

The Jesus Way – A Heart of Worship

Luke 19:28-48

We started the service this morning with singing “Hosanna...” I know it’s not yet Palm Sunday, but in our gospel readings for this week we covered Jesus’ Triumphal Entry, & it is Lent, so the song & the text are appropriate for today!

Luke 19:28-40 – Jesus enters Jerusalem on His way to the temple.

Those following Jesus sang with jubilation, kind of like we do in church! Why sing? B/c **God is worthy of praise, & the name of Jesus is to be exulted!**

But there were those who refused to sing, who tried to silence the song, and who rebuked the one who gave approval to it... again kind of like in the church

Some will try to censor... shorten... silence... the praise of our God in worship! But Jesus replied, **I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.** Do we ever fall prey to the same response we see here from the Pharisees?

Luke 19:41-44 – Jesus weeps over the city of Jerusalem

In the midst of this time of jubilant praise, & the silencing of His critics... Jesus begins to weep...Why? **He knew their brokenness was beyond fixing...** He knew the price that had to be paid for their sin to be redeemed... for peace with God to be possible!

Too often we think the enemy is only out there, when there’s an enemy here within! Jesus wept over God’s city/people because of the sin that resides in the hearts of even those who bear His name! Palm Sunday to Good Friday

If Jesus was making His way to our church today, like he was the temple in Jerusalem, what do you think He would see... experience... know about us?

- **Would He see our praise, or our pride?**
- Would He hear our devotion to Him, or our demands of Him?
- Would He experience our unity in Christ, or our division?
- **Would He know our desire for peace, or our desire for vindication?**

If you think I’m being too hard on the church/God’s people, look what happens next in God’s house, with His people in the text... **Luke 19:45-48**

The house of God, the temple, was filled with vendors & money changers... Those seeking their own desires, their own gain... **Their presence there was more about them, than about God?** Does that sound like the church today?

Why did you/I come to church today? Why are we here?

- **To worship**... As long as the service isn’t too long... As long as the music is to our liking... As long as so-and-so is leading/preaching/there...
- **To hear from God**... But only in a 30-minute or less sermon... As long as the pastor doesn’t say what I don’t want to hear...
- **To commune with God’s people**... As long as they agree with me... As long as they don’t make me mad... As long as they’re at a safe distance...

This is why I believe Jesus wept... He knew their hearts & He knows ours too! Would Jesus also weep over Brunswick Reformed Church? Would He turn over tables and drive some of us out for the real reasons we are here?

What is this place/time/gathering intended for? Jesus gave us the answer... **“It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer...’”** Of everything that Jesus could have said about the house of God, prayer is the answer!

What is prayer & why is it so important?

- **Prayer is our connection with God!** *“It is more than conversation, it’s communion!” “The meaning of prayer is that we get hold of God, not of the answers!”* – Oswald Chambers
- **Prayer is a posturing before God** – *“We are not informing God, He is transforming us!” “If we pray aright, perhaps it is quite necessary that we pray contrary to our own heart.”* - Dietrich Bonhoeffer *“It is quite useless praying to heaven for earthly comfort. It’s not the sort of comfort they supply there.”* C.S. Lewis
- **Prayer is the prioritization of God** - *“Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays.”* – Soren Kierkegaard *“Pray and let God worry.”* – Martin Luther *“It begins out of desperation. It grows into a discipline. And it becomes a passion.”*

You can come to church without prayer... You can sing praise songs without prayer... You can listen to sermons without prayer... You can serve without prayer... but **without prayer none of these things will honor God in His house!**

But prayer makes such things possible:

- Being part of an imperfect church with imperfect people.
- Singing praises to God with songs/style/duration that you wouldn’t choose.
- **Hearing a sermon that doesn’t seem to speak to you every Sunday!**
- True worship... True unity... True sacrifice... True transformation...

When the music fades & all is stripped away. When I simply come. Longing just to bring something that’s of worth that will bless Your heart... the heart of worship...

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