

**TEACHER REBUKE THOSE CHILDREN!**  
**Palm Sunday –March 25, 2018 –Matthew 19: 13-15**  
**The Church of the Covenant**

Why is it that everything in life seems to conspire against our joy? Even on that first Palm Sunday, when the long-awaited Messiah Jesus Christ was entering into the Holy City Jerusalem, there were those around who tried to curtail the people's joy.

On that first Palm Sunday the disciples and the people and the children were excited and rejoicing and joy-filled. And the Pharisees came along and said: *"Teacher, rebuke your disciples."* (Luke 19: 39) And Jesus responded: *"I tell you if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."* (v. 40) Similarly, there is the story of parents seeking to bring their children to Jesus that He might touch and bless them. But the disciples *"rebuked the people"* (Matthew 19: 13) The disciples told the parents in effect, Jesus has more important things to do than be with your excited, noisy enthusiastic children; Jesus is for "adults only". But Jesus said to His disciples: *"Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."* (Matthew 19: 14) Rebuked and rebuked SAME WORDS, same words in the Greek; a very strong remonstrance; turned away with stern words. REBUKE. Rebuke those disciples for getting too excited on Palm Sunday. Rebuke those children for getting too excited when Jesus is present. Shut up. Don't get excited. Don't have joy. Don't have reasons to rejoice because the Savior of the Universe has come this day to claim YOU!!!! (BTW, and HE has!)

I remember a Vacation Bible School in a former church of mine; it was called Bible Times Market Place and there was a little market set up where the kids would buy and sell the crafts they had made with little homemade "shekels". We had a drama team of senior highs and each day they dressed up as disciples and entered into the marketplace and acted out scenes from the Bible. I was their leader and they voted me Jesus. Its kind of cool to be Jesus, even with a hot robe on and even with a scratchy beard on your face, even in 95 degree and 98% humidity in July in Iowa. So when we arrived we created quite a stir; the kids started to anticipate each day when we would arrive. I had a little too much fun turning over the money changers tables and shouting out: "My Father's House shall be a house of prayer!!!!" But my favorite dramatic vignette was when I came in and the disciples tried to keep the kids away from me as

Jesus. They REBUKED them, told them to shut up; told them to be quiet; told them to sit down. But they didn't. The children kept making noise and they kept crying out and they kept laughing and kept trying to get closer to Jesus. There were a lot of children on that first Palm Sunday, making noise, refusing to pipe down, ruining the solemnity of the occasion of the Messiah marching in to claim the Holy City. TEACHER, rebuke those children! But of course Jesus did not. He said, *"Let the children come to me..."* He said, because these little children are like the kingdom that I'm seeking to bring to earth.

Why are there always Pharisees? Why are there always people around "rebuking" others? Why is it that some people just can't stand it if someone else is having a really great time? Because they're not feeling it; their heart is devoid of joy; everyone else is filled with joy and rejoicing and laughter; but their heart is empty, cold, dead and hollow. So they tell everyone else to shut up. Jesus, REBUKE your disciples on Palm Sunday! Jesus REBUKE those children when they are clamoring to touch you and see you and be blessed by you. Rabbi, let me come and kill all your JOY. Pharisees rebuke other people's joy because they have none of their own.

On Palm Sunday, JOY is the portal into the heart of God. JOY is the entry point into the Kingdom of God. JESUS is the DOOR. Praise and rejoicing is the way we enter into the Kingdom with Jesus. Be like these little children, says Jesus, and you'll get into my Kingdom. Try to rebuke JOY and you won't. Lift up your heads ye mighty gates that the KING of glory might enter in. Today the Messiah rides into your life to bring you JOY. Do you feel it? Or, rather, do you want to tell others to shut up? Palm Sunday in a nutshell. Amen and Amen.

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant,  
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IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*