

## Palm Sunday

Text( Philipians 2: 5-11) Subject(**What Kind of King Is This?**)  
Theme( 1. One Who humbled Himself to save us. 2. One Who is exalted for us to worship.)

Saint Paul wrote this letter to the Philipian congregation when he was a prisoner. And yet, the letter is a wonderful example of Christian *joy* at its best and fullest. As a redeemed child of God, the apostle Paul expresses a joy that *nothing* in this world can take away from him; a joy that glows just as brightly when faced with trials. This joy is the supreme joy that comes from knowing that all sins are forgiven through the Savior-King. It is this joy that draws the Christian to be humble. In order to act humbly at all in this world we need an *outside* influence that is powerful. The world, the flesh and the Devil are constantly pulling at us to be prideful and self-centered. But, by God's grace, we have a desire in us that draws us to want to humbly serve our Lord. We have a divine joy that is in each one of our hearts and souls; placed there by the Holy Spirit through the message of the Gospel. Because Jesus humbly saved us from our sins we want to follow His example of humility; an example of which we are reminded on Palm Sunday as He, the Son of God, rode a donkey through the streets of Jerusalem.

So let us, this morning, hear what Saint Paul says about following Jesus' example of humility; especially as we are reminded about the Savior's Palm Sunday ride.

Jesus humbled Himself to save us. Even though He was the Son of God, He permitted people to place Him on a donkey and He rode into a town which was filled with people waiting to kill Him. But, let us remember, as Saint Paul says in our text this morning, He **“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God”**. There was no anxiety or obsession with Jesus

to become a “god” because He was *already* divine! For sure, to the casual human observer, He did not *look* different than any other Jew. That is because when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, He had a human nature. As I told the Jehovah Witnesses one time, “When Jesus was cut, He bled. When He bumped Himself He got a bruise. When they punched Him out, it hurt!” He was truly human! But when I told the J.W.s that Jesus was also truly *divine*, they *vehemently* disagreed! But Paul makes it clear that divinity for Jesus was *already* His. It would be like a woman seeking to be a woman or a man seeking to be a man! One does *not* “seek out” something which is *already* in his possession. Neither did Jesus. He humbled Himself, in the form of a man, to save us from our sins even though He was, and is, true God.

But, as Paul points out, “**but (Jesus) made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men.**” Jesus literally *emptied* Himself. Of what? Christ emptied Himself of the full and constant use of His divine power and glory. He set it aside and became like an ordinary man. Occasionally in the New Testament we catch a *glimpse* of His glory; like when He performed a miracle or when He was transfigured. His deity was obvious at those points.

Can we imagine being separated from those whom we love with death coming upon us? It is a very sad thought indeed. But Jesus was, physically, separated from His Father in Heaven while being beat up and was separated from most of His “faithful” followers while being crucified. But He continued on.....Why? To save us.

Paul says in our text, “**And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.**”

No one *else* humbled Jesus. He humbled *Himself*. The fact that Jesus was not only God but also human was nowhere more obvious than it was in His death. It was as if the apostle was shocked! Why? Because “death” on a cross meant that the person being crucified was either a robber, a murderer or a rebellious

slave; one of the *worst* criminals. Indeed, Jesus *was*! When He was nailed to the Cross, Jesus took upon Himself all of our sins. Billions and billions of people's sins became the property of the sinless One! All of our "faults", or transgressions, became *His* fault. *His* sin. And He would endure His Father's *full* wrath for those terrible actions, those awful thoughts and those vile words; sins we have done. All the physical pain those sins deserved fell on Him. All the suffering of eternal Hell for those transgressions became His. Saint Paul says in his second letter to the Corinthians, "For He made Him Who knew no sin to be sin for us..." What tremendous humility and love for us. Jesus kept riding that donkey *knowing* that these things awaited Him in just a few days, there in Jerusalem.

The Lord exalted Him, as Paul points out in our text this morning. Paul writes, "**Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name...**" In His state of exaltation Christ is like the king who has dropped his beggar's cloak and revealed his *royal* robes. He no longer uses His divine power in only *limited* ways. He now fully exercises His divine power and majesty as He rules over all things. He came from Heaven, equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit and went back to that same position; one of the Godhead.

If you have ever seen the movie, "The Prince and the Pauper", you know a little what Jesus was going through. In the movie, people treated the king like a commoner; even abusing him! But when the truth was told, several suffered the consequences of their actions!

But why is Jesus' name "above every name" as Paul says in our text? No name is more *important* and highly *honored* than His because His "name" is the only one "under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." *Only* through faith in Jesus' name can sinners be saved. That is why He Himself said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father without Me.", in the Gospel of John. Jesus humbly came to save because He was the only One Who could! The common belief in our society today that

Jesus is “one of many roads to heaven” must be rejected, scorned and warned against. The Son of God must never take a “back seat” to anyone! He humbled Himself to save us as *only* He could.

Riding along on that Palm Sunday morning on that smelly donkey with many *false* cries of praise would have been depressing to many of us! But Jesus knew that once His death was accomplished, *every* knee would bow; some in love and faith; others in fear and terror. All people would leave this earth with the same relationship they will have with God for an eternity. If they leave here depending on *themselves* for salvation they are *without* God and shall be without Him, forever, in Hell. However, all who trust in the true God alone, through the Savior, by the gracious action of the Holy Spirit will live and reign with Him eternally.

So, as Paul says in our text, **“that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow , of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”**

Knowing this about Jesus, that He humbled Himself to save us and that one Day we shall bow our knees in love and faith in Heaven, that is our power source to be humble for Him. We are *enabled, empowered* to act more humbly as His love and grace move us to live for Him Who served and saved us.

Let our “attitude...be the same as that of Christ Jesus”, brethren. Let us leave here today, “doggedly determined” that we shall think, act and speak more *humbly* than ever because of our Savior’s humiliation for us. I know that I, and Saint Paul, are asking something that is very difficult! Our society is based on *selfishness*. Even most religions are self-based; pointing people’s hopes to what they *should* do or *could* do for God. But, as we have seen in Saint Paul’s letter, our salvation has been accomplished for us through the humiliation of Jesus Christ. His love and assurance of Heaven draw us, in faith, to desire to humbly serve Him. We pray to the Lord, “Make me more humble, dear Jesus, because You were humbled for me and for my eternal salvation.”

As the Savior bounced along on that donkey's back, He was thinking of you....and me. The cries of "Hosanna!" and praise would soon die off and be replaced with "Crucify Him!" But, in all humility, He continued on.....to the Cross.... to save us. THAT is the kind of king we have in Jesus....Let us always worship Him; our humble Savior. In His holy Name, Amen.