

Palm Sunday Parade: The High's and Lows Philippians 2:5-11

⁵In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶Who, being in very nature^[a] God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature^[b] of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

⁸And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Lord bless our Pastor's preaching, And all our hearing too

And after all is said and done we may believe and do.

Marchers in the Palm Sunday Parade.

The New Year's Day Rose bowl parade is amazing. The floats are huge and include all sorts of fun things. The bands and sounds are pleasant and popular to the ear. Crowds gather. Then the roses from which this parade gets its name.

Ever march in a parade? Fun. Tossing candy. Handing out brochures for our church or preschool. Waving to people.

Hearing your name being called out from the crowd to get your attention.

Today is Palm Sunday. You might call it a parade. In the city of Jerusalem it begins. It focuses on a king riding a lowly donkey into the city. We see the high's today. We see the low's later this week.

Palm Sunday has some elements of a parade. Cheering and excited praise was shouted out by the crowd. These familiar words we learned already when we were young:

HOSANNA! TO THE SON OF DAVID! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD! HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST! (Hosanna means Save).

Large crowd placed their cloaks on the donkey and on the road. Other cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Excited Praise....A high point of this parade.

But there are lows as the parade ends outside the city.

He lowered himself. We call this his humiliation.

From the Apostles creed we confess these 6 steps of Jesus emptying himself of his power.

He was conceived by the Holy Spirit; Born of the virgin Mary

Suffered under Pontius Pilate. Was crucified, died, and was buried.

MADE HIMSELF NOTHING. That's how low he would go. TOOK THE VERY NATURE OF A SERVANT. Did he not do this when he earlier washed his disciples feet. Then we see the parade coming to an end:

HE HUMBLLED HIMSELF AND BECAME OBEDIENT TO DEATH-EVEN DEATH ON A CROSS!

Lows in between. A betrayer among the group. Right there in the Garden of Gethsemane. A denier. Peter. No-one he said: I don't know the man. Unfair trial. Blood thirsty soldiers. Whipping. Beating. Loss of blood. Being spit on. Slapped in the face. A king alright. One who wore a crown of thorns. A wavering governor-Pontius Pilate. A death that was brutal. How low this parade would go.

Earthly leaders seek victory with strength. They build up their armies, train soldiers. Gather masses, use the most recent weaponry. All to gain the battle victory. They use their strength.

Jesus was different. He was the one man army. By himself. He hid himself of his almighty power to become the substitute and carry out the Father's plan to save sinful mankind. Paul describes how Jesus sunk down to the depths with his humiliation.

How low would he go? To the depths no other man could go. HE BECAME OBEDIENT TO DEATH-EVEN DEATH ON THE CROSS!

But God lifted him up. (exalt means to lift up). Recall these continued words of the Apostles Creed.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven. He sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Words to describe a high, glorious victory.

He descended into hell-the forces of hell defeated. Satan Easter can not and is not cancelled. The devil tried but failed.

He rose, Easter-Death could not hold him down. He was in the grave for three days-like he said-but no more, He is Risen.

He ascended into heaven-Heaven's doors are flung wide open and a room is prepared and ready for those believers on Palm Sunday and believers still today who call on his name.

He sits at the right hand of God-a position of power and authority. Virus sufferers remember this because of this position Jesus has. He holds tightly the reins in heaven and earth and always will. Our world will not spin out of control. Paul says GOD EXALTED HIM TO THE HIGHEST PLACE.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead-He will take believers, you and I to share his glory.

This parade has its highs and lows. From the highs of Palm Sunday and thru lows of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Jesus the one on the donkey has the name that is ABOVE EVERY NAME. Luke says of this name in Acts 4:12: SALVATION IS FOUND IN NO ONE ELSE FOR THERE IS NO OTHER NAME UNDER

HEAVEN GIVEN TO MEN BY WHICH WE MUST BE SAVED. That one name is Jesus. God the Father was well pleased with him. He is the only one with that name Savior. Savior from sin.

AT THE NAME OF JESUS EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH AND UNDER THE EARTH, AND THAT EVERY TONGUE CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER.

Every Knee will bow. Every tongue will confess. Right now the believers and the angels perfectly praise the One on high in heaven. Believers, even those on Palm Sunday and today praise him imperfectly. We echo that praise. Unbelievers on the last day will make confession to their shame and disgrace. The devils will openly confess their utter frustration. Believers on that day will confess the most important truth in all the universe. They will continually rejoice that Jesus is Lord. This confession and praise will glorify the Father, Who sent Jesus on this saving mission.

The Christian life like Jesus' life, travels the path of humility to glory, from the cross to the crown, because Jesus has graciously determined it should be that way.

Holy Week high's and lows. A parade to praise Jesus as Savior, a parade to the lows of death. A parade which ends on a high. God bless your celebration of the one so low and so high. Amen.

Readings for Palm Sunday

1st Lesson: Zechariah 9:9-10

Psalm: 24

2nd Lesson: Philippians 2:5-11

Gospel: Matthew 21: 1-11