Palm Sunday Philippians 2:5-11
March 28, 2021 131-133-749*/103-130
*CW-S – "The Love of Christ, Who Died for Me"

Rejoice in Your Palm Sunday King!"
I. See Him in His humiliation.
II. See him in His exaltation.
III. See Him reflected in your daily life.

Dear Christian friends,

Think back to the **first temptation**. The devil needed to make defying our **good and gracious** Creator not as something DESPICABLE but DESIRABLE. **So he promised** Eve that by ignoring God and listening instead to him she would ***"be like God."***

"You will be like God" is still a powerful temptation! That's what makes the lie of evolution **so popular**. Evolution gets rid of God and GUESS WHO gets to **take His place**? We do! We're now king of the hill. Nobody can boss us around. We can live our lives HOWEVER WE WANT to do. We become our **own gods**.

Paul here isn't tempting us to ***"be like God"*** but he is encouraging us to BE LIKE our God. ***"Let this attitude be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."*** As Paul encourages us to LIVE our Christian faith he doesn't lay a **guilt trip** on us. He doesn't crack a whip over us. Paul has us take another look at **Holy Week**. That's what we'll do this morning guided by this thought – REJOICE IN YOUR PALM SUNDAY KING! **Rejoice** as you 1)see Jesus in His **humiliation**, 2)see Jesus in His **exaltation** and 3)see Jesus reflected in your **daily life**.

I. See Him in His humiliation.

No doubt there were OTHER PEOPLE **riding donkeys** into Jerusalem that first Palm Sunday. Crowds of pilgrims were **arriving for** the Passover festival. A person riding a donkey was **not** an UNUSUAL SIGHT. But as we see this **again** we must clearly see the WHOLE PICTURE. We **need** to see exactly who Jesus really is.

Paul leaves no doubts about that. ***"Let this attitude be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Though He was BY NATURE GOD."*** To really understand and appreciate Holy Week we must be clear about this. That man Jesus of Nazareth is also "TRUE GOD, begotten of the Father from eternity." SO we heard at Christmas – Jesus is ***"Immanuel – God with us."*** **So** we caught glimpses in Jesus' **many miracles**. **So** we saw and heard at His **transfiguration**. So we MUST ALSO SEE as we watch Jesus ride that donkey into Jerusalem. **So** we MUST ALSO SEE as we follow Jesus to Gethsemane – see Him mocked and **ridiculed** – bloody and **beaten** – dying - DEAD. ***"Jesus of Nazareth"*** is the **eternal, almighty** Son of God in the flesh. If Jesus is ONLY A GREAT GUY then **Holy Week** is a waste of time.

Jesus ***"was in very nature God"*** yet ***"He did not consider equality with God as a prize to be displayed."*** Jesus didn't parade around town with a HALO over His head. Jesus didn't go bragging, "I'M GOD, you're not!" Jesus didn't exploit His being God – use it for HIS OWN GLORY and **advantage**.

It's just the opposite! Jesus ***"emptied Himself by taking the nature of a servant. He humbled Himself."*** While remaining true God and possessing all His **divine attributes** IN HIS STATE of **humiliation** Jesus didn't use all His divine powers all the time. He who is our **almighty Creator** – ***"didn't come to be served, but to serve"*** – serve US! ***"To serve"*** us not simply as an EXAMPLE for us **to follow** but especially as our SAVIOR from sin and hell.

Jesus as ONLY AN EXAMPLE does us no good. We can never live up to Jesus' example. Jesus lived a life perfect in **every way**. Jesus always gave His heavenly Father PERFECT **love** – perfect **trust** – perfect **obedience**. We owed God EXACTLY THAT kind of life but could never live it. That's our WHOLE PROBLEM, isn't it? We owed God a **perfect life** but we're born **sinful** and **corrupt**. We have a sinful nature that **can't stand** God. WE KNOW **what God wants** yet how often don't we **go and do** the exact opposite? **God wants** us to GLADLY respect and obey our **parents** and teachers – the **boss** and government. Forget that, God! **God wants** us to be content with His blessings – to put Him first in our hearts and lives. TOUGH LUCK, God – not going to happen! Being honest about our **sin** and **guilt** – the death and **hell** we had coming – makes this week SO SPECIAL! Oh rejoice in your **Palm Sunday** King!

"He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross." Jesus was NOT THE ONLY ONE to ride a donkey into Jerusalem. Jesus also wasn't the ONLY ONE to **be crucified**.

Crucifixion was a slow – painful – shameful death. Yet **if** we only see the PHYSICAL suffering of the cross we miss the real meaning of Good Friday. The real hell of the cross was the SPIRITUAL suffering Jesus endured on the cross. The good Jew couldn't miss that – that's what turned many off to Jesus. ***"Anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse,"*** we read in Deuteronomy. HOW could anyone who died ***"under God's curse"*** be the Savior! It's SO OBVIOUS - Jesus is not God but a PATHETIC LOSER!

Jesus COULD HAVE used His **almighty power** and come down from the cross. But He DIDN'T! That's the mystery of the gospel. Jesus – the very Son of God – is also ***"the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."*** It's the great exchange of the gospel. Jesus gives us all the credit for His perfect life. Jesus took the blame for the sins of the whole world and was punished in our place. Recall the familiar passages. ***"The LORD has laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all. God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. For it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.'"***

See Jesus in His **humiliation** and REJOICE! That's how much God LOVES you! **Rejoice** – God's law has been **fulfilled** – your sins have been **fully paid** for – you are forgiven and reconciled with your Creator! **Jesus** DID IT ALL – for all people – ALL BY HIMSELF.

As Jesus rode that donkey into Jerusalem He knew what was **in store**. He had already told the disciples that He would ***"be betrayed – condemned to death – mocked, flogged, crucified."*** Jesus also knew the FINAL OUTCOME – ***"and on the third day rise again."*** Jesus knew that ACCORDING TO **God's plan** the cross would be replaced with the **crown** – His humiliation would GIVE WAY to His **exaltation**. REJOICE as you see Jesus…

II. In His state of exaltation.

"Therefore God also highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

In His state of **exaltation** Jesus has laid aside that ***"nature of a servant"*** and now uses all His divine powers **all the time**. We regularly confess Jesus' **exaltation** in the Apostles' Creed – "He descended into hell, on the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead."

See Jesus now in His **state of exaltation** and REJOICE! The devil has been **conquered** – death **defeated** – heaven **opened**. REJOICE as you see Jesus FIRMLY IN CONTROL ruling over **all** things

and working all things for **His glory** and our **eternal good**. What joy – what peace and comfort are ours AS WE SEE Jesus **in His exaltation**. Life can BE SO SCARY at times. So much of this life is OUT OF **our** control. We don't have all the **answers**. We can't fix every **problem**. But look again and SEE YOUR Jesus! He who died **for us** NOW LIVES and reigns over **all** things. We are safe in **His hands**. Jesus hasn't promised us an EASY life here on earth but He has promised us ETERNAL life in heaven and to be ***"with us always, never to leave or forsake"*** us.

III. See Him reflected in your daily life.

HOW can we not be touched – CHANGED! – by **what we see** this week? Paul feeds our faith this morning with some REAL MEAT and potatoes **doctrine**. There's NO FLUFF here – no cute stories **to charm** us. But there's nothing boring here either! When we clearly see and cling to Jesus AS OUR SAVIOR from sin and death we will also want to **make Him** OUR EXAMPLE to follow. SEE Jesus reflected in your **daily life**.

"Indeed, let this attitude be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." That servant attitude of Jesus **so** goes against the WAYS of this **world** and the thinking of our **sinful nature**. Let's face it – YOUR sinful nature – MY sinful nature – is so PETTY - PROUD – SELFISH – LAZY – STUBBORN. The **sinful nature** is so quick to ask, "**What's** in it FOR ME? What's it going to COST me? WHY should I? **Haven't** I done enough already?" The **sinful nature** is so quick to complain, "GET **somebody** else! I don't feel like it. I'm BUSY!" That **sinful nature** is so quick to COMPLAIN - CRITICIZE and carry grudges.

CONTRAST that with the humble, servant attitude of Him who is ***"by nature GOD."*** Jesus wasn't forced to be our Savior. People took – they STILL TAKE! - advantage of Jesus' **love** – **forgiveness** – **patience** – **help**. But that doesn't stop Jesus from continuing to show that same love, forgiveness, patience, etc. Jesus wasn't dragged kicking and screaming to the cross. In AMAZING GRACE Jesus ***"who was by nature God – became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross"*** ALL FOR US so that we could be forgiven and live forever with Him in heaven.

"Indeed, let this attitude be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Just picture that HUMBLE, SERVANT ATTITUDE of Jesus being lived out in our **homes** – our **marriages** and families – our **church** and school and **community**. Just picture husbands and wives – parents and children – friends and **neighbors** – pastors, teachers and **members** SHOWING and LIVING Jesus' **humble, servant attitude**. What BETTER WAY is there for us to celebrate Holy Week than by clinging **in faith** to our Savior and going out and living JUST LIKE **our Savior**? Amen.

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