

The Sunday of the Passion, Palm Sunday



The last of our “heart issues” that we will be considering over the weeks of Lent will be the issue of our popularity. Our issues of personal self-worth and importance have been around for centuries. We tend to want to build up images rather than seek ways behind the proverbial woodwork.

We have come as far to set up our social media in terms of how many “followers” we have in our Facebook or Twitter accounts. Leverage sells and the more popular you are, the better you can move whatever your heart desires.

Being driven by popularity is a way of the world. Seeking to have everyone looking at you is exactly what we might want to consider giving up this Lenten season while we still have the chance. It’s not about how popular you are—perhaps it’s more dependent upon the change you can bring to this world with the things you say and do.

It is ironic to me that Jesus is welcomed into Jerusalem with a regal welcome. He might have been named the King of Kings by some, but by earthly actions would have Him dead in five days. I wonder out loud if people would have treated Jesus the way that they did with this royal entry if they knew what they had done to make this all necessary in the first place.

While our human nature may drive us to be people who would like to have the attention drawn upon ourselves, we do not really see the Lord doing the same. While on the journey to the cross, on several occasions Jesus told people not to say anything, or draw attention to the facts that just happened. Always demonstrating the power of following God’s intent in the salvation of mankind, Jesus never made it about Himself. Instead, it appears that He went to His death, through the Triumphal Entry, mindful of the real reason He was here.

Can we do the same? Can we rethink our positions to give up our popularity in favor of the gospel of Jesus Christ? Can we say the right thing, instead of the popular thing, in any number of circumstances? Can we speak love to a world filled with hatred? Can we follow Jesus to the cross and share in our own death to self, and then experience the rebirth of new life in Christ in our daily living?

Pastor Jonathon Kosec

OUR WORSHIP TODAY

GATHERING AND MEDITATION TIME

Pre-Service Music

Welcome and Announcements

OPENING

P: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

C: Hosanna to the Son of David.

Palms are distributed prior to the service. All are invited to rise, with palms in hand, for the reading of the Processional Gospel, John 12:12-16:

The next day, the news that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem swept through the city. A large crowd of Passover visitors took palm branches and went down the road to meet him. They shouted, "Praise God! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hail to the King of Israel!" Jesus found a young donkey and rode on it, fulfilling the prophecy that said: "Don't be afraid, people of Jerusalem. Look, your King is coming, riding on a donkey's colt." His disciples didn't understand at the time that this was a fulfillment of prophecy. But after Jesus entered into his glory, they remembered what had happened and realized that these things had been written about him.

HYMN 154 All Glory, Laud, and Honor 1,2,3

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY (Unison): Sovereign God, you have established your rule in the human heart through the servanthood of Jesus Christ. By your Spirit, keep us in the joyful procession of those who with their tongues confess Jesus as Lord and with their lives praise him as Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC:

"Do You See That Man?"

Dean Carson

FIRST LESSON : Isaiah 50:4-9

New Living Translation (NLT)

The Sovereign Lord has given me his words of wisdom, so that I know how to comfort the weary. Morning by morning he wakens me and opens my understanding to his will. The Sovereign Lord has spoken to me, and I have listened. I have not rebelled or turned away. I offered my back to those who beat me and my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard. I did not hide my face from mockery and spitting. Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced.

Therefore, I have set my face like a stone, determined to do his will. And I know that I will not be put to shame. He who gives me justice is near. Who will dare to bring charges against me now? Where are my accusers? Let them appear! See, the Sovereign Lord is on my side! Who will declare me guilty? All my enemies will be destroyed like old clothes that have been eaten by moths!

THE SECOND LESSON: Philippians 2:1-13

New Living Translation (NLT)

Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose.

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 27:11-54

New Living Translation (NLT)

Now Jesus was standing before Pilate, the Roman governor. "Are you the king of the Jews?" the governor asked him. Jesus replied, "You have said it." But when the leading priests and the elders made their accusations against him, Jesus remained

silent. “Don’t you hear all these charges they are bringing against you?” Pilate demanded. But Jesus made no response to any of the charges, much to the governor’s surprise.

Now it was the governor’s custom each year during the Passover celebration to release one prisoner to the crowd—anyone they wanted. This year there was a notorious prisoner, a man named Barabbas. As the crowds gathered before Pilate’s house that morning, he asked them, “Which one do you want me to release to you—Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Messiah?” (He knew very well that the religious leaders had arrested Jesus out of envy.)

Just then, as Pilate was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him this message: “Leave that innocent man alone. I suffered through a terrible nightmare about him last night.”

Meanwhile, the leading priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas to be released and for Jesus to be put to death. So the governor asked again, “Which of these two do you want me to release to you?”

The crowd shouted back, “Barabbas!” Pilate responded, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” They shouted back, “Crucify him!” “Why?” Pilate demanded. “What crime has he committed?” But the mob roared even louder, “Crucify him!”

Pilate saw that he wasn’t getting anywhere and that a riot was developing. So he sent for a bowl of water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood. The responsibility is yours!”

And all the people yelled back, “We will take responsibility for his death—we and our children!” So Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.

Some of the governor’s soldiers took Jesus into their headquarters[c] and called out the entire regiment. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. They wove thorn branches into a crown and put it on his head, and they placed a reed stick in his right hand as a scepter. Then they knelt before him in mockery and taunted, “Hail! King of the Jews!” And they spit on him and grabbed the stick and struck him on the head with it. When they were finally tired of mocking him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him again. Then they led him away to be crucified.

Along the way, they came across a man named Simon, who was from Cyrene,[d] and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus’ cross. And they went out to a place called Golgotha (which means “Place of the Skull”). The soldiers gave Jesus wine mixed with bitter gall, but when he had tasted it, he refused to drink it.

After they had nailed him to the cross, the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice. Then they sat around and kept guard as he hung there. A sign was fastened above Jesus’ head, announcing the charge against him. It read: “This is Jesus, the King

of the Jews.” Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.

The people passing by shouted abuse, shaking their heads in mockery. “Look at you now!” they yelled at him. “You said you were going to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days. Well then, if you are the Son of God, save yourself and come down from the cross!”

The leading priests, the teachers of religious law, and the elders also mocked Jesus. “He saved others,” they scoffed, “but he can’t save himself! So he is the King of Israel, is he? Let him come down from the cross right now, and we will believe in him! He trusted God, so let God rescue him now if he wants him! For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” Even the revolutionaries who were crucified with him ridiculed him in the same way.

At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o’clock. At about three o’clock, Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” which means “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”

Some of the bystanders misunderstood and thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah. One of them ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, holding it up to him on a reed stick so he could drink. But the rest said, “Wait! Let’s see whether Elijah comes to save him.”

Then Jesus shouted out again, and he released his spirit. At that moment the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, rocks split apart, and tombs opened. The bodies of many godly men and women who had died were raised from the dead. They left the cemetery after Jesus’ resurrection, went into the holy city of Jerusalem, and appeared to many people.

The Roman officer and the other soldiers at the crucifixion were terrified by the earthquake and all that had happened. They said, “This man truly was the Son of God!”

The Gospel of our Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST.

SERMON “Popularity”

Pastor Jonathon Kosec

SERMON HYMN: 338 Revive Us Again 1,3,4

OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH: The Apostles Creed (C)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE OFFERING:

After the consecration of the Offering, we will sing the Doxology:

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, Praise him, all creatures here below, Praise him above, Ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYERS OF PRAISE, WORDS OF INSTITUTION, LORD'S PRAYER

THE DISTRIBUTION

THE COMMUNION BLESSING

HYMN 173 Glory Be to Jesus 1,3,6

THE BENEDICTION & THE DISMISSAL

P. Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

C. Thanks be to God

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WELCOME TO OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN! Thank you for joining us as we worship our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! We are happy you are here! Please take a moment to turn your Cell Phone or other devices to mute, so they do not go off during the service and become disruptive. We appreciate your help to this regard. And thanks again for being here with us this morning!

IN OUR PRAYERS: We take time during our service to offer petitions for the prayer needs of ourselves, our families, our friends, and the world. Please give those requests to Pastor at the beginning portion of the service so they can be included in our prayers during worship today.

INVITE YOUR FRIENDS TO BE WITH US HOLY WEEK!

Maundy Thursday, April 13, 2017, 6:00 PM Evening Worship with Holy Communion

Good Friday, April 14, 2017, 6:00 PM. Evening Healing Prayer Service, Attendees are invited to come forward if they choose to be prayed over with prayers specifically for themselves and then anointed.

Easter Sunday, April 15, 2017, 10:00 AM. Easter Festival Celebration

TODAY IS THE LAST DAY TO SIGN UP FOR AN EASTER LILY!

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