

**John 12:20-43**

It is Palm Sunday, of course it is, but Palm Sunday has another name. When we think of Palm Sunday we think of loud hallelujah, we think of crowds cheering, we think of Jesus riding into Jerusalem in triumph. But when we think of Passion Sunday, we think of why was Jesus riding into Jerusalem? What was He facing? What was He doing there? His passion, his suffering.

We sang the hymn on Wed “The Lamb goes uncomplaining forth” – **uncomplaining**

Palm Sunday is everything that humans ever dream of, to be famous, to have the crowds cheering your name, to be considered the best, to be king. I mean that is the desire of every man’s heart.

But Jesus doesn’t care about that; He’s focused on what’s ahead. He’s thinking about why He is coming into Jerusalem, and how he’s going to have to suffer and die.

“**Uncomplaining,**” no one would complain about having everyone chant your name and wave palm branches. But Jesus doesn’t complain even when it’s not palm branches and glory, but whipping, and crucifixion, and everyone chanting, “Crucify him, crucify him.” Our text today focuses on this side of Palm Sunday, the Savoir who rode towards his death and crucifixion.

The Greeks come asking for Jesus, well yeah, of course they do. Here we have a group of men who came from far away to worship at the Passover. They get to Jerusalem and they hear everyone chanting and cheering for this Jesus. He is the man of the hour. He is the hero of the day. We’ve got to go get his autograph, right. Maybe they want to become His disciples. Definitely they want to talk to him, and find out what is going on.

Typical Jesus, He responds with the oddest answer , “The hour has come for the son of man to be glorified.” Can you imagine if you ask someone, “Hey, can I come talk to you?” and their response is, “The hour has come for me to be glorified.”

The Greeks probably said, “Yeah we know, we heard everyone chanting your name, that’s why we want to know who you are.” But of course Jesus explains, the glory of Christ is His death.

The palm branches and the people singing hosanna, there is no glory in that. That’s nothing, what does our epistle reading say:

**He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.  
9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him – Philippians 2:4-5**

Christ’s glory is this that he willingly suffered and died for our sins.

When Jesus says, “the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.” He is telling the Greeks, “The hour of His death approaches. He makes that clear in verse 24 and 25, “You want to follow me, I’m going to my death, are you willing to follow me there.”

The Greeks and everyone else was more than willing to follow him on Palm Sunday, but were they still willing to follow him, five days later when He was hanging on the cross? Are we? Christ warns them, he keeps warning us. The life of a Christian isn’t an easy stroll through flowery gardens, “yeah though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death.” If we follow Him, we follow Him through death, through the cross, through suffering.

This is who Jesus is **“a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:” Isaiah 53:3**

But in so doing He will draw all men to himself.

We see Jesus humanity in this text, in His anxiety about His coming suffering and death.

When I was in college, I would give plasma. The needle never bothered me, the finger prick never bothered me, but the anticipation, sitting there waiting that was torture. That anticipation was nothing compared to Jesus’.

Jesus knows what is coming. He is greatly troubled in his soul. But He is willing to do it, because “when he is lifted up in death, He will draw all people to himself.” He doesn’t try to back down, because He knows that it will mean forgiveness of sins to all people.

This only confuses the crowd though. The Greeks didn’t understand who Jesus was, that’s understandable they were Greeks. They didn’t grow up with the bible stories. But obviously neither does the crowd, the Jews, don’t understand.

Isn’t the Messiah supposed to stay forever? Why were we chanting “hosanna to the son of David,” if you weren’t going to establish the kingdom of David and rule as an earthly king?

Jesus says to them, “I am the light,” you can’t read a book without a light. I think I’ve told you before I used to try. I used to read books by the light that comes under the door way when it was past my bed time. Without light you’ll never understand the book.

You’ll never understand who the Messiah is as long as you remain in darkness. Jesus says, “I’m only going to be here a little while longer, walk in the light now, so that I may open your eyes.”

Notice how John singles out the Pharisees, nor is it John alone, the other gospels do it and Jesus himself does it as well. The priests, the Sadducees, the scribes, these also oppose Jesus. These also Jesus rebukes, but not so much as he does the Pharisees.

The priests were mostly like the liberal churches of our days. They were just going through the motions. Many of them didn't even believe in a bodily resurrection. It was more about culture and making money for them.

The Pharisees, they were the hard core conservative religious. If anyone was going to be ready when the Messiah came, from an earthly perspective it would be them. Yet they are the ones who most often opposed Christ, they are the ones who seemed to hate him the most.

Saul was a prime example of a Pharisee, showing his great zeal to the Lord in hunting down and persecuting the Christians.

It was their very zeal for the Law of God which blinded their eyes to the truth of who Jesus was. They thought they had it under control. They thought they were doing well enough on their own. They thought they didn't need a savior from sin, and therefore Christ wasn't there Messiah.

They even used the Law of God to prove it. He does work on the Sabbath. He pretends to forgive sins.

Yet their very refusal to accept Jesus was a proof that Jesus was the Messiah. For Isaiah prophesized that this is what would happen.

This is a grave warning for us . Not to let our pride in what we think we know blind us to the truth of what God is really saying in His Word. Not to let our pride in our religiosity blind us to our own sin.

Yet even among them still many believed. Such as Nicodemus, for the grace of God is far stronger than the sin and arrogance of man.

And so Jesus died and in his death, he drew all men to himself

This is the one who rode through the gates of Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday.

-One with His face set towards pain and suffering and death,

-One who was even at this hour the light of the world proclaiming forgiveness of sins

- One who fulfilled all the old testament prophesies showing that He is the Messiah