

“When Is The Last Time You Cried?”

Luke 19: 28-44

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When is the last time you cried? I mean you cried so hard that you could not stop? Was it at a funeral or a wedding? Perhaps it was at a movie or while reading a book. Maybe it was at a ballgame and your team lost in spite of the fact that you played so hard. Did others see you cry or were you alone?

Have you ever cried at a parade? I doubt it, at least not unless you were responsible for the parade and everything was going wrong.

The last time we have a record of Jesus crying, though, was at a parade. What's more, he was not merely a spectator whose tears went unnoticed, he was the Grand Marshal of the parade. All eyes were on him and he was crying. Why?

He was crying because he saw two things that day we now refer to as Palm Sunday. He saw the hearts of people and he saw their future. Both made him cry. Let me explain.

“As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, ‘If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace, but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you’ ” Luke 19: 41-44.

I think Jesus cried because he saw their hearts and when he did, he saw their restless spirits. He knew they were looking for peace but never found it. He also knew that he could have provided that peace but they rejected him. No wonder he cried.

How could Jesus have provided peace for them? To answer this question, you must know what peace is. Peace is not the absence of something, but the presence of someone. Peace is not the absence of fear, anxiety, worry, problems, tears, temptation, conflict or pain. Peace is the presence of God’s Spirit providing strength, courage, confidence, companionship, security, wisdom, understanding, patience, guidance and forgiveness. Peace comes with knowing I am not alone, I never will be alone and the One who is always with me will provide what I need to live victoriously.

How could Jesus have provided this peace for them? He could have done it in two ways. He could have taught them how to live a life of peace and he could have ushered them into the presence of God so they could be filled with His empowering Spirit. He was willing to do both and tried for three years to do so. They were not willing to let him, however, and it broke his heart.

I also think Jesus cried because he saw their future and it was not good. He knew it was merely a matter of time until the Romans would descend upon this holiest of cities and destroy it. Approximately thirty-five years later this occurred. Historians said you could run a plow over the ground that once held the temple. Not one stone was left upon another.

How was he able to see this massive assault years before it happened? He knew human nature and where rebellion would lead. He knew how destructive sin was personally and corporately. He knew the people were listening to the wrong leaders and were headed down the wrong road. Jesus was aware that hatred bred hatred and violence bred violence and yet the people were following those that promoted hatred and advocated violence. As a result, he knew there would be no peace in their land and it broke his heart.

If Jesus were to walk into our sanctuary this morning and scan our congregation, would he cry? Would he be sad as he looked into our hearts and saw where we were headed or would he smile and rejoice? Perhaps he would do both. I am confident he would see people at peace headed in the right direction. I am also sure he would see restless people headed down the wrong road. What would he see if he looked inside your heart? Would he smile or cry? If he would cry, why not turn his tears of sorrow into tears of joy by letting him give you the gift of peace and God's empowering Spirit? You might even cry tears of joy along with him.