

Easter 2017

Palm Sunday – What's it about.

Mark 11:1-11

Mark 11:1-11 (ESV)

¹ Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples

² and said to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it.

³ If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'"

⁴ And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it.

⁵ And some of those standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?"

⁶ And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go.

Jesus knows

- a. Where stuff is v2
- b. People's responses v6

What has that got for us?

Jesus knows stuff about us. (Actually warts and all – knows our deep thoughts and our most hidden secrets)

Jesus knows how we will respond. This is a tough one to get to grips with. Jesus knows how you will respond. How? He made you. God made you, if Jesus is God is part of that process. He knows how you are put together. Like those gifts Nick talked about last week. He put you together in a way that compliments the rest of this congregation. He put together your personality type and knows how that affects your thought processes. He knows you.

The other thing which is inferred in this passage but not stated is. Jesus has a reason for doing things. This whole donkey thing must have been a bit weird for the disciples but Jesus has a purpose.

Look at it.

⁷ And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it.

The purpose of getting the donkey was for Jesus to ride on it.
The purpose was for Jesus to ride on it and be glorified.

This appears to be a spontaneous reaction of worship. Again Jesus knew how these people would react. Jesus knew they would react in worship and praise. (hey does He know that about us when we come to church)
Look what they did.

⁸ And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields.

They took off their coats and laid them down in homage in front of the donkey as Jesus rode past.

What's this about, its weird?

That kind of celebration was reserved for victors in battle. It was a hugely high complement. Why?

Well your coat was one of your most treasured possessions. You wore it to stay warm, but you also used it as a blanket at night, actually, without it you froze in winter. You didn't want anything to happen to your coat.

What about leafy branches, usually translated as palms? Well when they ran out of coats, they wanted to keep going! They worshipped with anything they could find. You wouldn't want to own a florist shop on that road!

Notice on our banner – a symbol of Palm trees and symbol of Coats. (Use pictures of the symbols as well as the banner)

This banner will be hung over on the wall so you can see it and remember worship from a Palm Sunday perspective. (I do wonder why they called it Palm Sunday instead of Coat Sunday?) (Thanks Liesbeth Lukins for getting this and the banners for the rest of the easter story done for us.)

Here's the thing for us. What are we willing to lay down in front of Jesus to worship him?
Are we willing to lay down our most precious items?
Are we willing to "find" ways to worship when it's not church?

Heres a thing.

How do you see worship of Jesus?

A personal relationship

Through a window (Maybe a stained glass window)

On a computer screen?

How do we see worship of Jesus?

A Hymn

A contemporary song

A church service

A Bible reading

If we see worship of Jesus as these things what happens when we don't get them?

We need to be willing to worship.

It's a problem for the modern church isn't it. **What is worship or what is valid worship?**

I think we need to flip our concepts of I can't worship to that music or that song to **How do you want me to worship in this situation God?**

In other words:

Come expecting to worship no matter what happens.

Come expecting to worship if there is no music

Come expecting to worship (Full Stop)

If you can't worship to that song or that style – find a way.
Throw your coat on the floor – try that.

Notice what happens next – it gets verbal.

⁹ **And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"**

Hey this is an old Testament quote (Psalm 118: 26)

But what is this hosanna thing?

Greek ὡσαννά, hōsanná = save or rescue

Translated it means save me.

So the verse could read:

Save me, you are blessed because you come in the name of the Lord.

When you sang hosanna in that song before you were saying to God – save me!!! I don't know what your week was like, but crikey that sounds valid to me!

They kept going. (Now we assume they said other things too but these statements give us the idea!)

¹⁰ **Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!"**

Hey this is Old Testament stuff too. Not a direct quote but if you Look at Isaiah 9, and 11 Jeremiah 23 that's what it's about. This is linking the Old Testament to Jesus!!!! Prophetic stuff here.

Notice the wording – Blessed and hosanna again. Yep, being saved is a blessing and it's Jesus who does it!

Notice what Jesus does next.

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.**

He had a look around, why – well here's your homework – read the next part of the chapter. Or come tonight and we will unpack the next bit for you.

But before we go.

What do you want to lay before God as worship.

You have two bits of paper. One has a palm leaf, the other a coat. What do you want to give Jesus as worship, right now. Write it down and as we play this last song and as you leave, come out and throw it on the floor as a final act of worship today.