

**Holy Week - Palm Sunday**  
**Stopping at a Table on the way to the Cross**  
**Matthew 26:17-30**  
**April 2, 2023**

**I. From TRIUMPHAL ENTRY to a TABLE. (Mt. 21-26)**

- A. NOT your usual “APANTESIS”. (Mt. 21:1-11; I Thes. 4:17)**
- B. Jesus CONTROLS the NARRATIVE. (v.17-25)**
- C. FORCING the hand of the BETRAYER. (Mt. 26:5; Jn 13:28-30)**

It's Palm Sunday. Each year we celebrate this week, remembering Jesus' riding the donkey into Jerusalem just prior to His crucifixion. But this year I want to jump ahead to the story of the last supper. This was not the direction people thought things would go as they were yelling, "Hosanna. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord."

1. Kid's Question: Why do you think we take communion at our church? What does it mean?
2. When can you think of a time that Jesus has definitely "controlled the narrative" in your own life? What was that like for you?

**II. The TABLE sets the STAGE for what is coming. (v.26-30)**

- A. His BODY to be BROKEN. (v.26)**
- B. His BLOOD to be POURED out. (v.27-28)**
- C. The INITIATION of a new COVENANT. (v.28-29; Jer. 31:31-34)**

The pathway from the triumphal entry to the passover table had to happen, because Jesus was setting the stage for what was coming over the next 24 hours. It would be the culmination of what He had come to do, to make a way for our sins to be forgiven and to reunite us with God.

3. What does communion mean to you personally?
4. What does it mean to you that God has a covenant with you? How would you describe that covenant?

**III. COMING to the TABLE today. (1 Cor. 11:17-29)**

- A. How QUICKLY we FORGET. (v.17-22, 24, 26)**
- B. We are WELCOMED to COME. (v.23)**
- C. NOURISHED by CHRIST. (v.24-26)**
- D. We are CHALLENGED to REFLECT. (v.27-29)**
- E. RECOGNIZING the BODY of Christ. (v.29)**

The table that Jesus sat is the one He invites us to today. Paul gives instructions about it in I Cor. 11:17-29. It's important to realize why we do this ritual with bread and grape juice. There is something profound going on here as we remember what Jesus has done for us.

5. How can you better prepare yourself to mindfully celebrate communion with the church body each month?
6. Have you ever felt like you shouldn't take communion? How did you respond to that?
7. How often do you take time to prayerfully reflect on the state of your own heart and your relationships with others? Do you do it regularly enough?
8. What would it mean for you to grow in "recognizing the body of Christ" on a day to day basis?