

Lessons from Palm Sunday

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[0 : 00] The first of the three big days of Easter, Palm Sunday. But in many ways, Palm Sunday is what we call the orphan day of Easter.

! And that's because many people don't really understand what Palm Sunday is all about. On Friday, we'll be celebrating Good Friday. Many people know that is about the death of Jesus Christ. Then on Sunday next week, we will be celebrating Resurrection Sunday, and we know that's about the Lord's resurrection. But when it comes to Palm Sunday, it is kind of like in a blurry zone. And so this morning, although many of you understand this because I've certainly done my best over the years to help us to see what it's about, I want to once again try to serve us in this sermon to understand what Palm Sunday is all about.

Because it is more than just about Jesus getting on a donkey and people waving palm branches. And so my desire this morning is to broaden our awareness of what happened some 2,000 years ago.

[1 : 27] And what I will do is we're going to be taking a lengthy section of the Gospel of John, John chapter 12. And so if you've not yet done so, please turn to John chapter 12, and I'll be reading verses 12 through 36.

And I'm reading from the English Standard Version. John chapter 12, beginning in verse 12. The next day, the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.

And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just 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 had been written about him and had been done to him.

[2 : 55] The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to be a witness. The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they had heard he had done this sign.

So the Pharisees said to one another, You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him. Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, Sir, we wish to see Jesus. Philip went and told Andrew.

Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

[4 : 03] Whoever loves his life loses it. Whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

If anyone serves me, he must follow me. And where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this purpose, I have come to this hour.

Father, glorify your name. Then a voice came from heaven. I have glorified it. And I will glorify it again. The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered.

Others said, An angel has spoken to him. Jesus answered, This voice has come for your sake, not mine.

[5 : 08] Now is the judgment of this world. Now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.

He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. So the crowd answered him, We have heard from the law that Christ, the Christ remains forever.

How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is the Son of Man? So Jesus said to them, The light is among you for a little while longer.

Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light.

That you may become sons of light. When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them.

[6 : 20] Let's pray together. Father, we bow our hearts this morning. Lord, we have heard the account of what happened as Jesus rode into Jerusalem some 2,000 years ago where not even the disciples understood it.

Would you help us to understand it this morning? I ask, O Lord, that you give us heirs to truly hear. I ask for grace that you would make me a faithful minister of your word.

I pray to care for these who are gathered and these who are listening by live stream. Again, Lord, would you use your word to build this church and to sanctify us as your people for the glory of your great name we pray.

Amen. Well, in this passage that we just read, you'll be able to see that even the disciples of Jesus did not fully understand what was taking place some 2,000 years ago.

They only understood it after he had been raised from the dead. But here Jesus was, a mere five days away from going to the cross.

[7 : 56] And I think, brothers and sisters, if the disciples who had walked with Jesus and who were eyewitnesses of this account did not fully understand what was unfolding before their very eyes, I submit to us that we who are some 2,000 years removed from it probably are also at risk of not understanding these events.

So this morning, as we commemorate Palm Sunday, here's what I hope to help us to see from this sermon. I pray that we will see that Palm Sunday teaches unchanging lessons about the kingdom, discipleship, and the cross.

that's what I believe we see in this account that Luke gives us that is somewhat different from the other gospel accounts. I believe we can see in it that there are lessons, unchanging lessons, about the kingdom, about discipleship, and about the cross.

And so now, in our remaining time, I want to consider these beginning with the first one, a lesson on the kingdom. John tells us in verse 12 that the next day, when the people heard that Jesus was coming to the feast, they did a most unusual thing.

And this was no small feat when you consider the size of this crowd. We're told in verse 13, they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.

[9 : 46] Now, why did they do this? The taking of palm branches was a very deliberate act by the crowd.

This was a coordinated, orchestrated act by the crowd. They weren't there with any other kind of thing in their hand or tree in their hand other than these palm branches.

And what it shows is that they were going out to greet Jesus, not as a religious leader, but as a political leader. Because the palm was a recognized symbol of the Jewish state.

It was a political symbol. It was almost akin to wearing a flag on your car for the party that you support. And this was an expression of Jewish nationalism.

It was pervasive in Jewish culture. They actually had put it on their coins as an expression of unity and nationalism. And even after the Romans defeated them when they revolted against the Romans, somehow the palm branch made its way back on the Jewish coin.

[11 : 01] And so it was a political symbol of a deeply held nationalistic aspiration that they had to be lifted up from Roman oppression and to return to the glory days that they and their forefathers had known.

they had a desire to throw off Roman oppression. But we're also told that they sang Hosanna.

They shouted Hosanna, which means give salvation now. But the salvation that they were crying out for was not the salvation that Jesus was on his way to procure on the cross.

Instead, it was this cry for salvation from Roman rule and oppression. Well, in response to this deliberate act of the crowd of waving palm branches and shouting Hosanna, John tells us that Jesus does something that was also highly unusual and no doubt surprising to the crowd. We see the deliberation of Jesus in verse 14. John says, Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it. Not because he was tired.

[12:20] Not because horses could not have been found. John says, he found a young donkey and he sat on it. Now, why did Jesus do that?

Well, to understand why he did that, we have to read verses 14 and 15 together. John tells us, and Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it just as it is written, fear not, daughter of Zion. Behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt. This is almost like two individuals having a conversation.

They're talking past one another. In the crowd, Jesus, in Jesus, the crowd saw the fulfillment of these aspirations.

that they had. John tells us that the reason, we read it, the reason this crowd had even gathered was because they heard that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead who had been dead for three days whose body was decaying.

[13:28] And there were people in the crowd who were saying, man, this is the man. And this was no, this was no one or two persons in a room who said this person was dead and is now raised.

No, this was a very public event. It was certified that Lazarus was dead. There were droves of people around and Jesus called them forth from the grave and there were people who were testifying to all of this.

And so, what they saw in Jesus was certainly, if this man could raise the dead like that, he can certainly, maybe he is the Messiah, maybe he is the one who we are expecting to deliver us from Roman oppression.

But John tells us that what Jesus does is Jesus, in essence, by getting this donkey and sitting on it, he is saying to them, no, I am not that kind of king.

I am the king who is prophesied in the scriptures, prophesied by Zechariah. when he wrote, fear not, daughter of Zion, behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt.

[14:46] Jesus was presenting to them the Messiah that he was and the kingdom that he represented. And here's what we should see from what Jesus did. This deliberate act of Jesus of finding this donkey and riding this donkey was as deliberate as what the people did in finding palms and waving them.

Jesus was saying to them, you have it all wrong. My kingdom is not of this world. My kingdom is not an earthly political kingdom that advances through military strength and might, like the kingdoms of this world.

Its strength is in weakness like this donkey. Its might is in meekness as this animal that is allowing me to ride him.

Its exaltation is in humility. and it represented the symbol of servanthood, the symbol of peace rather than what a horse would represent, a symbol of privilege and a symbol of war.

In other words, this expression of finding and riding this donkey, Jesus was saying, my kingdom kingdom is different. It's not like the kingdoms of this world.

[16:24] But not only is the kingdom of God in this part of the account shown to be different, I believe the larger lesson that is displayed for us is that the kingdom is also unattractive to the world.

Just imagine, we don't get the reaction of the crowd, we're not told what their reaction was, but I can imagine that in their minds they're thinking, here's this man, we think is going to be our deliverer riding on this donkey and they are probably visualizing the Romans, the ones who were oppressing them strutting around on their stately horses.

while this hopeful Messiah is riding on a clumsy donkey and there's no attraction in it. There's no attraction in it.

Brothers and sisters, I think we must get used to this. We must recognize that the kingdom that God offers through Jesus Christ is one that is unattractive to the world.

People don't run after it in droves. they went after Jesus because of the miracle that he did. John tells us that.

[17:48] When the Pharisees said, oh, the whole world has gone after him, the Pharisees were misunderstood. They were mistaken. They did not go after Jesus for who he was. They went after

Jesus for what he could do.

We read in verses 20 to 22 that something else happened. John takes the time to say that there was a group of Greeks who were at the feast and they went to Philip and they said, we want to see Jesus.

And then Philip does something rather unusual. They say to Philip, we want to see Jesus. And we read in verse 22 that Philip went and told Andrew.

And then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus, why would Philip not go and tell Jesus the Greeks wanted to see you?

Well, the text does not explicitly tell us, but it seems to imply that Philip was impressed and excited that the Greeks wanted to see Jesus, so much so that he ran to tell Andrew the Greeks wanted to see Jesus and they went to Jesus in their excitement and they said to Jesus, even the Greeks want to see you now.

[19 : 20] You see, if you were a Greek in that day, even without you opening your mouth, once they knew that you were a Greek, generally speaking, you were considered wise.

that's what the Greeks represented with all the philosophers that they had produced. Listen to how the apostle Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 22.

He writes, for Jews demand signs. That's what the Jews were interested in. And Greeks seek wisdom. Throughout his ministry, the Jews were demanding of Jesus, show us a sign and then we will believe that you are from God.

But for the Greeks, they were into oration. They were into eloquence. They were into wisdom and philosophy.

And so it's very impressive that the Greeks would want to come to see Jesus. And Andrew being, and Philip being so excited that this had taken place, he goes to, rather than going to Jesus, he goes to Andrew and he tells Andrew, man, even the Greeks want to see Jesus.

[20 : 35] And they go to Jesus bearing this wonderful news that even the Greeks want to see you. And then we find another surprise.

In verse 23, John tells us that Jesus responds in a most surprising way. And it brings me to the second lesson of Palm Sunday.

The first lesson on Palm Sunday, which is a lesson on the kingdom, that the kingdom is unattractive to the world. And the second lesson is a lesson on discipleship.

And the lesson on discipleship is, it is costly to follow Jesus. It is costly to follow Jesus.

And to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior is to sign up to be a disciple. Look at how Jesus answered Philip and Andrew in verse 23.

[21 : 47] And Jesus answered them. The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone.

But if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it. And whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

If anyone serves me, he must follow me and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

Notice that to this request that the Greeks want to see you, Jesus totally ignores it and he reaffirms his mission.

it's pretty clear that Jesus recognized that both the Greeks and Philip and Andrew were unmindful of his mission, unmindful of the fact that he was on his way to Jerusalem to be crucified on Calvary's cross.

[23 : 06] But they had different aspirations for him. and those aspirations did not include death. They were seeking a different path and a different glory for Jesus.

And so with the cross in view and undistracted and unimpressed by the Greeks, Jesus says to Philip and Andrew, the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

You may remember that throughout the ministry of Jesus, there was always this temptation being presented to him to try to circumvent what God had for him.

Satan did it when he tempted him in the desert, told him, you know, why don't you just throw yourself down and God will save you. He was always trying to get Jesus to go another way.

He said, if you bow down, I will give you all the kingdoms of this world and all of its glory. And this was yet another distraction coming to Jesus, a temptation to say, hey, you know, you don't have to go through all that, just take another more popular route.

[24 : 17] The whole world has come after you. The Greeks even now want to see you. In the face of that, we see Jesus with amazing resolution and determination.

and he goes on to give an illustration of planting a grain of wheat which points to the necessity of his death. And he points out that if he is the son of God, refused the path of death, he would remain the only son of God.

He says the same by this wheat. He says unless it goes into the ground and dies, it will remain alone. And Jesus was pointing to his own death and saying that it was through death that he, the son of God, would be able to bring to the father many sons and daughters of God.

But it's in verses 25 and 26 where we really see the lesson on discipleship that Jesus directs to us. And he helps us to see that this whole thing that we are thinking about it.

And here we are, we're thinking about the coming and the living and the dying of Jesus. And it's easy to only think about what it meant for Jesus.

[25 : 38] But Jesus helps us to see that there are implications for us. And we should be renewed in that this morning. We should be renewed in these words that Jesus says in verses 25 and 26.

He says whoever loves his life loses it. And whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

If anyone serves me he must follow me. And where I am there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me the father will honor him.

Jesus helps us to see that his example has implications for every one of us who will follow him. And he gets to the core issue that we have to face when it comes down to following Jesus.

The core issue that he gets to is that we naturally love our lives. We naturally do all that we can to preserve our lives and not just our lives biologically. We certainly try to keep ourselves from harm and death.

[26 : 50] But we also love the comforts and pleasures of life. We don't choose as they say to go up the rough side of the mountain not knowingly. We may get there but we didn't choose to go there.

And Jesus gets at this because it is the core issue that confronts us in this call to follow Jesus, this call to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Jesus tells us with absolute certainty he says if you love your life the implication being that we are doing things to illegitimately preserve life as we see it.

He says if you do that you're going to lose it. He says but if you develop an attitude towards your life where you hate it in terms of for the purposes of God because that's what Jesus was doing in his own example of laying down his life as a ransom for many.

He was hating his life for the purposes of God. Not hating his life because he was mentally deranged but he was hating his life to fulfill the purposes of God.

[28 : 11] And that's the kind of hate that he is calling those who will follow him to. That we must not love our lives to the degree that it will prevent us from pursuing and fulfilling God's call on our lives.

Whatever he calls us to, we must be willing to lose it. But the irony of it is Jesus says if you will do that, he says, you'll keep it for eternity.

You'll keep it for eternity. And if the lesson on discipleship isn't clear enough for us in verse 25, again, listen to what Jesus says in verse 26, if anyone serves me, he must follow me.

And where I am, there my servant will be also. Friends, those who follow Jesus Christ must submit themselves to the purposes of the Father, whatever those purposes are.

And the reality is, is it calls for sacrifice. It calls to an attitude towards our lives that is inconsistent with the way life is viewed in this world.

[29 : 47] We must not love our lives so dearly that we will be tempted and indeed even yield to the temptation of being prevented from obeying the path that God calls us to.

And brothers and sisters, this is a lesson on discipleship that we need to hear again and again and again.

And so even this morning as we commemorate Palm Sunday, let us remember that it is a commemoration of the call to be disciples.

The call to have the resolution of Jesus where we are not attracted by the world's praises. we are not attracted by the world's offerings to cause us to lose sight and lose focus of pursuing the Father's purpose for our own lives.

Jesus modeled that for us on the first Palm Sunday. And as we reflect on it, we must recognize that he calls us to that as well.

[31 : 00] He calls us to be his disciples. And the wonderful promise is that if we will do that, the Father himself will honor us. We may not get the honor of the crowd, we may not get the approvals of the Greeks of this world, but God himself, the God of the universe, the eternal Lord, will honor those who pursue his purposes in this life, not loving their lives, any aspect of it, but holding it out in service and offering to the Lord.

You know, this is really a side issue. It's a side issue. We follow what we see. And the reason that many times we don't want to lose our lives in this world and we see our lives as something valuable to hold on to and the purposes of God as not valuable is because we have bad sight.

We're not seeing as we should. When our spiritual sight is blurred, we resist the purposes of God. When our spiritual sight is blurred, we give in to the praise of the Greeks and the hosannas of the crowd, a crowd that in a couple of days will say crucify him.

Coming to Jesus is the beginning of discipleship. And coming to Jesus is really a call to die that we might live.

It is in dying to our own will and our own pleasures that we truly find life. And as we consider this this morning, I wonder whether for any of us there might be areas or aspects of our lives where we are conscious that we are seeking to preserve, we're seeking to hold on to, instead of laying them open and freely before the Lord and say, Lord, use me, use my life, use this aspect of my life however you choose, however you please.

[33 : 41] Friends, it is so easy. And we know it's easy because many have done it. The apostle Paul had a companion in the ministry by the name of Demas and Paul writes in one of his letters when he was very much alone, he said, Demas has deserted me, having loved this present world.

Brothers and sisters, this world is passing away with all of its desires. And the promise of scriptures, those who do the will of God, they will abide forever.

If we seek to preserve our lives rather than to lay them down in the purposes of God, we will lose them. And so on the first Palm Sunday, we find a lesson on the kingdom that is unattractive to the world.

We find a lesson on discipleship that it's costly to follow Jesus. And third and finally, we find a lesson on the cross. And the lesson on the cross is that the cross is necessary for our salvation. Jesus expresses this in verses 27 through 32. But back in verse 23, Jesus refers to the hour that had come for the Son to be glorified.

[35 : 24] In verse 23, he says, the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. And then we read in verse 27, two times again, he refers to this hour.

He says, now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this purpose, I have come to this hour.

You see, it's easy for us to think about the days of Easter, the three big days that we commemorate. We tend to think of them in compartments and as isolated, but no.

The crucifixion will be about five days away, but here Jesus is saying, my soul is troubled. My soul is in grief. And what shall I say?

Father, save me from this hour. But for this purpose, I have come to this hour. We see the urgency. We see the weight of the suffering that awaits him.

[36 : 30] And this hour captures and encapsulates the essence and the very apex for why he came into the world.

It captures the fullness of the redemptive purposes of God. All that God had been working out in the Old Testament was going to now come to a climax in this hour that had come upon Jesus, that he was experiencing even as the crowds and the Greeks were screaming at him and luring him to something else.

The hour was upon him. And he was going to die, but he was not just going to die an ordinary death.

He was not even going to die an ordinary crucifixion. There were going to be two criminals who would be crucified on either side of him.

But those criminals were going to be crucified because of the sins that they had committed, the crimes that they had committed. But the holy, spotless son of God was going to take that middle cross and he was going to bear the sin of sinners and he was going to endure the wrath of God for those sins.

[37 : 55] And that was the ultimate purpose for which he came into the world. That was the ultimate fulfillment of the redemptive purposes of God throughout human history in the son of God.

You realize that when we consider the Old Testament there is this unfolding of the redemptive purposes of God. Well, they completed in Jesus Christ. There is no more unfolding.

It is truly finished. And that's what Jesus, began to experience on that day. And here we see his example rather than shrinking back in agony, Jesus doesn't.

What he says instead is, Father, glorify your name. Glorify your name in your son. John tells us that the father spoke.

He said, I have glorified it and I will glorify it again. No doubt pointing to the life that Jesus lived, that he was glorified in that. And now the death that he was going to die, that he likewise would be glorified in that.

[39 : 02] The crowd didn't understand the voice, but they understood that something supernatural happened. Some thought it thundered, others said no, an angel spoke, but they understood something supernatural happened.

Jesus embraced the hour for which he had come into the world rather than shrinking back from it. And then he goes on in verses 31 and 32 and he tells us the significance of the hour and what will be accomplished in it. He says, now is the judgment of this world.

Now will the ruler of this world be cast out and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself. Through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, the world, he said, would be judged, but now the world has been judged.

Collectively, the world is human, kind, in organized rebellion against God.

[40 : 09] And that is the world that has been judged. And Satan has been cast out. And we don't, I don't stand here claiming to fully grasp all that that entails.

But I accept the truth of scripture that Jesus says, the hour has come for that to happen, that hour has passed, so that has happened. Now is there going to be a final day of judgment for the world and for sinners?

Yes, there will be. Is there going to be a final day where Satan is utterly and finally and totally destroyed? Yes, there will be. But I want to say to us this morning, God has declared his verdict on the world.

And the verdict on the world is that it is so sinful that it required the Son of God to come and to give his life as an atonement for sin.

And on the final day, again, Satan will be destroyed. But even now, Satan is no longer the same today as he was before Calvary.

[41 : 21] Jesus defeated Satan in his cross. And though Satan still has power, he is a defeated foe. He doesn't have sway and power over the nations as he did before Calvary.

But the part of this that I want us to focus on is I don't want us to focus on so much what it means that the world has been judged and that Satan has been cast out.

The plain part of what Jesus says will happen in that hour that had come upon him is in verse 32. He says, And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.

Now, Jesus is not just talking about ascending to heaven. John tells us in verse 33, he explains it. He says, Jesus was speaking of the kind of death he was going to die, meaning he was going to be lifted up on a cross. And he says that in being lifted up on this cross, which will be the means of salvation for all people, again, in context, not all people without exception, but all people without, because if you say it's all people without exception, then that's universalism.

[42 : 51] The Bible doesn't teach that. It's all people without distinction. It's all people no matter who they are, no matter what they've done, no matter what tribe or tongue or nation or circumstance.

He draws them to himself through his cross. But we see the crowd is still filled with preconceptions. Even as Jesus explains to them why he is coming to the world, and that hour had come upon him to fulfill it all, we read in verse 34 the crowd saying, we have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever.

How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is the Son of Man? It's a very interesting question that they asked Jesus. Jesus. Jesus earlier in verse 23 identified himself as the Son of Man.

He answered them, the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. And really, you're able to see that, you know, they're not absolutely sold on Jesus.

[44 : 12] They're just hoping he would be the one. They're just hoping that he would be the Son of Man, the Messiah. And so they say to him, who is this Son of Man?

And they go on to say to him, we read from the scriptures that the Messiah, when he comes, that he will be with us forever. Now you're talking about being lifted up, going from this place.

What are you talking about? They're really expressing to Jesus, we're not really sure that you are the Son of Man.

We come to yet another surprise in the narrative. Jesus doesn't engage them. Instead, we read in verses 35 and 36, Jesus responds to them and he simply says this, walk, sorry, in verse 35, he says, the light is among you for a little while longer.

Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light that you may become sons of light.

[45 : 48] When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them. Didn't just depart, he departed and hid himself from them.

A very deliberate act, he hid himself from them. today, there are many people like the crowd who wonder about Jesus, question Jesus, question all manner of things about him, whether he is truly God, whether he is truly a savior, whether he was truly born of a virgin Mary, and they engage in all these questions.

Jesus is unimpressed with those who ask original such questions. questions. And if that's you this morning, if you, whether present or listening by live stream, have these questions and wondering about this and wondering about that, I say to you what Jesus said to the crowd.

He said to them, the light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.

While you have the light, believe in the light that you may become sons of the light. Friends, I believe that this act of Jesus in not responding to the crowd and leaving the crowd and hiding himself those who believe that when I'm good and ready, I'll come to Jesus.

[47 : 53] When I'm good and ready, I'll do this and I'll start doing that and be concerned about my soul. That's a false plan.

Walk in the light while you have the light. Come to the light while you can come to the light. Don't assume that you will be able to when you are good and ready to do that. Come to Jesus, the one who is the light, the light of the world, the one who is able to give light to our darkened hearts and so that we who come to him may walk in the light, but not just walk in the light, walk in his example of pursuing God's will and God's plan for our lives in a world that's filled with distractions and filled with attractions and filled with voices calling us on another path.

Let's walk in the light and come to the light while there's still opportunity. Let's pray. Father, we thank you this morning that we are able to commemorate the Lord Jesus Christ coming into Jerusalem on his way to Calvary's cross where he would give his life as a sacrifice for sin and sinners.

We ask this morning that you would speak to our hearts about his example that we likewise would not love our lives but lay them down in your purposes.

And we pray this morning for those who stand on the outskirts those who are like the crowds and who want a God and a Savior of their own making.

[50 : 07] God have mercy on them and open their eyes and bring them to saving faith. We pray and ask in Jesus' name. Amen.