

Building the Bridge Between an Entrance and an Exit

Retro seems to be in fashion these days, from clothing to music to home decor. For some of us, going “retro” means we just reach further into the back of the closet to achieve that 70s or 80’s look.

Retrospection - looking back over past events or circumstances to better understand them from the current place you find yourself in.

One biblical scholar writing about John’s Gospel suggests the whole Gospel is written in “retrospection”. And that would be safe to say, as all the Gospels were written decades after Jesus had lived and died.

This morning, we are taking our own look back on John’s account of Jesus’ life. The past few weeks, we have been in the garden where Jesus was arrested and then in Pilate’s palace, as Jesus faced trial and sentencing. Last week, we joined our voices with the crowds calling for his execution by crucifixion! Crucify him!

How did we get to this place? This morning, we step back a few chapters to find out how it began? Remember, John, unlike the other three Gospels, has Jesus going up to Jerusalem three times.

This morning, he goes for the third and final time, this time, parading in on the colt of a donkey. People cheer his coming, waving palm branches. Did you know, John is the only Gospel to mention “palm branches”? The other Gospel writers say the people lined his path with “clocks and leafy branches” but not palms.

Palms were a radical sign of military victory used to welcome a military ruler or king. We wouldn’t wave palm branches today. We would make posters. What would your poster say if you were to make one to take to this parade?

As you think about that, let’s go retro and join the parade crowd welcoming Jesus.