

Palm Sunday

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Date: 13 April 2025

Preacher: Father Randall Russell

[0 : 00] In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Have you ever felt disappointed?

If so, I do not think it is a sin to admit it! I don't think it is a sin to feel disappointed when life doesn't go your way, or to wonder why God allowed you to experience this or that.

I think disappointment only becomes sin when it leads to rebellion against God, or we mistakenly blame God for all that we suffer.

Yes, the scriptures teach us that God will never fail us, and I know that, and I believe that. But it still doesn't mean that we all won't feel disappointed from time to time, especially when something we had hoped for doesn't turn out quite the way we had expected.

Take, for instance, Palm Sunday. Today is a happy day. Today is a day in which all the people of God rejoice. Hosanna to the Son of David.

[1 : 18] Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. But the time will soon come when all the people of God will feel disappointed.

When their hero has fallen. When they hear others mock the Savior and say, He saved others. Could he not save himself?

If he truly is the Son of God, let him come down from that cross. For the cross. The cross is the one thing that nobody ever expected on that first Palm Sunday.

In other words, it wasn't the salvation they had hoped for. For they had hoped that a Savior would come who would overthrow the Roman Empire.

And that's what they wanted. And that's what they thought Jesus would be. An earthly king who would put Rome in its place and who would at last, pardon the expression, make Israel great again.

[2 : 31] For ultimately, that is why the people of Jerusalem waved palms, a proud symbol of Jewish nationalism at that time.

And that is why the people of Jerusalem shouted Hosanna, a word that actually means, Lord, save us now. For what the people of Jerusalem wanted on that first Palm Sunday was a king to set them free from Rome.

But instead of political revolution, what they got on Good Friday was, at least in their minds, just another Jew who had been captured by Rome and sentenced to die.

So they were all naturally disappointed. And that disappointment led to frustration. And that frustration became anger.

And soon those joyous shouts of Hosanna on Palm Sunday became angry cries of crucify, crucify by Good Friday. Okay. But it isn't wrong to feel disappointed or to feel sad.

[3 : 52] Just as it wasn't wrong for Mary to cry as her son bled and died upon the cross or maybe even wished there could have been some other way.

In fact, didn't our Lord himself pray that very same thing in the Garden of Gethsemane? Did he not pray, Father, if it is your will, take this cup from me?

Nevertheless, not my will, but your will be done. For you see, disappointment in and of itself is not wrong.

But when disappointment leads to rebellion against God or blame or self-pity or murderous shouts of rage as it did on that first Good Friday, well, then disappointment becomes wrong.

Then it becomes sin. Nevertheless, the same people who happily shouted Hosanna to the Son of David on Palm Sunday and the same people who angrily shouted crucify, crucify, crucify on Good Friday, they all are the same people whom Christ Jesus came to save from sin, death, and the devil.

[5 : 19] For in the end, God is much, much more loving and much, much more merciful than any of us might expect.

for God is good all the time and all the time God is good. We just need to trust that even when we feel disappointed is still according to our Heavenly Father's plan, just as we shall once again see only one week from today.

For whether it is at a blood-soaked cross or an empty tomb, Jesus Christ is Lord and God is still love.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.