

Palm Sunday (2021)

John 12:20–43 Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.” Truly, 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. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If 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.

“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. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. So 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?” So 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. While 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. Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, so 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?” Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, “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.”

Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. Nevertheless, 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; for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

In the Name of Jesus.

Will the Son of Man be glorified? Or the Father's Name? It is so happy the way that all the Gospel words sort-of roll and wave back and forth all over the place, splashing, splashing, like water and rolling floods! If the Son of Man has HIS reputation nailed down—that's what 'glorify' means!—then God the Father's Name is nailed down and HE is known to all as the God Who did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the WORLD—through HIM!—would be saved! (DESPITE what WE religious types broadcast by our looks and furrowed brows and pursed lips—daily and much!)

So...Palm Sunday again. And we're TOGETHER!
Praise the Lord!

The beginning of Holy Week, the Week of glory, the Big Week! Whose week? Well, you've heard your poor pastor preaching for decades now. You know. Whose big week is it? My granddaughter's! Emma Grace! Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday to Good Friday and the Vigil and Day of Resurrection: it's all about HER! (Gonna baptize the little heathen and make her holy later this morning.)

You too, of course. And since the WORLD has been scooped up into the beating heart of the Father's Love to us, then your poor pastor claims this week as mine also. Like the great one, my granddaughter, Emma Grace, I too have been baptized by the Glorious Son, the Father of Glory.

Ah! Read great Luther this week! Large Catechism, on the Third Article of the Creed. 'I am holy in the sight of God, made so by the Holy Spirit. HOLY is what HE is called! So, I MUST be holy!' Ha!

And since Me and Y'all and Emma Grace, my granddaughter, now OWN the Father's heart, the Father's ear, the Father's Son, the Father's GLORY—that I bid y'all to scoop up YOUR birthright and get back to being little; get back to learning to speak all over again.

With all boldness as confidence, as a dear child to a dear father. 'Father! Glorify your Name!'

'Little Jesus wast Thou shy once,
and just so small as I?....

So, a little Child, come down
And hear a child's tongue like Thy own;
Take me by the hand and walk,
And listen to my baby-talk.
To Thy Father show my prayer
(He will look, Thou art so fair),
And say: 'O Father, I, Thy Son,
Bring the prayer of a little one.'

Two uncles and a grampa trampled holy ground yesterday afternoon. We tried to teach a child born like your poor pastor—in the jungle, with wolves—tried to teach him to reply politely to adults. He, in turn, taught the three of us how to pray.

Rather than answering questions ‘Yeah!’ and ‘Naw,’ we did our best to train the little rudeness to respond with ‘Yes, sir’ and ‘No, sir’ and ‘Yes, ma’am,’ ‘No, ma’am.’

‘Are you ready to sit on the potty and try?’

‘Naw.’

You say, ‘No, sir!’

‘No, sir!’

‘But I want you to sit on the potty and try. Say, Yes, sir!’

‘No-Yes, sir!’

And I thanked HIS heavenly Father that that little rude sinner is baptized. And I thanked Him for my Baptism into Christ. And looked forward to this morning.

His little majesty takes the words given him—but does NOT...PRETEND! ‘Yes, sir! I hear you! But No, sir, I would far rather decide MYSELF if and when I will sit on that throne!’

Why did the Son lay down His life for His friends, for the world? It was the riskiest of all things. For He had NO guarantee that ANYONE would live from His dying. ‘Who has believed our report?’

He laid down His Life because it made clear to all men of all times and places that God is NOT going to treat us as we deserve!

So that when WE pray, we may even need to grit our teeth and say to Him, ‘Yes, sir, here is YOUR will; but no, sir, it is not at all to my liking.’ ‘In a word: Follow Me!’

The end of the Gospel according to Saint John:

¹⁷ He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.” ¹⁹ (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.” ¹

In your Holy Week struggles against sin and unbelief, in your praying, in your Baptismal Life, glorify your Father Who is in heaven! Meaning: ignore all the liars! The lying preachers and boasters who say that there must be a greater and greater ALIGNMENT of YOUR will and HIS

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 21:17–19). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

will, or maybe things are not looking so great for you when Jesus Christ comes as our Judge.

‘No, sir! No, ma’am!’

You glorify your Father’s Name, when you confess your sins and point to the Father’s Son, plead the Father’s Son, no matter how much ‘buy-in’ is going on inside of you. Even when you must grit your teeth and say, ‘Forgive US, dear Father, PRECISELY the way WE forgive those who trample on US....’

Remember that the Son of God grit His teeth and bore His cross and glorified His Father, though the Son of Man could have NO confidence that those He was saving would give a hoot!

Stopped at a store. Saw a smiling, beaming politician on a magazine cover; one this poor miserable sinner cannot stand. Ran through the nasty thoughts and feelings I have toward such. Then, I glorified my Father in heaven. Admitted that—‘No, Yes-sir!’—I had NO confidence that HE was in charge of all things in my world and that nothing slips past Him.

And then—I am baptized!—I demanded that my dear Father in heaven bless and protect and guide this particular lord and master of mine. And I topped it off by reminding my Father in heaven: ‘If you had NOT installed such-and-such as my better and little worldly tyrant-god, I could not be saved! This is clearly you will!’

How convinced was your poor pastor in that praying? How sincere? How much only resigned?

Well...I prayed HIS word; and admitted my own. Follow me.

Every week shines the glory of Your Father, and His Son, and the Spirit Who baptized you and made you holy!

Every week is Holy Week, my dear ones! His; and, of course, Emma Grace's! And yours too in the Name of Jesus.