

As I have been preparing for this message, I, for lack of a better way of saying it, had a change of focus.

I have always heard, and yes, preached, palm Sunday as a narrative. One of those events that was used as a springboard to move us to the next big event in the Christian calendar, in this case the crucifixion.

The story would be told as outlined in the scripture, while children would walk down the isles of the church carrying palm branches. The focus would be on the crowd and how this cheering group would soon become the jeering group and how our lives sometimes reflect the crowd. But this time around I wanted more from this exhausted ritual and I looked at this narrative, this story from a different standpoint. I was burdened with a simple question, "What am I missing?". Some 2000 years later, in a time where we no longer lay palm branches down or practice crucifixion, what is relevant to me today about the triumphant entry, besides it being a historical narrative leading up to Easter Sunday.

And then I saw it, this narrative, is simply about knowing the Truth..

And how refreshing that is. In a society that is quickly creating its own truth based on hearsay or creating a truth that best benefits the cause, I was astounded at how much I needed this reminder. This reminder that no matter how far fetched things become, that for me, Jesus is the epicenter of truth.

As Jesus was entering Jerusalem on the donkey and being hailed and praised as King, He knew the truth was, he was not to be crowned but crucified.

As Jesus was watching the crowd laying down the palm leaves and their coats for him to travel across, he knew the truth would be him laying down his life.

As Jesus heard the praising of Him and the Thanksgiving to God, he knew the truth was that these very people would soon be condemning and cursing him.

And most importantly, he knew the truth in the hearts of all that were there. He could see past the celebration and feel the anxiety, pain and anticipation in the crowd. He could see their own deceit even if they could not.

You see, as Jesus was entering and experiencing all of this, knowing the truth, he did not turn back, but he moved forward. Knowing the truth of the crowd, he kept moving forward

This is what I can relate to today. The ability of Jesus to see me. To see my heart. To see my fears, my anxieties, to see my love for him but also see my questions about him as well. I can trust Jesus to see the real truth about me, not one I have made up and falsely present.

This is what my faith is built on, a simple truth. Not one that was taught to me, not one that is dependent on someone else. My faith is built on the truth not of Jesus, but the truth in Jesus. And I have come here thru my own experience with the truth in Jesus. And the truth in Jesus is not the historical record of his life, but the truth in Jesus is the love of God poured out to all mankind. The ability to be accepted as I am, not how society thinks I should be. The truth in Jesus is simply being accepted and not judged, being freely loved and not conditionally loved. And now, as I reflect on the truth in Jesus, I seek to live my life in that truth, to extend to those around me, free love, without judgement.

Amen