

# Palm Sunday

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Date: 10 April 2022

[ 0 : 00 ] Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Words from this morning's epistle lesson in the Father, in the Son, in the Holy Ghost.

Amen. We tend to think of Jesus' passion and crucifixion in a rather antiseptic way. Typically, pictures and crucifixes are rather clean.

They depict the five permanent wounds and maybe a few drops of blood. But in truth, there was nothing antiseptic about Jesus' passion and crucifixion.

Nothing antiseptic at all. It was a battleground, a spiritual D-Day. In Gethsemane and in the high priest's courtyard, in the praetorium and in Herod's palace, through the streets of Jerusalem and on Calvary, Jesus went to war and defeated man's greatest enemies, Satan, sin, and death.

He gave every ounce of his human strength, every drop of his precious blood, and the very last of his holy breath to defeat them. We need to understand Christ's passion and crucifixion for what it is.

[ 1 : 29 ] For it is our calling, our duty, our privilege. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

But why? Why did Jesus endure the passion and crucifixion? The epistle tells us, for the joy that was set before him.

How could there be any joy in such pain? How could there be any joy in such a display of hate and wrath? How could there be any joy in death?

Once again, the epistle answers for us. Therefore, God has also highly exalted him and given him the name, which is above every name.

Jesus endured the passion and crucifixion with all its pain, for the joy of his resurrection, his ascension, and his eternal reign as Lord at the right hand of the Father.

[ 2 : 32 ] He endured it out of love. Love for the Father first, and love for us too. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.

We're being fooled if we think the Christian life is meant for pleasure and happiness. That it's to experience an unrealistic heaven on earth. The Christian life is meant so we might have joy, hope, and peace in the midst of the war the church is engaged in today and for our own resurrection, ascension, and eternal life in heaven in a day to come.

In Christ, the joy is in the journey. The hope is in the promise of eternal life. And the peace comes in the giving up of ourselves out of love for the Father and for one another as Jesus gave himself up for us.

1 Corinthians 15, 21-23 states, But now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. But each one in his own order, Christ the firstfruits, afterwards those who are Christ's at his coming.

[ 4 : 05 ] One day we will receive what Jesus has already received. He is the firstfruits we follow after. We will conquer Satan's sin and death because he first conquered them on our behalf.

And we are in him. As in Adam, we have fallen under the curse of death. So in Christ, we will rise into the blessing of eternal life.

This is our joy, our hope, and our peace. For today, though, we are on earth, in the war zone, and on the battlefield.

And the battle is raising hot. It's a spiritual battle, but it's nonetheless real. Souls are at stake every day, our own and others.

Are we consciously aware of this? Or is it just Bible speak? Does our life declare this awareness? What? Who are we living for?

[ 5 : 09 ] Are we trying to be as worldly as we can while our conscience tells us we are saved? That's deception. Are we focused on happiness and pleasure from the things of the world?

Are we seeking the forever elusive heaven on earth? 2 Timothy 2.4 exhorts, No one engaged in warfare and tangles himself with the affairs of this life.

That he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. Note that St. Paul does not say we are not to be involved with the affairs of this life.

He does not say that. He says we are not to be entangled, we are not to be interwoven with the affairs of this life. We are not to live for them.

We are not to place our hope in them. We are not to derive our purpose from them. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

[ 6 : 20 ] Philippians 2.7 and 8 states, Jesus made himself a bondservant and humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

This is the mind of Christ that also is to be in us. We are to give ourselves over to God as his bondservants, as men and women who willingly choose to surrender their lives to serve their master.

In St. John 12, verses 25 and 26, Jesus says, He who loves his life will lose it. And he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

If anyone serves me, let him follow me. And where I am, there my servant will be also. As bondservants of Jesus Christ, we are privileged to follow our master and to one day be where he is. But the way the master took is the narrow way he set, the way of passion and crucifixion.

[ 7 : 34 ] Philippians 3.10 and 11 states, Christ's bondservants strive to know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings being conformed to his death.

If by any means we may attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Our lives should be ordered in such a manner that nothing obstructs us or prevents us from reaching this goal.

In 1 Corinthians 16.15, St. Paul states, I urge you, brethren, you know the household of Stephanas that is the firstfruits of Ahiab and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints.

The church that met in the house of Stephanas was devoted to ministering to the saints. In the King James Version, the word devoted here is addicted.

Tasso in Greek. It means order. The Christians meeting in Stephanas' house ordered their lives to minister to the needs of their fellow Christians.

[ 8 : 48 ] They were addicted. They were devoted to one another. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Following Christ and his passion and crucifixion takes more than mere willingness. We must be crucified with Christ and live by his faith right now.

Always say, when the day comes, I will lay down my life for Christ. But will we? How can we if we're not laying down our lives for him now, today?

If we're not laying down our ego, our reputation, our pet pleasures, our comforts, our career goals, our social circles, or any such things.

If we won't lay those simple things down, how will we lay our lives down? Following Jesus and his passion in crucifixion is to be our daily objective.

[ 9 : 51 ] We must make real-time decisions that stand for the kingdom of God and for the salvation of souls today. We live to cast down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and to bring every thought into the captivity and the obedience of Christ.

2 Corinthians 10.5 To do this faithfully and persistently, we must follow Jesus and his passion and crucifixion today.

We must enter into the fray of the battle today, seeing it for what it is, smelling its smell, tasting its tastes, overcoming its fears.

We cannot wait for a day to come. Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Brethren, there was nothing antiseptic about Jesus' passion and crucifixion. There won't be anything antiseptic about ours either. We may not have to shed blood or give our last breath as Jesus did, but we will have to endure the carrying of our cross unto death, dying to ourselves and finding our lives in him.

[ 11 : 24 ] In the war zone, with our spiritual boots on the ground, we follow Jesus and his passion and crucifixion. We are crucified with him.

let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. In the name of the Father, I'm the Son of the Holy Ghost.

Amen.