

Sunday Morning Message

September 11, 2022

The Triumphal Entry – Are You Sure About Jesus?

The Gospel According to John

Text – John 12:12 - 19

Congregational Reading – John 12:12:12 - 19

Introduction

Read Luke 19:28 – 35 (also Matthew 21:1 – 7; Mark 11:1 – 7) – This will give us a little background info for the story that we will be dealing with today in John’s gospel.

Today in our study of the Gospel of John, we are examining at the story of the Triumphal Entry of our Lord Jesus into the city of Jerusalem, the Palm Sunday story, which serves today to remind us that oftentimes people will decide about Jesus, but will later change their minds, either about Him, or about the Christian life.

Note – when Jesus was in Bethany at the beginning of John 12, we were told that it was six days before the Passover, which according to our calculations would start Thursday evening at sundown. He likely arrived in Bethany during the day on Friday, but the dinner that He went to at Simon the Leper’s home may not have taken place until Friday evening, which is the start of the Sabbath. Here, we are told that it was the next day, but it was probably the day after the Sabbath.

The people of Israel got it right on Palm Sunday. They recognized Jesus as the King of Israel, their Messiah; the One that they had long been waiting for.

However, we also know that in just a few short days, this same crowd that called Him King on Palm Sunday, will also be crying crucify a few days later.

See John 19:1 – 15 – they changed their minds

This morning, I would like to speak to you about the subject: “Are You Sure About Jesus?”

In John 12, on Palm Sunday, the people of Jerusalem cry out: “*Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.*” But then, just a few days later, in John 19, they are claiming that their only king is Caesar; and they are demanding that Jesus be crucified.

How do you go from claiming Christ is your King one day, and then demanding His death a few days later?

My contention is that these folks made a quick profession that was not backed by true Biblical repentance and conviction, which is based upon accurate Biblical knowledge. Their confession of Christ as King was not based upon Biblical Assurance. They are like the people that Jesus spoke of in the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:

"But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." (Matthew 13:20-21)

These folks decided for Christ, but later turned away from Him. They obviously were not sure about Jesus.

Turn to Luke 14:25 – 33 regarding counting the cost.

"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62)

Lot's wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt.

When Elisha determined that it was God's will for him to follow in Elijah's footsteps and be the prophet for Israel, he first went back home and burnt his plow so that he could not go back to farming.

When Jesus was feeding the 5000 and healing people, he had multitudes following him; but when he started talking to them about discipleship, they were no longer sure about Him:

"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." (John 6:66-68)

Too many Christians have such a very minimal understanding of Bible doctrine, which results in their lack of conviction regarding their faith in the Lord; and a lack of assurance that God truly is real, and that He is manifested in the Person of Jesus Christ.

A Biblical conviction is something that you can sink your teeth into, something you can cling to when the feelings of your flesh are telling you to quit believing. A conviction is something you know to be true, not just something you hope to be true. Conviction is an assurance that the things that the Bible says are true about Christ are absolutely true.

Conviction is personal. It is not something that you can receive from your parents. You can see it in your parents and be drawn to it because of their testimony and faith, but it is something that you will have to discover for yourself.

A person with conviction and Biblical assurance can say with the Apostle Paul:

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." - (2 Timothy 1:12)

Paul's faith in the Lord was able to stand up through the attacks of the religious leaders, the atheistic and polytheistic philosophies of the world, the persecutions of the government. Nothing could move Paul from his position of faith that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah of Israel, and Saviour of the entire world.

See Acts 20:17 – 27

Paul had assurance. Paul had conviction. Paul's faith in Christ did not waver when the crowd was going in the other direction.

Back in our text, the crowd got it right, at first, but soon changed their mind about who Jesus is.

Why was that? Why did they change their mind so quickly?

I They Had a Misconception About Who Christ Was and What He Came to Do.

Jesus came to die for the sins of the world. Christ was headed to the Cross. Your sins and my sins, and Israel's sins needed to be paid for.

These people in Jerusalem thought that Christ was coming to put down the Roman authority that was oppressing them.

They thought that Christ was coming to put an end to the corruption of the religious leaders that had been abusing them.

They thought that Christ was coming to set up an earthly kingdom, where they would be protected, and provided for.

They did not think that Christ was coming to die; and they especially didn't think that Christ was coming to die for them, because they didn't recognize their need for a Saviour.

They didn't see themselves as personally needing redemption; they just saw the nation as needing redemption from the enemy of Rome, and the corruption of religion.

Today, there are also many people who profess Christianity who have a misconception about Jesus.

They think that Jesus is going to take all of their problems away, and fix all of their boo boos. Isn't this exactly what Jesus was talking about when He explained the parable of the sower:

"But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." -

(Matthew 13:20-21)

People become very offended when their expectations are not met. The people in our text had wrong expectations. People today have wrong expectations.

If you are saved, Jesus has removed the penalty of sin from your life, and you will never have to worry about Hell again; and praise God for that. However, Christ is not now your Genie who will provide you with your every desire. On the contrary, we are to live for His desire. We are to glorify Him, and sometimes He will ask us to do something that is very uncomfortable, and often very painful in our service for Him. These trials that God puts us through will accomplish two things: they will bring us closer to Him, and they will glorify Him in front of people who do not know Him.

II They Misunderstood the Scriptures

Misconceptions about Christ and Christianity are caused by misunderstandings, and misinterpretations of the Scriptures. It is obvious that these people were very religious, but it is also painfully clear that they possessed little understanding of the Bible.

Jesus told the Pharisees:

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." - (Matthew 22:29)

Therefore, it is imperative that you and I become grounded in the Scriptures.

Remember when Jesus was on the road to Emmaus with two of His disciples:

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." - (Luke 24:25-27)

Jesus basically told them that they misunderstood the purpose of His death because they misinterpreted the Scriptures.

There is much that we do not understand about the Christian life, but all the answers that we need are contained in the Scriptures.

Therefore, it is so important for young believers to go through our discipleship program.

This is also why it is so important for us to be daily in the Word of God.

This is also why it is imperative for us to be in all the services, opening the Bible together, examining and searching out the nuggets of doctrine that we so desperately need to understand and fulfill God's plan and purpose for our lives.

The Scriptures provide solutions that educate us.

The Scriptures provide strength to help us endure.

The Scriptures provide samples to encourage us.

III Their Desire for Misbehavior and Misconduct

Here is another misconception about the Christian life. Unfortunately, there are many people that believe that the Christian life can be lived without repentance of sin.

We will always be sinners, but until a person comes to the place where he sees his sin the way God sees his sin; and until a person recognizes that the wages of sin is death, separation from God, eternally, in the lake of fire – until we see sin as it is – we cannot truly be his disciple.

*"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, **and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.** For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."*

- (John 3:18-21)

We will always be sinners, but a true Christian will always be convicted about His sin and will also have a desire to repent. He may not always win the battle with his sin, but he will constantly be reminded of the inner working of the Holy Spirit, as He works to chip away at the sin and conform the saved sinner to the image of the Sovereign Son of God.

Conclusion

Are you sure about Jesus? Are you sure about what He wants you to do?

Why do people change their mind about Christ? How could somebody call Him their King today, and then cry crucify tomorrow. Because they lack assurance and conviction regarding Who Jesus is, and what the Christian life is truly about.

They have misconceptions about Who Christ is, which are caused by misinterpretations of the Scripture, which in turn can lead to a worship of self, manifesting itself in a desire for misconduct and misbehavior (sin).

The solution is to search the Scriptures. Ask God to reveal Himself to you. Learn who the Jesus of the Bible really is, commit yourself to Him, and count the cost of discipleship.

A.W. Tozer says that people who are crucified with Christ have three distinct marks:

1. they are facing only one direction,
2. they can never turn back, and
3. they no longer have plans of their own.

Are you sure about Jesus? Or will you be like these folks in John 12 and countless others throughout the centuries who say at one point, “I want Jesus”, but will later forsake him.

Where will you be one year from now? Ten years from now? Will you be shouting, “Hosanna” or will you be crying, “crucify” with your godless lifestyle and lack of faithfulness?

You may say, “Not me preacher – I have been saved for 5, 10, 20, 50 years, and I am still a follower of Christ.”

Maybe, you haven’t forsaken Him altogether, but have you lost some of your zeal for Him? Are you as zealous for the Lord today as you once were?

Do you love Him as much today as you once did?

Are you sure about Jesus? Are you sure about His will for your life?