

When I was young, I read the Hardy boys, and Chip Hilton, sports hero, And I watched the Lone Ranger. And I always knew who I was, I was a Hardy boy, I was Chip Hilton, striking out a star hitter with the bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth, I was the lone ranger, conquering evil outlaws. Now it is still the same, I watch Hill Street Blues, and I'm Furillo, honest, hard working, dedicated, wise.

But this week as I read, I'm not always sure where to see myself. For it is the drama that <sup>we</sup> know better than any other, beginning with the entrance into Jerusalem on Sunday and ending with the empty tomb the following Sunday, it is the drama of our ~~Lord's~~ Lord's Passion and Resurrection. I'd like to ~~be~~ <sup>be myself</sup> the leading character, my Lord Jesus, greeted by the crowds on Palm Sunday, cleansing the temple, teaching, sharing my Last Supper with my disciples. I like to fancy I am like Jesus praying intensely in the Garden of Gethesmane, facing betrayal calmly, enduring trial and mockery and rejection without striking back. Yes, I dream of myself the innocent sufferer, arms outstretched, dying for the life of the world. Then raised, so that all know and see, I am the one.

But this week is no week for fantasy, pretending. The cross is not a drama hatched for TV. It is the deepest truth about me, and you, and the God who has created all things.

No, this week as I search I recognized my face in that crowd alongside of the road into Jerusalem. Hosanna ~~text~~ ~~text~~ ~~text~~ I cry, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Yes, that is me, the day I was confirmed, dressed in a white robe, vowing that all my life I would be faithful to ~~this~~ Jesus. I promised like I never promised before, sure that I would do my every word. Sometimes since it has been like that also, I sing a hymn and the words reach down into the very depth of my being, and I feel real, whole. Or I kneel at this railing, experiencing the depth of the love and forgiveness of God for me, Hosanna in the highest.

Then as if in a dream, suddenly I hear the cry of another crowd, Crucify Him. And there stands Pilate asking, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him." And there is my face, one of the many, swept along with the emotion of the moment. Yes, I am in this crowd also.

Anger burns hot within me. I shout words that are intended to hurt. I want revenge. Once it was on a retreat. Jerry the other counselor did something said something, I can't remember what. But suddenly there I was a college junior attacking Jerry in front of a cabin full of seventh graders. I got behind him, wrapped him up in a full nelson, and pounded his head against a post. I the same one who had promised lifelong faithfulness on that confirmation day.

We sing a hymn, words of praise to God. My mind is on fishing. Or on what has gone wrong in the <sup>last week</sup> ~~worship service~~, or on what I must do <sup>with</sup> next. I mouth the words, they are a mockery of the one they praise.

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I preach a sermon, wondering how you will like it. I forget the one whose word I proclaim.

I go along with the crowd. If you and you and you are doing it, then I do it too. One moment Hosanna, Crucify him, the next.

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From joy to sorrow, for hope to despair, ~~for~~ from feeling warm and tingly and real to cold, and empty and false, this is my life. From Hosanna, to Crucify him.

*So I know what I am in the dream of Holy week, one of the public crowd.*

But the drama is not about me. It is about him who does not let the crowds, nor his friends, my faithfulness nor my unfaithfulness control him. It is about our Lord Jesus Christ who suffers and dies for me and for you. And while I am being bounced on the waves of my life, one moment on the top, the next on the bottom, he remains my Lord who loves me through it all and wants me to be real as he is real, and true. He wants that for you, not the falseness and the pretending and the chasing after dreams that turn to dust, he wants you to know his love, and his peace.

Yes, we have a part in this drama, sometimes Hosanna, sometimes Crucifixion.  
We all have both parts. But we are not the star in the drama of Holy Week,  
Jesus is. Just as he, not we, is the star of the drama we call our life.