

SRM14042 Palm Sunday 4/13/2014

"The Road to Resurrection: Jericho to Jerusalem"
Mark 10:46-11:11

What would be your response if you heard that your favorite celebrity (singer, film star, sports player, political leader, author) was coming to Gardner for a personal appearance, and a motorcade was being planned? Would you attend? Would you volunteer to be on the planning committee? Would you make a substantial contribution?

This is a little like asking, "Where would you have been if you were a resident or visitor to Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday?".

When Jesus made his final journey to Jerusalem, He knew that it would lead to His painful, humiliating, lonely ordeal of execution by crucifixion, followed by His triumphant resurrection, miraculous appearances, and glorious ascension.

We have seen that on this Road to Resurrection, Jesus has been teaching His disciples about the right way to value strangers, other believers, marriage, children, money and position.

In the midst of it all, He teaches them a new view of life that involves seeing the Messiah they had always looked forward to in a new way.

Before Jesus enters Jerusalem, Mark's story of Jesus records one last miraculous personal encounter that should open our eyes to who He really is.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem on the Sunday before he was executed and resurrected, he entered the city in a kind of parade, to shouts of acclaim in various forms of "Hosanna to the Son of David!". What is the meaning of these words?

ILL: A group of four-year-olds were gathered in a Sunday school class in Chattanooga. Their enthusiastic teacher looked at the class and asked this question: "Does anyone know what today is?" A little four-year-old girl held up her finger and said, "Yes, today is Palm Sunday." The teacher exclaimed, "That's fantastic! That's wonderful! Now does anyone know what next Sunday is?" The same little girl held up her finger and said, "Yes, next Sunday is Easter Sunday." Once again the teacher said, "That's fantastic! Now, does anyone know what makes next Sunday Easter?" The same little girl responded and said, "Yes, next Sunday is Easter because Jesus rose from the grave." But before the teacher could congratulate her, she continued, "But if he sees his shadow, he has to go back in for seven weeks."

That first Palm Sunday, they shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!". What does this mean?

1. The Son of David opens blind eyes.

Mark 10:46-52

It happened in Jericho: v. 46a "Now they came to Jericho."

Jericho was a very old city 15 miles northeast of Jerusalem. It was the place where another "Jeshua" had led God's people in the first victory over a Canaanite city.

In Joshua's day it was a center of pagan religion. It was so wicked, God placed a curse on anyone who would rebuild it.

In Jericho we find a beggar in a desperate state: v. 46b "As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging."

Bartimaeus was a nobody. Handicapped, known only as his father's son, (Bar-Timaeus), a beggar.

His genuine Faith begins with a cry for mercy.

v.47 "And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Bartimaeus hears a crowd coming; asks what the commotion is about and is told that the one coming is Jesus of Nazareth, a term of derision by many of Jesus' critics.

Bartimaeus' response, however, is one of Faith. "Son of David" is a known messianic title, and Bartimaeus is the only one in Mark to address Jesus this way.

He was one of the first outside the apostles to proclaim Jesus to be the Messiah, and he is not shy: he shouts it out.

Pastor Bob Lentz points out five things we can learn about recovery from whatever is plaguing you from Bartimaeus, and #1 is "seize the moment."

"I wonder how many divine moments have come and gone because we've been so preoccupied with ourselves that we let Jesus pass us by? Bartimaeus may have been blind, but he wasn't dumb. He recognized a divine moment and he jumped on it."

But he knows that Faith in the Messiah begins with a cry for mercy.

The first fact of the gospel: All people are sinners

Genuine Faith is not deterred by other people.

v. 48 "Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

The other pilgrims did not appreciate Bartimaeus' shouting, & tried to silence him, but he just got louder. Lentz #2 "Ignore negative people."

"On this particular day, something clicked in Bartimaeus' heart. He somehow knew that his real hope was in Jesus, not the crowd."

Christians today are called to loudly proclaim Jesus as Messiah. Are we easily silenced?

Why are so many half-hearted in their pursuit of Christ? It is because they are not yet desperate over their sins, and the disease of their own souls.

God responds to a determined Faith: v. 49 "So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you."

Bartimaeus' Faith caused Jesus to stop, and to personally invite him to approach.

When you call out to God with conviction, He will take notice. It affects others, too. Suddenly the attitude of the others around him changes from "Shut up!" to "Cheer up!"

Bartimaeus' determination is seen in a Demonstration of faith: v. 50 "And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus."

Blind people don't throw things aside that they care about finding again.

It was probably all he owned, and was probably what he laid on the ground to collect "alms", but he does not hesitate to throw it aside.

His actions are consistent with a determination to trust in Christ alone.

Lentz: #3 "Surrender your old life."

"In this very same chapter we see the man we call the Rich Young Ruler coming to Jesus and asking him how to have eternal life. Jesus basically said, "Repent and turn away from the things that keep you from following me." But the young man couldn't do it, he couldn't give up his stuff, he was unwilling to surrender his old lifestyle so he walked away from Jesus."

Faith in Christ as the Lord expects things only God can do. v. 51 "So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight."

Bartimaeus could not see, but he Believed what he heard from others. Jesus later said to Thomas, "... Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." John 20:29

- that means you and me.

Lentz: #4 "Know what you need."

"If I could get you to see today that your greatest need isn't a new job, better car, or more money, but it's a relationship with Jesus, then you'd be on the road to recovery and I would have done my job as your pastor."

"Bartimaeus was smart enough to know that no one could give him his sight except God Himself. And so he turned to Jesus and he wasn't disappointed. When you figure out what your needs are, there's only one person you can turn to...Jesus."

Because of his view of Christ, Bartimaeus is not afraid to ask for the impossible.

What does God want you to ask him for?

Faith in Christ receives things only God can give. v. 52a "Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well."

Jesus says to him, "Go", as he says to all who trust in him. Note his response: v. 52b "And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road."

He becomes a disciple, and the fact that his name was known by the apostle probably indicates that he continued to follow Christ.

Lentz: #5 "Live out your faith."

"When Jesus said, "your faith has healed you", the word he used for "healed" is the same word for salvation. You see, Jesus doesn't just meet your needs; he exceeds your needs. Bartimaeus' life wasn't changed just because he had eyes to see, but even more so because he had a faith to follow."

Trans: The Son of David opens blind eyes.

2. The Son of David confirms the scriptures.

Mark 11:1-7

A. Jesus chose a symbol of humility by riding into Jerusalem on a donkey's colt. v. 1-7

"Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples; 2 and He said to them, "Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it. 3 And if anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it,' and immediately he will send it here." 4 So they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door outside on the street, and they loosed it. 5 But some of those who stood there said

to them, "What are you doing, loosing the colt?" 6 And they spoke to them just as Jesus had commanded. So they let them go. 7 Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it."

The people's idea of a Messiah was one of military power to overthrow the Romans & give them political freedom, but Jesus' choice was a statement that His Kingdom was not that kind.

It was a symbol of humility. Jesus introduced a Kingdom unlike those of this world.

We know from Matthew that they had to borrow the donkey mare with the colt. The colt and the makeshift saddle were borrowed because He never had any of the riches of the world.

B. Matthew also reminds us that Jesus did this in confirmation of the Old Testament prophet Zechariah 9:9-10 (NKJV) "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be 'from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.'"

If the people had read the scriptures carefully, they would have known better than to expect a military hero to overthrow Rome.

And Christians today would be much less deceived if they would only read and trust in the Bible.

In his new book, Taking God at His Word: Why the Bible Is Knowable, Necessary, and Enough, and What That Means for You and Me, Kevin DeYoung uses the acronym, SCAN to highlight four essential characteristics of the Bible: Sufficiency, Clarity, Authority, and Necessity.

Sufficiency. The Scriptures contain everything we need for knowledge of salvation and godly living. We don't need any new revelation from heaven.

Clarity. The saving message of Jesus Christ is plainly taught in the Scriptures and can be understood by all who have ears to hear it. We don't need an official magisterium to tell us what the Bible means.

Authority. The last word always goes to the word of God. We must never allow the teachings of science, of human experience, or of church councils to take precedence over Scripture.

Necessity. General revelation is not enough to save us. We cannot know God savingly by means of personal experience and human reason. We need

God's word to tell us how to live, who Christ is, and how to be saved.

In other words, God's Word is enough, clear, final, and necessary. And Jesus riding a donkey into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday is a confirmation of it.

Trans: so The Son of David opens blind eyes, the Son of David confirms the scriptures, and

3. The Son of David saves people from sin.

Mark 11:8-11

v. 8-10 (ESV) "And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. 9 And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! 10 Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!"

"Hosanna" means "Save now," and it becomes evident that they thought the Messiah would give them wealth, health, power and security. In the cry, "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" they indicated the kind of Messiah they sought.

The Jews were oppressed by foreign governments from the time of the Babylonian Captivity. They believed that the Messiah, the Son of David, would come to save the people of Israel from the oppression of alien governments.

The people of Jesus' day were no different from those today who are looking for God to give them money, power and personal gratification; they see their salvation as "feeling good."

But Jesus came to defeat a bigger enemy than Caesar and Rome. He came to deliver people from Satan and Death. Earthly wealth, health, power and security cannot do that. His kingdom is greater !

Look again at this crowd. Who is there as the people wave their palm branches before Jesus and pave the road with their clothing? I would imagine Bartimaeus is there. I would imagine Zacchaeus is there. I would imagine that Lazarus was there, along with Mary and Martha. That crowd was full of people He had healed, delivered and ministered to and they were praising Him.

After the Palm Sunday parade, v. 11 "And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve."

Jesus looked at the people and at the temple. Today He looks at you and me, and at the church.

Then, he saw blindness and bondage to sin, so He fought the fight through death, and brought life, and He still is doing this today. Jericho to Jerusalem.

Action: Ask Jesus to heal your spiritual blindness, and open your spiritual eyes.

Make a new commitment to reading the Bible this week.

Pray “Hosanna” to make Him your King.

Joseph Bayly in Psalms of My Life “A Psalm for Palm Sunday”:

King Jesus, why did you choose a lowly ass to carry you to ride in your parade?

Had you no friend who owned a horse—a royal mount with spirit for a king to ride?

Why choose an ass, small, unassuming beast of burden trained to plow not carry kings?

King Jesus, why did you choose me, a lowly unimportant person to bear you in my world today?

I’m poor and unimportant, trained to work not carry kings—let alone the King of kings, and yet you’ve chosen me to carry you in triumph in this world’s parade.

King Jesus, keep me small so all may see how great you are; keep me humble, so all may say,

“Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord,” not what a great ass he rides.