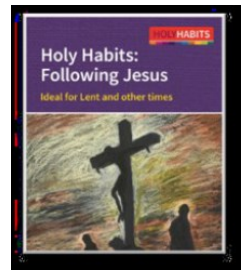




**LENT COURSE - HOLY HABITS: FOLLOWING JESUS**  
**(For use with or without the online Zoom meeting)**



**WEEK 6: 25<sup>th</sup> MARCH - 'JESUS GENEROUS UNDER PRESSURE'**

Focus habits: 'Gladness and Generosity' and 'Worship'.

Luke 19:28-39

**Opening Song:** 'Make way, make way' by Graham Kendrick Copyright © 1986 Thankyou Music

<https://youtu.be/alCQ7fb0hEA> (*Reflect on the words if you do not have access to the music*)

Make way, make way, for Christ the King in splendour arrives  
Fling wide the gates and welcome Him into your lives

*Make way! (Make way!) Make way! (Make way!) For the King of kings (For the King of kings)  
Make way! (Make way!) Make way! (Make way!) And let His kingdom in*

He comes the broken hearts to heal the prisoners to free  
The deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance, the blind shall see... *Make way! (Make way!)*

And those who mourn with heavy hearts who weep and sigh  
With laughter, joy and royal crown He'll beautify... *Make way! (Make way!)*

We call you now to worship Him as Lord of all  
To have no gods before Him their thrones must fall! ... *Make way! (Make way!)*

**Prayer:**

Lord, we welcome you and join with the Palm Sunday crowds in crying, 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!' Amen.

**Bible Reading: Luke 19:28-39 (NRSV)\***

(As you listen/read - what words or phrases do you notice? Note these and we will return to them later.)

After (Jesus) had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say this: "The Lord needs it."' So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them. 'Why are you untying the colt?' They said, 'The Lord needs it.' Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!' Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop.'

**Watch or listen to 'Hosanna' from 'Jesus Christ Superstar'** (if you can access it.)

Notice the joy of the crowd alongside the grumbling and complaining of the Pharisees.

<https://youtu.be/7x530xSkAdk>

**Reflection:** This story is vibrant and alive with gladness and generosity. The scene is euphoric, with the people welcoming Jesus with joy and expectation. By contrast, the religious leaders grumble and complain. The dark clouds that will gather during Holy Week are already beginning to form. The remarkable thing is that Jesus knew exactly what was coming (see Luke 18:31-33). He knows that the joy of the crowd will fade away, and he will be quite literally hung out to die. But that does not stop him joining in generously with the gladness of the Palm Sunday events.

Someone once described love as grace under pressure. On several occasions in the Holy Week narratives, we see this grace at work in Jesus. One of the hallmarks of those who are devoted followers (disciples) of Jesus is the way they are generous towards others, even when they are under the most intense pressure or experiencing the most severe suffering.

**Questions for reflection/discussion:**

1. In whom have you seen love as grace under pressure? Who has continued to be glad and generous in the midst of their own suffering?
2. How does this inspire or challenge you? (Don't be afraid to say if you find this difficult.)

**Further questions for reflection/discussion:**

1. Learning from the example of Jesus or others who have inspired you personally, how might you within the church support each other when under pressure or in pain?
2. The Pharisees are not the only ones in history to have complained about exuberant worship. How generous are you in blessing the preferred worship styles of others?
3. Returning to the words you noted in the text, which other things might you need to pay attention to?

**Respond: Sing "Ride on, ride on in majesty" by Henry Milman**

1 Ride on, ride on in majesty as all the crowds 'Hosanna!' cry:  
through waving branches slowly ride, O Saviour, to be crucified.

2 Ride on, ride on in majesty, in lowly pomp ride on to die:  
O Christ, your triumph now begin with captured death, and conquered sin!

3 Ride on, ride on in majesty the angel armies of the sky  
look down with sad and wondering eyes to see the approaching sacrifice.

4 Ride on, ride on in majesty, the last and fiercest foe defy:  
the Father on his sapphire throne awaits his own anointed Son.

5 Ride on, ride on in majesty, in lowly pomp ride on to die:  
bow your meek head to mortal pain, then take, O God, your power and reign!

**Prayer:** Lord, as we soon journey into Holy Week, may our devotion not lessen. When the hosannas fade and the pressures mount, help us to remain faithful, we pray. Amen.

**'Take-home' ideas:**

Think of a person you know who is under pressure for whatever reason and consider giving them a small but generous gift that might bless them with gladness in their place of pressure.