

Join the Parade

Intro

- We are continuing in our Series on Lent
- Reminder= Baptism on Easter Sunday
- 2 weeks ago= Real Community
 - Talked about the job of the community of faith (the church) to nurture believers, especially new believers
 - How Jesus responds to these is how we ought to
- Last week= Believe
 - Looked at the Story of Lazarus being raised from the dead
 - What it means to truly believe
- This week= Join the Parade
 - Palm Sunday
 - We begin our walk with Jesus through the final days and hours of his life on this earth.

Matthew 21:1-11 ESV

1 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. 3 If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once." 4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'" 6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. 8 Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" 10 And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" 11 And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

Parade

- Characters in the story
 - Jesus
 - Marching to his death
 - Disciples
 - Been with Jesus for almost 3 years now
 - His closest friends,
 - Most trusted allies, exception=Judas
 - Residents in and around Jerusalem
 - Heard about Jesus
 - Witness to his miracles

- Pilgrims from a far away land
 - Maybe never heard about Jesus
 - Been told something upon arrival
 - Came to celebrate Passover
 - Probably the ones that asked “Who is this” (v.10)
- Religious leaders
 - Skeptical of Jesus
 - Don’t want anything to jeopardize their power
- Who are you in this story
 - Not Jesus
 - Residents
 - Heard about Jesus
 - Witnessed some stuff
 - But still in your own comfortable situation
 - Not willing to risk anything
 - Pilgrims
 - Never heard about Jesus
 - At least not in an intimate way
 - Came for something else
 - Asking yourself “Who is this?”
 - Religious
 - Been in “the game” a long time
 - Don’t want to jeopardize your status
 - Following Jesus will make you look weak
 - Confess sin, repent
 - Not as good as you want everyone to think
- Call to action
 - Lewis Lane “Pew Sitter”
 - On the sidelines- Bystanders
 - Not in the game
 - Cheered Jesus on Palm Sunday
 - Swayed by Friday to yell “Crucify Him”
 - But the truth is, God calls us to do more than just show up and watch. God calls us to do more than wave our palm fronds as Jesus goes parading by.
 - God calls us to get up and go with him. God calls us to follow Jesus into lives of discipleship. God calls us to join the parade, to put boots on the ground and start marching.
 - We Must be his disciples following him
 - then Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. 3 If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once." 4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 "Say

to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'" 6 **The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them.**

- Following Jesus to his death
 - Not necessarily what we want to hear
 - Colossians 2:12-13 ESV
having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,
- Disciples weren't perfect
 - Followed him into the city
 - With him in the upper room
 - In the garden
 - Said that they would die with him
 - Time came= Scattered
 - All except John
 - Peter gets a bad rap for denying him three times
 - Where were the other 9?, (John, Peter, Judas)
 - Not perfect, we are not perfect and we will fail at times, but with Christ we will win in the end
 - Baseball
 - .300 batting average= Hall of Fame
 - 30% success rate
- Good News
 - Other side of the cross is the promise of eternal life
 - Story doesn't end with death and the crucifixion, ends with an empty tomb
 - Ends with a New Beginning, a new life marked with water and the Spirit= Celebrated in baptism

Closing

- Which character are you?
 - Resident
 - Pilgrim
 - "Who is this?"
 - Religious
 - Disciple
 - Who we should be
- How
 - Questions
 - What is happening in our community that demands a response?
 - What kind of Christian response can Ebenezer offer?
 - What fears do we (Ebenezer) have about marching?

- What can we learn from the historical march toward justice in the church of Jesus Christ?
- March with Jesus
 - To his death
 - Find Courage
 - Philippians 2:5-11, NRSV

5 Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, 8 he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- **JOIN THE PARADE**