

The Difference A Day Makes

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[0 : 0 0] Hey everyone, thanks for joining us today. I'm Pastor Steve Frenzenmeyer from the First Christian Church in Greensburg, and I'm glad that you're here with me today. And I just pray that as we kind of look through some scriptures, that God just really speaks to all of us today, because this is a sermon for me as well. So hopefully we'll all get something out of it. So, you know, over the course of time, I know that I've talked about my dog, Rio, several times. And I know he's just a dog, but I love that little guy. He likes to sit on my chair with me and watch TV, and he doesn't like watching football and basketball games with me, because sometimes I just get a little too loud and rowdy for him. But through all of that, I've learned an awful lot from Rio. You know, Rio is a true social butterfly, and he has tons of personality and character. And I love it when we come home after being gone for a while. Usually, we'll pull into the driveway, and then pretty soon we see his little face poking through the curtains.

And you know, you can tell that he's excited just because his ears are plastered back, and his whole body is shaken because his tail is wagging so hard. And then, when you enter the house, Rio goes ballistic. His tail is wagging so hard, he cannot walk straight. He is running up to everyone and jumping on everyone that comes in. He gives us this great big welcome as if to say, where have you been? It's about time you got back. Finally, someone is here to love me, to pet me, to let me outside so I can go potty, and someone to feed me. And he also seems to say, hey, you're also going to take care of me. And so after that big welcome happens, you know, five or ten minutes later, you know, it might be hours go by, and you don't see him at all. So we get home. We have this spectacular welcome. And ten minutes later, Rio doesn't want to have anything to do with us. Unless, of course, he wants something from us. You know, I know that may sound funny to all of us, but don't we act that same way with Jesus sometimes? We usher Jesus into our lives with fanfare and adulation.

We welcome him with open arms into our lives, tell him that he is the king of our hearts and lives, and then at some point, at some point, something changes. You know, sometimes it's a dramatic event in our life that changes our need for Jesus. We lose a spouse, a child, a tragic event happens in our lives, a divorce, a job loss, a terrible health issue. And I know that those list of possibilities could literally go on and on. Or maybe over time, our need for Jesus just slowly fades. You may think to yourself, I have this whole life thing figured out and under control. I've got Jesus if I really need him. Or I've gotten to this point in my life and accumulated everything that I have because I've earned it on my own. Either way, at some point, to some degree, we turn our backs on Jesus. And you know, the sad thing is, Jesus has had backs turned against him all along. Throughout history, mankind has turned its back to

Jesus. The Jews did. Judas did. Peter did. Three times. And all of his disciples. And when I mean all of his all of his disciples, that also includes any of us that have ever proclaimed Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

So here we are today, Palm Sunday, also known as the triumphant entry of Jesus to Jerusalem. So let's turn to the Gospel of John, chapter 12, verses 12 through 19. And we're just going to look.

[4 : 1 6] And John says, the next day, the great crowd had come for the festival, heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the King of Israel. So let's just have a very quick history lesson.

The Romans came into Judea in 63 BC. So at the time of Jesus' entry to Jerusalem, the Romans had been in control for almost 100 years. The Romans, they brought their own pagan religious system, a religious system that had over 20 gods and goddesses. And the Romans instituted festivals to celebrate and honor these gods and goddesses. It wasn't easy being a Jew during the

Roman reign.

But the one thing is, is that Romans still allowed the Jewish people to worship their own God, just to kind of keep them happy. The Romans put little interference in their religion in hopes of somehow satisfying the Jews and keeping the masses calm. But it was constant suppression for the Jews. And the Jews wanted the Romans out. They despised the Romans so much that there had been at least a dozen attempted insurrections against the Romans in the previous 10 years. And all had failed miserably.

And some failed miserably and terribly. The Jews wanted to be free. Free from the Romans' domination over them. And the Jews thought Jesus was going to be the one to free them from the Roman domination.

[6 : 09] The text we read says the Jews waved palm branches and then laid them on the ground as Jesus and his disciples walked along. The palm branch was a Jewish symbol, a symbol of national dependence.

So waving a palm branch would be similar to us as Americans, waving the stars and stripes. And as Jesus passed by, the crowd shouted, Hosanna, Hosanna. Hosanna is in Hebrew, is a Hebrew word.

It's a combination of two words. Yasha, meaning to save or deliver, and Anna, meaning please. So an English translation would be something like this. Please save us now. Or I beg you to save us. You see, the Jews that gathered that day had an agenda. Jesus was to free them. Free them from the Roman rule and suppression that they had been under and totally changed the way they lived. And they had a timeline now. Jesus, you're here right now. So right now, let's get down to business and let's kick the Romans out of here because we're behind you 100%. So let's fast forward a couple of days. Jesus has been taken into custody. And through an unfair trial, an illegal trial, and Jesus was going to be sentenced.

So Luke 23rd chapter verses 18 through 21 says, But the whole crowd shouted, Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!

[7 : 49] Barabbas had been thrown into prison for an insurrection in that city and also for murder. Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them saying, Again, but they kept shouting, Crucify him! Crucify him!

Excuse me. The whole crowd demanded the death of Jesus. The whole crowd, everyone, everyone wanted Jesus to die. And why?

Because Jesus didn't give them exactly what they wanted and what they had hoped for. The same crowd, the same people, just days before, welcomed Jesus with a hero's parade, waving palm branches, laying them on the road as he passed and singing Hosanna.

Jesus didn't give them what they wanted. And they wanted to be politically and militarily free from the Romans. They saw Rome as their enemy and not their own sin.

Jesus offered them freedom from sin and death. So the question for all of us today is, Have you ever been disappointed with God?

[9 : 12] And I mean disappointed in the fact that he did not answer your prayer as you hoped he would. We can see disappointment in God through another story.

In Luke, the 10th chapter, verses 38 through 42. Let's just go there real quick. As Jesus and his disciples were on the way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to them.

She had a sister called Mary who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made.

She came to him and asked, Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do all the work for myself? Tell her to help me.

Martha had faith. But Martha hoped her faith would mean getting something for herself. It's like saying, Lord, I'm going to trust you as long as you give me what I want.

[10 : 19] You know, this text is a lot different than the one we saw in John. In John, we see people making a drastic turn in their opinion of Jesus. In John, we see Jesus go from Savior to being murdered in a conspiracy move just because people were disappointed.

In Luke, it's a disappointment how Jesus reacts at a dinner party. A disappointment of, I didn't get my way. Or, look what I've done for Jesus.

Look what I've done for the church. I do so much. You know, sometimes we get disappointed when we think our works should be rewarded.

In our world, we are programmed by one simple principle. If I do something for you, you have to do something for me.

Ephesians, the second chapter, verses 8 and 9 say, For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith. And this is not from yourselves.

[11 : 27] It is a gift of God. Not by works, so that no one can boast. You know, God blesses us according to His will and not because of our works.

Joshua, the 24th chapter says, Now fear the Lord and serve Him with all faithfulness. Serve the Lord with faithfulness.

No agenda. No quid pro quo attitude. I'm going to do this. You've got to do this for me. Just serve and honor you, Lord, with everything that I have just because I love you.

Sometimes we get disappointed with God when others don't meet our expectations. We get disappointed with God when we have expectations for others and those expectations are not met. It could be something like this. I've been praying that my spouse would change and she doesn't or he doesn't. I've been praying for my kids so that they would stop doing stupid things.

[12 : 37] But they keep on doing things. I wish my boss appreciated all the work that I do. But it doesn't. I wish that my grandchild could get his or her act together.

And sometimes our disappointment can even be about ourselves. I wish I could beat this bad habit that I have. But I can't.

And if any of those expectations would ever be met, if all those things that we ask God for were to be taken care of, in our minds, life would be perfect, wouldn't it?

So let's go back to Luke chapter 10. Let's pick up with verse 40. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made.

She came to him, that is Jesus, and asked, Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? You know, do you hear the frustration in Mary's voice?

[13 : 40] Or Martha's voice? Martha must have been OCD. I have this long list of things that I need to do, and they all need to get done, and no one is helping me.

And I can't relax until all this is done. Or, she may be thinking, this is important to me, so it needs to be as equally important to everyone else around.

And I think Jesus is saying here, savor the moment. What you are doing is important, but there are even more things even more important out there.

And sometimes, we get disappointed with God when we cannot control God. Let's go back to Luke. Martha's complaining to Jesus that Mary is not helping her with the preparations for the day.

And then when she says this, tell her to help me. In the scriptures, that sentence ends with an exclamation point. At this point, Martha is not making a request for Jesus to do something, but it becomes a demand.

[14 : 51] She is demanding Jesus to do something for her. Disappointment happens when we don't get something we want. In our disappointments with God, our disappointment can lead us to a lack of faith.

It can lead us not to want to trust Him. Like the Jews that lined the city streets in Jerusalem. In their disappointment, they went from one extreme to another.

Crying Hosanna on Sunday to yelling crucify Him on Friday. What a difference a day can make. We may not have that drastic of a pivot in our life or in our faith, but there's often a shift.

So how can we handle disappointment with God? You may be sitting here thinking, Steve-O, you've been knocking me down here for a little bit about all my disappointments, but you have not given me anything practical yet.

And you know, I only have one thing for you today. Just one. And it actually doesn't come from me. Jesus, on the night that He was betrayed, after the Last Supper was over, Jesus is with His disciples, and He goes off by Himself to pray.

[16 : 11] And He knows what's about to happen. He knows He's going to be betrayed. He knows He's going to be tortured. And He knows that He's going to be hung on a cross and that He's going to die.

And in all that, in Luke chapter 22, verse 42, we hear Jesus praying these words. He says, Father, if You are willing, take this cup from me.

Yet, not for my will, but Yours be done. we know Jesus' heart had to be heavy. We know that He knew what was about to happen.

Jesus didn't want to go. But He laid His own wants aside, His own desires aside, and was obedient to the will of God.

And because of His obedience, in yielding to the Father, there will be a day when we will see Jesus face to face and have no disappointments at all.

[17 : 17] We need to yield to Jesus. And yielding, according to dictionary.com, says that yielding is the act of relinquishing possession of something, or simply giving up something.

I think I should be willing to give up something of mine for something from Him. I think there's an old country song entitled, Sometimes I Thank God for Unanswered Prayers.

You know, if I got everything I had ever asked for, and got exactly what I wanted, and the way that I wanted God to answer them, I would have missed out on so many blessings.

And yet I've also had prayers unanswered that caused me great pain. The loss of loved ones, failed relationships, loss of a dream. You know, that's all real stuff.

So today, right now, wherever you are in all of this, can we allow Jesus into our hearts and cry Hosanna and also at the same time, not my will, Lord, but your will be done.

[18 : 37] You know, I know this is one of those messages that there's a lot in it. Because at one point or another, all of us get disappointed. We just didn't get exactly what we wanted.

Things didn't turn out the way we thought they would. And because of that, that leaves us hurt. And sometimes not trusting God. But I want to tell you this.

Unanswered prayers, the way, sometimes they don't happen like that, the way we want them to.

God always has the best for us in mind. And that may be hard for you, and it's hard for me to understand sometimes.

And that's where we just have to trust and pray. Lord, not my will, but your will be done. So today, if there's something that you're going through, a prayer that hasn't been answered, or a prayer that was answered in a different way, and that bothers you, that hurts you, just know that you have a Heavenly Father that loves you, that cares for you immensely, and wants only the best for you, because with Jesus, He gave His best for you.

So if He's willing to do that, if He's willing to give up Jesus on the cross for us, He's willing to go to so many other extents to show us how much He loves us, and He did, and He does on a daily basis.

[20 : 06] So in our hurts, in our struggles, when we feel that God's just not listening, He is. He is listening.

And He will answer your prayer one way or another. So be patient with God. Allow Him to work in His timing, and according to His will.

because He tells us that everything that He does works out for our best. Because God loves you that much. Not my will, Lord, but Your will be done.

Let's pray. Father God, I thank You so much that You love us the way You do, so extravagantly through Your Son, Jesus. God, in spite of our sin, You brought Jesus to be our Savior.

And if we give Him control of our lives, Lord, You have something special there for us. You allow us to be part of Your will, allow us to be part of Your plan.

[21 : 13] God, we thank You for that. And Lord, forgive us when our faith has gotten thin because we get disappointed or we haven't gotten what we prayed for.

Lord, forgive us of that. And allow us to trust in You completely through all and in all situations. God, we thank You. In Jesus' name, amen.

I thank You so much for being here today with me. And I pray that the words that the Lord put on my heart to share with you have touched you. And if they have, I pray that if you want to get a hold of us here, you can here at the First Christian Church in Greensburg.

Our number here is 812-663-8488. You can find us on Facebook or on the web at FCCGreensburg.com. Thanks for joining us and I pray that you've had a blessed day.

Thank you. Bye-bye.