

Coffee to Go | Palm Sunday

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

humility, Jesus, scripture, Jerusalem, hosanna, pathway, leader, triumphal entry, crowds, holy, serve, Christianity

SPEAKERS

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Josh Mangelson 00:17

Welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.

Karin Peter 00:28

Welcome to Coffee to Go, where we center ourselves in the scriptures, seasons, and holy days of the Christian tradition. I'm Karen Peter, and I'm here with Blake Smith, and we welcome you on the journey with Jesus through the liturgical year. So our question is, where are we with Jesus this week? Well, this week is Palm Sunday, which means we have reached a part of our journey that we have been aiming for for several weeks during Lent, we have reached Jerusalem. This is the day on Sunday that the Church celebrates that Jesus and the disciples or we could say, just the followers of Jesus, this is a day they arrive at their destination Jerusalem for the Passover. So in Christian tradition and scripture, a lot of times you will see Palm Sunday referred to as the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. And this is due to the prophecy that a great leader or a king would come to liberate Jewish people from oppressive alien rule, in this case from Rome. And the arrival of Jesus is in the in the Scripture text is cast in images that invoke how great leaders or great victors in battle would enter a city. They would come in on the back of a mighty steed, and leaves and flowers would be thrown down to cushion the pathway or just prevent the leader's horse from walking on dirt through the pathway. And people would shout praise and acclaim to the victor from a great battle or as a great ruler. But in the Scripture, even as these images are in vogue, they're alluded to, they're also kind of mocked in a way or kind of maybe turned on their head, because Jesus doesn't arrive on a great steed and a triumphal entry, triumphal is ironic here. Jesus enters on a borrowed donkey. So there's more to learn in this passage. So on this day, we celebrate that Jesus, who we know as Lord, has entered into Jerusalem. But we also understand that there's more to it than that as we look ahead, at what is to come. So Blake, how about sharing our Scripture with us.

Blake Smith 03:10

All right, our scripture comes from Mark the 11th chapter, the first through the 11th verse. When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethpage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you. And immediately you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her, Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you just say this, The Lord needs

them, and He will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, tell the daughter of Zion, look, your King is coming to you, humble and mounted on a donkey. And on a colt, the foal of a donkey. The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them, they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them. And he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him, and that followed, were shouting "Hosanna, to the Son of David, blessing as the one who comes in the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest heaven." When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil asking, Who is this? The crowds were saying, this is the Prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee. We often talk about how Jesus is countercultural, I mean, as you mentioned, the Karins when leaders came into the town that was truly a triumphal entry, they usually come from a battle and they were, you know, in their full regalia and the flags and horns and all of this and Jesus comes in, in a completely, completely different way. Humility in leadership is, is not the norm. In many cultures today, I would say that, I don't know of any. Leadership is meant to be strong and forthright and all of that. And so humility and leadership to come riding in on a donkey. Yet this passage summons us to model this same humble discipleship. So we've learned about humility through this Lenten season, we've been called to be humble, we've been asked to go through the difficult process of self-examination. And it doesn't stop there. Jesus' life is about humility and, and leadership in a way that is so countercultural and different from what we would expect. And humility is a theme that will occur over and over in this Holy Week. Christianity is rooted in humility, it's not looking to win or control or dictate or oppress. And you might be thinking to yourself, well, this is not the way the Christianity I know, lives out. I mean, Christianity, in the minds and perspectives of a lot of people is used as a political and social weapon, we see that, quite honestly, in our culture today, this is not something of the past, it is used abusively, if you will, spiritual abuse. And the Bible is used as a weapon we, we pull passages from it that we can use to diminish someone else's value or worth or to prove our value or worth. And that's just not what Christianity is about. It's completely in opposition to Christianity. And Jesus shows us this in this passage. He wasn't recognized because he didn't come in the way a leader would come in. Why did people have to ask "who is this?" This is not what we were expecting. This is not the Messiah., We're waiting for that to come. Hosanna is an appeal for divine help. Hosanna a savior, Lord, liberate us. These people were in a place of desperation waiting for that extravagant gift that we've talked about previously. In other episodes, this is about humility, it is the ultimate beginning to this week of humility. As we move into Holy Week. I think that's what for me what is important about this passage is picking up the depth of humility. And it's not the first time Jesus has done this. Here's the guy you know, born in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes not coming as the king, this is really who Jesus is. And he doesn't, he doesn't deter from that, ever.

Karin Peter 07:47

Yeah, I think that is really relevant. We forget sometimes how relevant scripture is to our, to our current culture, with, with humility being a problem, then and humility being a problem now for many of us. So there's lots of ways we can experience this kind of "Palm Sunday" experience this week. So one of them is to practice humility in your words and actions. And this is one that I tried to do on a regular basis. And I just went counter to it, but that sentence, so let me explain it. As you write emails, and as you text people or message people this week, try to do it without starting your sentences with "I." It's amazing how many times when you go to write an email you're starting with "I." I am writing to tell you, I would like to know, I need whatever. And instead, try to start it with something else. So that you're not

putting yourself first and central to the communication. So that it isn't all about me by starting everything with "I." So going back and looking when I write emails even now as part of a spiritual practice for myself, reviewing them to see how many sentences I began with "I" as part of my email life now to see what am I really putting first and foremost in this communication. So practice humility in your emails and texting this week. Starting your sentences without "I." Be a servant in your home this week. Serve dinner to everyone at your table. Maybe you're a family that sits or a household that sits around the table and you pass the food dishes around. Well, just for this week, you be the server that serves everyone or perhaps in in your family your grab your food and eat in front of the TV kind of family. Well, make a point to serve everyone first, before doing anything else and pay attention. Prepare your plate. Fill your cup last to pay attention to any feeling that springs up in you. What does it feel like to put everyone else first and serve yourself last. Leaves and branches, as you mentioned, were laid on the road you make the pathway softer or are easier as a sign of reverence and acclaim. So what can you do to make someone's path easier this week? What can you do? It's still cold while we're recording this, and I'm thinking, what would it look like to serve someone, and instead of leaves and branches, but to go out and warm up someone's car for them before they leave for work? Is that the same kind of a feeling? Is that the same kind of experience? Or maybe simply with your family sweep the walkway or steps of your neighbors? And talk about humility as a family practice? What does it look to do that without wanting to get recognized? Or have acclaim for simply making the pathway softer or easier for your neighbors? All good things, that you can try to experience a little bit of this Palm Sunday message in your own life this week?

Blake Smith 11:09

That's great. Karen, I found myself thinking, Oh, I wonder if I want to even go back and look at my sent emails for the last week. No, no, no, I don't think I do. Because I can only imagine how many times I use "I" at the beginning.

Karin Peter 11:27

Yeah, I have discovered I do too. I want, I need, I'm writing to ask, I, I, I, I. So yeah, it's alright, to go back. That's a good practice.

Blake Smith 11:37

Yeah. I mean, I would have argued that that was good communication skills. But boy, it does sound very "me" centered

Karin Peter 11:44

Only for a week only for Palm Sunday week.

Blake Smith 11:48

I just going to have to quit writing emails. I think I don't I think I'll be stifled, I won't be able to do it. So that leads us to our time where we ask what questions might we ponder this week, especially this week of Holy Week, and we are now in Jerusalem moving toward Easter. So the questions I would ask, "If I were in the crowd welcoming Jesus, what would I be waving? What would I be waving in the current context? I live in a pretty cold area, geographical area, of the country? Do I want to lay down my coat but don't even take it off and sacrifice that warmth? What are you waving? What am I waving? And

what do you cry out? And these people again, they were they're crying out Hosanna? An appeal for divine help. Do you have that depth of need in your life right now in this place? That we can cry out in joy or in anguish? What would you cry out? Another question... Do I have difficulty being humble? Is it hard for me to be humble? And when is it most difficult for me to be humble? What kind of situations or circumstances might I find myself in this week, where it would be hard to be humble? How many conversations that we get and where we know we're right. And to take a step back and listen to the other perspective, an act of humility? And what are some of the ways I can develop a deeper sense of humility in my walk with Jesus? What are some ways I can develop a deeper sense of humility in my walk with Jesus? Well, before I give our blessing to close this out this week, I want to just remind our listeners that this week, being Holy Week, we have some special episodes coming up. We'll have episode on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Of course, we'll have an episode on Easter. And we invite you to join us with that. I want to close out with this blessing from Psalm 118, which is also part of the liturgical calendar this week. Guide us to the gates of righteousness and wholeness, that we may enter through them giving thanks to you, oh, God. May we open our eyes and ears to your salvation, the redeeming grace that reconciles all Creation unto you. May your humility and peace be found in all we do? Amen, amen. We invite you to join us here at Coffee to Go for the next part of our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition. Don't forget that, this week,. that means Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Josh Mangelson 14:36

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