

“The Mind of Christ” – Pr Jim Sprengle
Palm Sunday / Sunday of the Passion – March 29, 2026

- I. **Philippians 2:5** – Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.
- II. **Palm Sunday has so many good memories connected to it.**
 - a. I remember back in the days of my own kids, they would be lined up with their little palm branches... and today, my grandchildren are probably doing that at their home church.
 - i. It’s a day that reminds me of springtime, of the rugged cross, of Holy Week, and of the song that has been stuck in my head all week, “All Glory, Laud, and Honor” that we sang today.
 - ii. During this time of year, I have all kinds of good things in my mind.
 - b. Today, our minds are on the spirit of Palm Sunday and Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem... but I wonder what was on Jesus’ mind that day?
 - i. I read a great devotion from Lutheran Hour Ministries that gives us a lot to think about regarding what Jesus experienced.
 - ii. The devotion points out that everything Jesus had was borrowed that day: the donkey, the cloaks for a saddle, the clothing thrown on the road, and the palm branches were all borrowed for the day.
 - iii. Yet, Jesus wants it to be this way, as He rides into Jerusalem with humility... and that is a picture of His whole life.
 - iv. Here’s how the author of the devotion put it, “This is the King who loved us so much, He came down from heaven and became a human being, formed in the body of His mother like any human child. This is the King who was born in temporary housing and put to sleep in a feeding trough. This is the King who became a refugee before He was five, and returned home to grow up in Nowheresville. Everything is borrowed, everything is humble, everything is unprepared. Except for His own heart...”¹
 - v. That’s pretty much what Paul writes in our reading today... as Jesus “emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (vv 7-8)
 - c. So I guess we understand a little more about what was on Jesus’ mind that day when He rode into Jerusalem... but there is more.
 - i. More than all the things that went into this big event... and even more than His own obedience to His Father’s will... He had people in mind.
 - ii. He had you in mind... no one is outside of His love and sacrifice... as Jesus faced His death knowing that He was the Messiah and the only one who could save us all from our sins.

- III. **Thus, in a few short days we will worship together on Good Friday.**
- a. Philippians says that Jesus “humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (v 8)
 - b. Many of us remember Good Friday at Ascension as a service of darkness, or Tenebrae, along with the altar stripped of everything... and even the cross covered in darkness.
 - i. The 7 black candles on the altar are extinguished one by one as I read sections of the Gospel of John and Isaiah.
 - ii. As the lights dim and Paschal candle is carried out of the sanctuary, we sit in darkness as the rugged cross is then carried out as well.
 - iii. Then, the Paschal candle is returned, which helps us remember Easter is coming... and then we leave in silence as we walk by the rugged cross.
 - iv. It is our yearly opportunity to remember the suffering and death of our beloved Savior, and many of us leave with a somber and heavy heart, as we see the significance of our sin and what it cost.
 - c. Yet, notice the change... from the crazy crowds, praise, and welcome of Jesus... to silence.
 - i. The crowds and people everywhere to a single Man upon the cross.
 - ii. From glory in the eyes of the people to complete humiliation.
 - d. To be clear, it's more than just humiliation, but it has to do with the reason God needed to send His Son... Jesus takes the sin of the world upon Himself.
 - i. The curse that began with Adam and Eve did not disappear... it was placed on Christ... our sin was reckoned to Him, and He paid for it in full.
 - ii. God's righteous punishment was not put on us, but on His own Son.
- IV. **As we contemplate Jesus on the cross**, what do think was on His mind?
- a. We can see some of the thoughts on His mind as look at the Gospel accounts.
 - i. In Luke 23:43, Jesus had His mind on someone else, as He told the thief on the cross, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise.”
 - ii. As the soldiers who brutalized and tortured Him were gambling for His clothes, He said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34)
 - iii. In John 19 He makes sure His mother Mary was cared for, telling John, “Woman, behold, your son!” And to John, “Behold, your mother.” (John 19:26-27)
 - iv. And, instead of calling down an army of angels to destroy every last one of those people and Jerusalem... He obediently had in mind the ones who were cursed by sin.

- v. In the final moments He said, "It is finished," (John 19:30), which means that He completed the sacrifice that would be enough.

V. **Today, we bring together Palm Sunday and Good Friday.**

- a. We see a glimpse of what was in the mind of Jesus... and what He needed to do for our salvation.
- b. He knew that obedience meant torture and death... and a death that no one should ever suffer as He was crucified without mercy.
- c. Yet, He still humbled Himself unto death... for the men, women, and children who cheered Him into Jerusalem... for the Pharisees and the Romans who had Him executed... and even for you... and me... and all people... Jesus had you in His mind as He gave up His life.
- d. To remember this day, some of us take a palm branch cross and put it somewhere as a reminder of the love that Jesus has for us.
- e. You might think about that too, as you put it in your house... in your car... at your desk... or maybe your kitchen... and you remember the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- f. Remember... just like in the Lambs Lesson... remember and believe that Jesus had you in mind when He rode into Jerusalem... and when He was on the cross. Amen.

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