

PALM SUNDAY
Passion History Commentary

Two things, that's what I would like you to take away from the service today. Two things, short and sweet. Two things.

First, I want you to be able to answer this question: How serious is sin? Here's the answer: It's God crowned with thorns, whipped, spat upon, mocked, covered with dust and blood, nailed to a cross, "***My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?***" serious. Next time you're tempted to ask whether something God has clearly said is wrong is really so wrong, remember that. When you are tempted to think of the Ten Commandments as ten suggestions, remember that. Ignoring suggestions doesn't put God on a tree to die. Breaking commandments does.

Sin has a price. A high price. As St. Paul reminds us in Romans, "***The wages of sin is death.***" When you are tempted, look for the way out that our Lord has promised to provide. When you feel helpless or addicted, lean upon Him who was strong enough to carry you on His shoulders. When you've fallen into sin, repent as He urges you. You can't argue out of the devil's accusations when you've sinned. When he's got you, he's got you. If you've done it, you've done it. The only reasonable thing to do is to return to Him who has crushed the serpent's head, cast out demons and stopped their blasphemous tongues.

Second, knowing the seriousness of sin and its high cost, ponder the boundless love of Christ. Your Jesus dies to put to death your old Adam. Your Jesus rises for a new man to daily arise and live before Him. Your Jesus enters Jerusalem today, knowing full well what awaits Him—suffering and death—to the shouts of "***Hosanna,***" "***Lord, save us,***" and He does so to do just that, to save you and even those who whose shouts turned all too quickly to "***Crucify!***" Add your ***hosanna*** to the chorus, and know that He hears you, and know that He does everything necessary for you to be His Father's child, to find a place in His kingdom, to be washed of all your iniquity. See how your Jesus loves you. Let that chase out all doubt or any hesitancy you might have to fall before Him. Wave your palm branches for your King, and know that He will weave those palms into a marvelous crown, a crown of life, a crown, not for Himself, but for you. His is the victory, and you are the prize—the prize He presses on to make His own.

Two things. Sin is indeed, and contrary to many rumors otherwise, still sin. And sin is serious. And sin has a price you don't want to have to pay, that you certainly never could pay, even in a thousand years in hell, even in an eternity in hell. But Christ has paid it for you. He has been forsaken by His Father for you to be found, bound for you to be set free from damnation's grasp. Heaven is yours, not because you've earned it, but because this week Jesus earns the right to bestow it, and how can He not bestow it upon those He loves with and through so much passion? Receive it through the faith He Himself gives. And never trade it for anything, no matter what. Your ticket to eternity is signed with God's own blood. Hold on to it with both hands and with a determination that matches its inestimable worth. Amen.