recently purchased a set of twin beds for us. They were beautiful! The San Angelo parsonage was a two-bedroom, one bath Craftsman bungalow which was built in the 1920-1930 era. The furnishings were not as old as the house, but not by much. My sister and I went back to sharing a double bed in a small bedroom. The church and parsonage were in the middle of an affluent neighborhood. The parsonage was across the street from the church on a block half-filled with small rental properties. For the first time in my life, I was ashamed of where I lived. I had felt guilt and shame over the years for many of my actions and words, but this shame felt different. It wasn't my fault, and there was nothing I could do about it. Confession and forgiveness could not make it better. Only later in life when I lived in the Rio Grande Valley and saw the homes of many of my friends and houses in Mexico that were much worse than that parsonage, did I come to appreciate it.

Shame is a powerful emotion. In *God's Unconditional Love: Healing Our Shame* by Wilkie Au and Noreen Cannon Au, the authors call shame the *master emotion*, because it regulates our expression, even our recognition, of all other emotions. If we feel ashamed of emotions like anger, hurt, fear or love, we are not likely to express them. Shame hovers over all our social interactions so that much of our life experience is colored by shame...anticipating it, experiencing it, and managing it.

In today's scripture, Jesus asks his disciples who the crowds are saying he is. Then he asks them, "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "The Christ sent from God." Jesus gives his disciples strict orders not to tell this to anyone. He tells them about how he will suffer and be rejected and killed by their own respected, religious leaders. He challenges them to be true to their following... to take up their own crosses. The cross was a shameful way to die. He warns them about the cost of being ashamed to be with him. The cost...He would be ashamed of any who are ashamed of Him. What a terrible thing it would be to make Jesus ashamed of me.

— Myra Schomburg, First Church member

A Family Affair

Have you ever felt so happy, or excited, that you wanted to scream or shout? Share an example with your family. Read Luke 19:28-40. This passage describes Jesus entering Jerusalem for the celebration of Passover and is sometimes called the *Triumphal Entry*. The description sounds very festive... think of excited people lining the streets, like when waiting for a July 4th parade. Instead of a long parade, Jesus came riding in alone and humbly, on a donkey. One might expect a king to ride on something more glamorous, like a war horse, but Jesus was not that type of king. The people watching were so excited to see Jesus because of his amazing works and miraculous healings. As he rode in to the city, people spread their cloaks on the ground to honor Jesus. They shouted "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord." Other gospels report that the people were waving palm branches to celebrate Jesus!

Today is Palm Sunday, the day we remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem at Passover. We will have palms in the sanctuary and at Resurrection Celebration. Watch during the worship service, you will see the choir members waving palm branches, like those who welcomed Jesus riding on the donkey. You may also be given a palm branch, or palm leaf. Wave it high in celebration!

Dear God, thank you for all the things that fill us with so much joy that we want to scream and shout. Help us to be grateful when we celebrate these things. Amen.

—Jennifer Hall, Director of Children's Ministry

Today is Palm Sunday when we celebrate Jesus' triumphant procession into Jerusalem. Read Luke 19:29-40. No one was ashamed of Jesus on that day...not even the stones.

Monday: Luke 9:18-20 (compare to Luke 9:7-9)

Jesus knew who He was, but who did others in His life think He was? It was important to Him that His disciples knew who he was. In the earlier verses, Herod is concerned that Jesus is John the Baptist returned.

- Who do you say that Jesus is?

Tuesday: Luke 9:21-22

At this early point in His ministry, it was still important that the Messianic Secret remain a secret to allow Jesus' ministry to expand and protect His followers. He forewarns his disciples about how people they respected were going to end His life, but He also tells them that He will be raised on the third day.

- How well could you keep Jesus' identity a secret?
- Can people see Jesus in your actions, hear Jesus in your words?
- Could you consider continuing to follow Him despite His prediction of His death?

Wednesday: Luke 9:23-27

Jesus not only gave a warning that being His follower was going to continue to become more and more difficult, but also warns the disciples of the consequence of becoming ashamed to be associated with Him and His word.

- Do you live up to the crosses in your jewelry, on your walls or on your skin?
- Do you take your Bible and study materials with you to read during meals or while waiting for appointments?
- How do you respond when someone asks you who Jesus is?

Maundy Thursday: Luke 22:14-23, 39-53

The Passover Seder was the most important celebration for Jewish families. The fact that Jesus was celebrating this event with His disciples is a very strong indication of the depth of their relationship. Jesus changes the liturgy of the celebration. Even Judas is present for this new covenant. After the meal, the group goes out to the Mount of Olives most likely to their campsite. Jesus withdraws, kneels down and prays.

- Have you ever been with someone when they truly needed your prayers and support?
- Have you ever been called during the night by someone who needs help?

Good Friday: John 18:33-38, 19:7-42

Every Good Friday afternoon, I watch *The Passion of Jesus Christ* and the second part of a video of the Gospel of John. Both videos portray the exchanges between Pilate and Jesus according to John. Read John 18:28-38 again. Pilate's final question is important for all of us to try to answer in our hearts.

- What is truth?
- Who is the King?