

**BLESSED ARE WE IN
CHRIST JESUS, OUR LORD**

(Sermon #2)

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Today, churches who recognize that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, who died on a cross for our sins, to take away the sins of the world to all who will believe in Him are celebrating Palm Sunday today, which is the start of what the church calls "Passion Week", which is in reference to the Passion of Jesus, the Son of God, to carry out His Father's command, to do the will of God, to die on a cross, so that we can have eternal life in Him, to all who will believe. Palm Sunday then is when Jesus entered Jerusalem before the Passover festival that was celebrated every year, riding on a donkey, to the praise and adulation of the people. This was just a week prior to when Jesus was going to be crucified on a cross, after being betrayed by Judas, his disciple, and being arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. The reason we most celebrate this day is not only in Jesus dying on the cross, and then being laid in a tomb, but that on the third day He rose from the grave, conquering death, and assuring us that we too will raise from the grave to have eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 12:12-19 The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out:

"Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!"

Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: "Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt." His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him. Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!"

Jesus had just previously raised Lazarus from the dead and the people were calling for Him to be king. Yet, the Pharisees did not only not like Jesus, for He drew in the crowds which threatened their own importance, but they sought a way to destroy Him for they feared that their own significance would be eliminated as the people were calling Jesus the King of Israel. As the story mentions, Jesus had just previously raised Lazarus from the dead and over the past several years Jesus had caused the blind to see, the lame to walk, He cast demons out of people, and did many other miracles (walking on water,

feeding thousands with a few fish and loaves of bread and so on and so on). Yet despite all of that, despite all of the miracles that Jesus performed for the betterment of the people, within a week He would be hanging on a cross. One week the people were cheering,

"Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!"

and then a week later the crowds would be shouting, **"Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"** As this message unfolds, the question that is to be asked is this: To which crowd do you belong with. The crowd that shouted, "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!" or the mob that raged, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Are we excitedly waiting for Jesus to come back to finally reign over His Kingdom where we can cheer,

"Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!"

or are we going to not be ready and willing for Jesus to reign as Lord, to where we would say as they did, **"Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"**

None of this was a surprise to God or to Jesus that the people would so suddenly turn on Him as they did, as it was revealed to Him by God, His Father. As was recorded earlier in the book of John, "But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man." In other words, Jesus did not think, "alright, this must be it, I'm going to now reign over Israel!" Jesus knew that the event that we now call Palm Sunday had to happen to fulfill prophesy. Jesus was not interested in the testimony or praise of man, but only of the testimony (and glory) of the Father who said of Him at His baptism, "This is My beloved Son in Whom I Am well pleased," and at what is called the Mount of Transfiguration where Jesus, "was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him", and then a voice from Heaven said, ""This is My beloved Son in Whom I Am well pleased. Hear Him." Jesus knew that He was going to have to be the perfect sacrifice of God to redeem His people. Jesus also knew what was in the heart of man. That "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God", that "there is none that are righteous, no not one", (Romans 3:10) that "there are none who seeks after God" (Romans 3:11). It was God's plan for Jesus to be betrayed and to be crucified on a cross so that we could be reconciled unto God. No one else could pay that price. As it is also written, "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Psalm 49:7) What that is all saying is, left to ourselves, we are all wretched creatures with no good in us. The sacrifice of God had to be perfect and holy, without blemish and the only way that would happen is for God Himself, through Jesus His

Son, to be that perfect sacrifice. In the words of John the Baptist, "The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!"

There were several hundred prophecies written by the prophets in the Old Testament about Jesus, before He was even born. God already knew exactly what He was going to accomplish through His Son Jesus, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Jesus knew that His mission was to heal the sick, the lame, the blind, cast out demons, raise people from the dead, and then to be the perfect sacrifice of God, to die on a cross for our sins. That was all in God's perfect plan, just as it was God's plan for Him to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey and have the crowd cheer Him. In fact, the narrative in the book of Matthew (ch.21) says that Jesus told them where to get that donkey.

Just as God had the perfect plan to redeem His people from their sin, God also has a perfect plan for each of us. He is after all our Creator. The very air we breathe comes from Him. He alone is the sustainer of our life. His plan for us first and foremost is to believe on Jesus Christ as our Savior, that He died for our sins, to reconcile us unto God so that we can have a right relationship with God, and then have life eternal in Him. His perfect plan for each of us is to also let His righteousness work in us to make us into the image of Christ. When we accept Christ as our Savior His Word tells us that He gives us His Holy Spirit, that He places His Spirit in us as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." Jesus alone become our righteousness, making us right before God, and that the fruit of that comes through Him working in us to be like Jesus. Doing good works, loving others, loving God and wanting to please God. That is certainly not to say the we do works for our salvation. Jesus also satisfied that requirement by the shedding of His blood and the dying on a cross for our sins. It does mean that God wants to not only be our Savior but also our Lord. He is God Almighty, is He not. There is no other God that is His equal. He alone reigns over Heaven and Earth. If He wants to be our Lord, then that means we have a choice. It doesn't work that we can just allow Jesus to be our Savior but not our Lord. Jesus said, the greatest commandment of all is to love God with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength." How can we love God completely unless we allow Him to be Lord of our lives? The Apostle Paul said in Romans 5 that you are a slave to whom you obey, either a slave to sin or a slave to the Righteousness of God. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Our Lord! He wants us to live in Christ and for Him to be our Lord!

Yet Jesus doesn't just want us paying Him lip-service by calling Him Lord. Jesus said in Matthew 7:21-23 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the

will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' Will you today not only commit to calling out

"Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!"

and to receive Jesus as your Savior but also accept Him as your Lord? Will you not only believe on Jesus but receive Him as your Savior **and** Lord? I John 2:3-6 says, "Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked." How can we then follow His commandments if there is no good in us? John also says in John 1:12, "But as many as **received** Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name." When we believe on Jesus to be our righteousness before God, we become born of the Spirit or as Jesus put, born again, and we become children of God. So, will you choose today that life that is in Christ Jesus or will you be the ones in the crowd that a week later shouted, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Just as the Pharisees who appeared before other men to be fully following the commandments of God and calling God their father, as the Israelites did in the time of Isaiah the prophet where God said through Isaiah, "this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men." Romans 10:9-10 says, "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one **believes unto righteousness**, and with the mouth **confession is made unto salvation**." God is not just wanting us to honor Him with just our mouths but with our whole hearts and lives.

There is a witnessing tool, passages of Scriptures that we as Christians can use to lead others into the knowledge of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is called the Roman Road, where all the Scriptures are found in the book of Romans. Most of them I have already mentioned. I'll go through again.

First is **Romans 3:23**, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God". We have all sinned against God and His commandments.

Second is **Romans 6:23**, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Third is **Romans 10:9-10** "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the

dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness [that is where He is leading us], and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation [we become witnesses unto Him]."

Fourth is **Romans 12:1-2**, " I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." God wants to change us into the likeness of His Son, Jesus.

Jesus Himself started His ministry out by saying, "repent for the kingdom of God is at hand", just as did John the Baptist. When Jesus met the lame man and commanded him to take up his bed and walk, He said later when He saw him again in the temple, "'See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you." God is always ready and waiting to forgive us of our sins. "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness." Just as God had planned for Jesus to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey and for Jesus to suffer and then die on a cross for our sins, God also has plans for us to be like Christ. As was Adam was made in the image of God before sin entered the world, when we are born again we are born into the image of His Son, Jesus and we then to live in the ways of Christ.

There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. Jesus said He is the Way (the only Way), The Truth (the only Truth, and the Life (the only life, and that is life eternal)! Let us continue to look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Let us confess our sins before God that we may continue to be live in His righteousness. Then, one day when we are before Jesus our Lord, we will be perfected and be like Him. Let us continue to get to know our God and Father by reading His Word, and let us continue to love one another and let Christ reign in our hearts for the glory of God, for blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord and blessed are we in Christ Jesus our Lord!