

In Robert Louis Stevenson's classic allegory, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Stevenson explores the dual nature that we all have as humans: the idyllic desire to do good in the world, and the incessant compulsion to serve and fill ourselves at our basest levels; both of these competing against one another inside the heart and mind of one person. Dr. Jekyll wanted to isolate the evil within himself in order to purify the good, so he created a potion that could transform him physically into Mr. Hyde, who was to be the embodiment of all his evil appetites. By isolating his evil desires within the person of Mr. Hyde, all Dr. Jekyll had to do in order to live a life of pure good, was resist the potion. The problem was that, despite the pure good that was within his reach, Dr. Jekyll could never quite quit becoming Mr. Hyde. Jekyll assured those who asked that Hyde was under control, but Mr. Hyde eventually overtakes Dr. Jekyll, to the point that there is no more Dr. Jekyll.

My guess is that all of us have felt the tensions between our OWN Dr. Jekylls and Mr. or Mrs. Hydes, the proverbial angel on one shoulder and the devil on the other. You may need to think WAY back in your own life to find such an inner conflict, maybe as much as 24 hours.

For example, I know that I shouldn't look at that website, and I want to do what's right, but really not as much as I want the guilty pleasure. Or more subtly, I want to make a meal for that person who's going through a hard time, but that would take more time than I'm frankly willing to offer. I don't mean to be too harsh here; because sometimes we really genuinely are too busy to adequately help other people. All I'm trying to say is that we can easily relate to the inner turmoil of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde; even St. Paul wrote in the letter to the Romans, "what I do is not the good I want to do; but the evil I don't want to do I keep on doing. Apart from the power of Christ working within us, our Dr. Jekyll will surely lose out to our Mr. Hyde.

I thought of Jekyll and Hyde as I read through the Palm Sunday liturgy, seeing the crowds worshipping the Lord Jesus as He enters Jerusalem, then seeing the same crowds, not a week later, calling for his death.

"Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Away with this man! Crucify him! Crucify him!"

It seems unconscionable that the crowds could worship him and hail him as their king, and then just days later be rallying for his brutal execution. We might wonder, or hope, that perhaps these were two different crowds. But then we think of Peter, at first insistent that he will stand by Jesus even if it means his own death, but only hours later denying any affiliation with Jesus three times, and not to fearsome soldiers or members of the Temple guard, but to a maiden and two bystanders. And we might be tempted to pity Peter, or to judge him, thinking this is Peter's problem, alone. But then we think... of ourselves. And please know that I throw myself in with this lot. Worshipping God on Sunday mornings, and the rest of the week profaning Him in our thoughts, and perhaps also in our words and deeds, by the things we have done, and the things we have left undone. Not that every thought is murderously evil, or that every action is flagrantly disobedient, but rather that in our humanness, we ALL live lives that are spiritually

inconsistent. Our Dr. Jekyll side may desire to live a life that is purely good, but at the same time, we're not able to completely shake our Mr. Hyde.

Today is Palm Sunday, and with glad and joyous hearts we are rightly singing Hosanna and we're Crowning Him with Many Crowns. But we're also marching towards Good Friday, when we must confront our own culpability in the Crucifixion of Christ.

Friends, as we move into Holy Week, I implore you to take the time to name and wrestle with your own inner Jekyll and Hyde. Remember, it's only apart from Christ that Hyde wins. But if there are areas of your life where Mr. Hyde is winning, NAME them before God, and carry them to Good Friday, carry them to the Cross of Christ, where our Savior, hanging with outstretched arms, said 'Father forgive them; for they know not what they do.'

The path to the resurrection and new life of Easter, means the death of our Mr. Hydes at the Cross of Jesus.

It's Palm Sunday, HOSANNA! And Good Friday, here we come, to victory, and the glory of God in our lives, by way of the Cross. Amen.