

Nokesville UMC Palm Sunday Worship
April 5, 2020
Rev. YoungMin Kim

What Do You Expect from Jesus?
Matthew 21:1-11

(1)

Good Sunday morning, Nokesville UMC members and our visitors! How were you doing during the last week? I pray that you were doing well without any problems or hardships. On the other hand, we need to keep praying for those who physically, mentally, and economically suffer from the virus as well as for those who help them on the frontlines.

It has been the fourth Sunday since we've seen each other. Even though we are not sure when we will meet together again at church, please be safe and healthy, follow the government and CDC's guidelines, stay at home, and maintain social distancing outside the home for mutual safety and health.

(2)

According to the Lectionary schedule, we read the Gospel of Matthew 21:1-11. And today, we commemorate Palm Sunday, which refers to the day when Jesus entered into Jerusalem as the Son of God and Savior. Since Jesus proclaimed Himself as the Son of God and started His public ministry for about three years, He mostly spent His time with His disciples and followers in Galilee, which is about 100 miles away from Jerusalem. Performing His divine miracles such as feeding, healing, casting out evil spirits, giving back life, and many others, people began to recognize Him and finally believed that Jesus was a great prophet. And such news was spreading like wildfire. As a result, like a musical name, Jesus became a superstar among all of Israel within three years. Wherever Jesus visited, people welcomed and followed Him and asked for mercy for their physical and spiritual illness. Contrary to the group that welcomed Jesus, another group began to be bothered by Jesus. They were those who had religious power in Jewish society—such as Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes—and who had military power in Jewish society such as Herod the Tetrarch. In the concentration and the restraint, Jesus had kept His ministry, and...Jesus finally knew that the time for His final hours was coming and that the time for His purpose coming down to earth was finally about to be fulfilled in Jerusalem. Thus, Jesus put His disciples to prepare His last way.

Before entering into Jerusalem, Jesus ordered His two disciples to go to a nearby village and bring a donkey with her colt. They brought them and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. When Jesus and His disciples entered into Jerusalem, as if countless people already knew it, they waited for and welcomed Jesus, spreading their cloaks and branches on the road, shaking palm tree leaves, and shouting (video). This is what Jesus did on Sunday, so we call this "Palm Sunday."

(3)

Ironically, however, the crowds who welcomed Jesus and shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” (v. 5) suddenly turned their backs on Jesus and shouted “Crucify Him!” They completely turned just within six days. What happened to them? Did Jesus do so wrong to them?

In Galilee and Jerusalem, Jesus was the same and did the same things. No difference! However, the people who welcomed Jesus might have believed that Jesus is the one—the Messiah, who could save them from the oppression of the Roman Empire just as Moses did from the oppression of Egyptians. Jesus wanted to save their spirits, but they expected physical freedom. To break their empty expectations, I believe, Jesus did not perform any divine power among the people in Jerusalem—no feeding, healing, casting out, giving back life, and others. As a result, higher expectations made them frustrated; and, after all, they became furious at Jesus and crucified Him on the cross.

Jesus was the same in the past, is the same in the present, and will be the same in the future. Our Lord Jesus Christ is always faithful to us. What do you expect from Jesus? Jesus came to RECONCILE US TO GOD and Jesus fulfilled His purpose on the cross. Let us self-examine whether we ask Jesus for physical blessings even though Jesus gave us spiritual salvation. What occupies your mind: giving thanks to Jesus or asking Him for something to make you satisfied? Do you expect the right one of Jesus?

(4)

Starting Palm Sunday, the passion week has just begun. Last Tuesday, I mailed a card to every single family of our church. I hope they were already delivered and all of you received it. As I announced, we will offer our Online Early Morning Prayer Meetings during the passion week from Monday through Saturday at 6 o’clock in the morning. Each morning, we will follow Jesus’s traces and find out what Jesus did each day, and then we will have time to pray for the world, nation, community, family, friends, coworkers, yourself, and others. I hope you are with me at 6 o’clock in the morning, but if you miss our prayer meeting, please visit our website or Facebook page and follow our spiritual discipline. We will spend the passion week in this way. And on Easter Sunday, April 12th, we will have the Online Easter Sunrise Service at 6:20 in the morning as well as the Online Easter Worship Service at 11 o’clock. Let us stay connected in spirit, remember Jesus’s last six days before death, and celebrate His resurrection. See you tomorrow morning. Amen.