

Palm Sunday/Sunday of Passion 2020
John 12

Holy Spirit, Light Divine/Shine upon this heart of mine
Chase the shades of night away/Turn the darkness into day.
Let me see my Savior's face/Let me all His beauties trace.
Show those glorious truths to me/Which are only known to Thee

John 12:12–19

12The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" 14And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, 15"Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"

16His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. 17The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. 18The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. 19So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him."

John 12:20–4320Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. 21So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." 22Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. 23And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

27"Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. 28Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." 29The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." 30Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not mine. 31Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. 32And I, when I am lifted

up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” ³³He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. ³⁴So the crowd answered him, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” ³⁵So Jesus said to them, “The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”

When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them. ³⁷Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, ³⁸so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

“Lord, who has believed what he heard from us,
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

³⁹Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said,

⁴⁰“He has blinded their eyes

and hardened their heart,

lest they see with their eyes,

and understand with their heart, and turn,

and I would heal them.”

⁴¹Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. ⁴²Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

In the Name of Jesus.

Rejoice, rejoice, believers!

³³ So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” ³⁴ Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” ³⁵ Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?” ³⁶ Jesus answered, **“My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my**

kingdom is not from the world.”³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”³⁸ Pilate said to him, “What is truth?”¹

Be glad, sheep who hear the Good Shepherd’s voice! Every catechumen in the church can answer poor pompous Pilate. What is Truth?

‘The Law came through Moses; grace and Truth came through Jesus Christ!’

As simple as your poor minister can put it: keep sinning! Bring to the TABLE what YOU, what I, what the WORLD have to OFFER! ‘Behold, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world!’

In Jesus’ language: ‘If you WERE blind, then you would see—because I AM HERE!—but NOW, since you INSIST that you SEE, you are truly blind.’

‘If the Son sets y’all free, y’all will be free indeed!’ ‘Whoa! WE have never been SLAVES!’ ‘Everyone who SINS is a slave to sin. The slave has no place in the house; the son does. So, if the SON—IF...I...set you free: now THAT’S freedom! Grace! Truth! The Entire Holy Spirit, not a feather out of place!’

My dear ones: without faith to be healed, the Lord cannot do but a few wonders. More to the point: without any SINNERS around, Jesus is out of a JOB, and the Holy Spirit is on the verge of being GRIEVED!

To offer what LITTLE worship WE can bring to the Table—The Father cannot wait!—the Small Catechism of Doctor Martin Luther PLEADS with us to KEEP...SINNING!
M...E...A...N...I...N...G.....

¹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Jn 18:33–38). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Rise from the Last-Day practice, each day, WET! ‘I am baptized! Happy Day!’

‘I have a King not OF this world, not FROM this world—in fact, NO...ONE...WANTS...HIM! The crowd-favorite is ALWAYS a BARABBAS!’

But this King WAS in the world; in the flesh; my flesh. And He laid down His Life for His friends; for the life of the world; for...just whoever!

What’s the BIG sin, my dear ones? The original? The deep-down, person-sin? Dear Mary showed it, even when He had picked up his life again.

¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ ” ²

What’s wrong with here ‘clinging?’ There’s still a shadow there—that Joyful Easter morn!—of Mary wanting what all of us want but are N...E...V...E...R going to have: heaven on earth. The kingdom of God here—from here—of here—like the here and now!

A Law kingdom; a pointing-finger kingdom; a judgment-seat kingdom. For goodness’ sake! Most of the TV shows I see people addicted to have some poor person or two—singing, baking, building with LEGOs!—standing before SOME type of tribunal; tense music; tense faces; the winner and all the losers!

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 20:15–17). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

NOT...HIS...KINGDOM! And not Y'ALL'S! Instead:

‘Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears MUCH FRUIT!’

But not like it is here! Not like this:

¹² From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar’s friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.” ¹³ So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. ¹⁴ Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” ¹⁵ They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” ¹⁶ So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. ³

His ‘own’ people, Israel, Judah—they cast their votes long ago; with tears, we learn that many still vote the same way: we insist on a king and kingdom of power, life and death, one we can touch and see and—though this world’s kingdoms DESPISE...THOSE...THEY...RULE.....!—WE figure WE can accommodate ourselves to: all this HERE!

Not YOU! Close your eyes, that He may open them!

Die—HE raises to life!

Sin! And then, BEHOLD the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world!

³ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Jn 19:12–16). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

If King Jesus ever allows us to collapse the distance, socially, and eat His Body given for us, drink His Blood, shed the forgiveness of our sins—we've learned the tune from the CROWDS, at Palm Sunday. Read and hear and repent and believe! My dear ones!

16His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that *these things had been written about him and had been done to him.*

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THAT, beloved, IS ALLLLL....WE....can bring to the table!
We're 'doing it to him'----STILL!

'When, oh when, is the good Lord going to follow through on RULING US, according to the PLATFORM...WE...have elected Him to fulfill?!'

Later today I must remove my sandals and enter holy ground. A dear brother is already in the garden, ready for his place of rest. And he keeps asking: 'How do I know the good Lord is going to keep his word?'

And all my detractors—within and without!—must be howling mad that even THIS POOR MAN is going to end up safe and secure with God above!

Tell me what to say to this man, an honest man: blind, fearful, faithless, sinful? You know: behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world!

YOU keep being afraid! That's what YOU HAVE, to bring to the table! HIS job is simple; two words: Fear not!

You keep being faithless; own it! His Life—now, now ris'n from the dead is this: 'Stop being faithless, but believing!'

Drop all the LIGHTS and torches and such that YOU CAN light, to open up a way to live...HERE...OF THIS WORLD, FROM THIS WORLD....

'I am the Light of the world!'

Actually, your poor pastor has learned—finally—to answer the doubts and worries of what WE label life and death, faith and despair...

Sing to each other, the psalms and hymns and spiritual songs given you in your prayer book.

Pray with each other, the prayers taught you for use morning, noon and night, in the Small Catechism of Doctor Martin Luther.

Even READ, for each other, the story of the garden; and tell each other, with Mary, that we need never look for the Kingdom of God here and now.

⁴⁰ So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. ⁴¹ Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there. ⁴

⁴ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Jn 19:40–42). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

THAT is our King? That CORPSE?!

Oh, God's attachment to the whole world in the Name of Jesus!
Amen.