

What Is Missed *Colossians 2:8-10*

We are still in the book of Colossians but since today is Palm Sunday we are going to start there in Mark's gospel.

This day is called "Palm Sunday", because the crowds in Jerusalem came out to greet Jesus as he entered the city through the Eastern Gate, and the Bible says they were carrying palm branches, which they waved or strewed in his path.

I want us to read the Mark text together as a responsive reading:

¹ As they approached Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples,

² and said to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here.

³ "If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' you say, 'The Lord has need of it'; and immediately he will send it back here."

⁴ They went away and found a colt tied at the door, outside in the street; and they untied it.

⁵ Some of the bystanders were saying to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?"

⁶ They spoke to them just as Jesus had told them, and they gave them permission.

⁷ They brought the colt to Jesus and put their coats on it; and He sat on it.

⁸ And many spread their coats in the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields.

⁹ Those who went in front and those who followed were shouting: "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;

¹⁰ *Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest!" (Mk. 11:1-10)*

PRAY

One of the mistakes we often make in church life is that we assume everyone knows the stories of the Bible ...

... but that is not always the case

... so, I want to tell this story today ... and even if you do know the story it's still good to hear it again.

There is an old gospel song that says:

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best, seem hungering and thirsting, to hear it like the rest...

So, this day we call Palm Sunday happened in the spring of the year, in the Jewish month of Nisan which is the same things as early April in our calendar.

Passover always began on the 14th day of Nisan, which in that year probably fell on Friday.

[Scholars using astronomical data have determined that the date of the Passover feast during which Jesus was crucified was either April 3, AD 33 or else April 7, AD 30.]

Part of the disagreement has to do with different people using different calendars... Julian, Hebrew, and Gregorian.

... Now Jesus and his disciples are headed to Jerusalem for the Passover feast like thousands of other Jewish pilgrims.

... And right before the passage in Mark that we read they had just passed through the ancient city of Jericho ... where Jesus healed a blind man named Bartimaeus.

Jericho is about 17 miles east of Jerusalem and so they would have most likely traveled the Roman road from Jericho, over the Mount of Olives, across the Kidron Valley through the Eastern Gate.

... and they would have passed through the villages of Bethany and Bethphage.

... Bethany was located on the Southern side of the Mount of Olives and Bethphage was on the Western side facing Jerusalem ...

... Bethphage was literally a suburb of Jerusalem.

... Bethany was the home of Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus whom Jesus Christ had earlier raised from the dead.

Most likely they had left Jericho early in the morning and then arrived in Bethany late in the afternoon.

... according to John's gospel they all had supper together.

It was during this supper that Mary anointed the feet of Jesus Christ with precious ointment and then dried his feet with her hair.

... From best we can tell from the scriptures, Jesus and his disciples spent one or two days with Mary, Martha and Lazarus in Bethany ... before finally going on to Jerusalem.

... this extended stay time (of 2 days) in Bethany allowed the word to get around to people that Jesus was going to come into Jerusalem.

According to the Bible Jesus sends two of his disciples go ahead of him to get a donkey's colt for him ...

... Jesus rides the colt across the Kidron Valley, and into Jerusalem through the eastern gate to the Temple's court.

... I want you to understand that Jesus' choice of a donkey's colt is **deliberate and significant**.

... In order to appreciate what is happening here, you need to understand the feelings of the Jewish people toward Rome.

You see, 63 years before the birth of Christ, (in 63 BC) under the leadership of General Pompey, the Roman army had conquered Jerusalem and ended the Jewish state.

... although Israel had returned from its exile in Babylon 500 years earlier it remained a vassal of first Persia, then Greece, and now Rome.

The golden age of one of David's descendants becoming the king and the glory of Israel returning (as the prophets had promised) ...

... even in Jesus' day had never materialized.

Israel continued to be under the authority of a foreign king (in this case Rome) ...

... and the Jews hated the oppressive yoke of Roman rule.

Even during the time of Christ Israel remained restless, dissatisfied, longing for the promised messianic king to deliver them and restore their former glory.

... they were looking and longing for a political king to sit on the throne of David and establish God's Kingdom on the earth.

... and here comes Jesus.

... he makes the lame to walk, the blind the see, even raised the dead to life.

... with just a little food he feeds thousands!

... OH, and by the way, he is from the tribe of Judah and son (a descendent) of King David!

How could Jesus not be the promised king from the lineage of David?

In fact, in Mark 8:29 when Peter makes the confession at Caesarea Philippi "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God ...

... Jesus warned the disciples to tell no one.

But then here in Mark 11, with the triumphal entry through the Eastern gate, into Jerusalem, everything changes.

... Suddenly, he is no longer incognito

Let me explain ...

Throughout all of Jesus ministry we never see Jesus ever riding anything ... He is always walking.

But on this day, (although the distance is only 2 miles) Jesus mounts a donkey's colt and rides down from the mount of Olives into Jerusalem.

Why? What is happening?

Listen to this from the prophet Zechariah:

⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.¹⁰ I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth. (Zech. 9:9-10)

This event is Jesus deliberately and defiantly declaring that he is the king the Zechariah's prophecies spoke of.

... Jesus is publicly identifying himself as the promised king.

... and you need to understand that Jesus intentional actions were not lost on the crowd.

The people began to spread their cloaks on the road for Jesus to ride over like a red carpet...

They cut palm branches and other leafy plants as the Jews did at other celebrations and strewed them in Jesus' path.

And then (I think) remembering how blind Bartimaeus back in Jericho had repeatedly cried out to Jesus calling him the “Son of David” ...

... the crowd began to shout “Hosanna! ... Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

... others responded, “Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!”

Jesus is declaring his messianic office ... but people aren’t thinking messiah ...

... Yes, they are thinking teacher and miracle worker ...

... but they are thinking POLITICAL KING

... they are thinking that Jesus will be the King who will overthrow Rome, free the Jews, and re-establish David (and Israel’s) political glory!

And so, amid the shouting, praising, and singing, of the crowds Jesus rides through the eastern gate of Jerusalem ... to the Temple.

How did the Jews get it so wrong?

What did they miss?

... they missed the very things that Paul warns the Colossians to not miss...

... they missed Jesus’s humanity, deity, and authority.

These are the very things that Paul talks about in Colossian 2:8-10.

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. ⁹ For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, ¹⁰ and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; (Col. 2:8-10)

1. At the Eastern Gate they Missed His Deity

For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form

to pleroma theotetos somatikos

This means: The fullness of divine nature and essence was dwelling in Christ's human body.

Paul is saying that he does not want us to be tricked and trapped by the world's philosophy or the empty deceit of human traditions...

The key word here is **theotetos** ...

... This is not the same word Paul uses in Romans 1:20 translated 'divine nature' that is thee-oats.

This word (theotetos) emphasizes the divine nature and essence of God that is in Christ human body.

Paul is saying that Jesus Christ, even upon this earth, is absolute and perfect God.

If we miss the deity of Jesus Christ, then we will expect less than God has offered and provided.

The Jews missed the deity of Jesus Christ and so instead of finding a supernatural messiah who could save the soul and establish an eternal and glorious kingdom ...

... they were looking for a earthly political temporary ruler.

... they were looking for someone to free them from the yoke of political bondage when what they really needed was to be free from the bondage of their sins.

In the end these same Jews that praised Jesus, later were in the crowd crying "crucify him."

Why?

The people of Jesus day quickly became disappointed with Jesus ... and cried for his death.

... not because he lacked power or was weak ...

They cried for Jesus' death because he did not meet their LOW EXPECTATIONS!

... and we are no different.

We don't want Jesus to free us from our sins and to make us His forever ... we want Him to put money in our bank, give us a good house, and make us a success in our careers.

Much of the compromise in Christianity today is because of this very reason.

We are not looking for a revived, on fire for God, standing for the truth church ... we are looking for a big crowd, a popular church, and a celebrity preacher.

We don't want a sermon that makes us uncomfortable and calls us to a higher life ...

... we want a sermon that makes us happy, comfortable, and satisfied!

... that's exactly what the world's philosophy and the empty deceit of human traditions will do ...

The world's philosophy is that if you are addicted, you will always be addicted ...

... Jesus is God, and the Bible says that "he whom the Lord sets free is free indeed!"

The Kingdom of God which Jesus preached and inaugurated is a kingdom built on the fullness of the Godhead bodily residing in the Lord Christ Jesus!

If you put your trust in an imagined Jesus who is not all holy ...

... a Jesus who doesn't care how you live your life ...

... a Jesus who is figuring it out as he goes along ...

... a Jesus who makes no demands on you ...

... a Jesus who is left to the whims of your desire and will ...

THEN YOU WILL BE DISAPPOINTED!!

But if you put your trust in the Savior who is High and Holy, Righteous and True, Just and Mighty

... if you will put your trust in the Jesus of the Bible ...

... then I can make the same promise to you that Paul makes in Romans 10:11 "**Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.**"

2. At Colossae they Missed His Humanity

rather than according to Christ.

Paul makes it very clear that the world's philosophy and the empty deceit of human traditions is NOT ACCORDING TO CHRIST!

As we have already talked, these false teachers in Colossae believed that Jesus was deity, but they did not believe that he was completely human

... they believed that the flesh itself, every physical thing, the physical matter in this world ...

... they believed it was sinful and wicked.

So, they concluded that if all things physical are sinful then Jesus couldn't have had a real physical body ... otherwise he would have been sinful.

... So, they believed Jesus only "appeared" to have a physical human body.

Paul makes it clear that Jesus is not only the risen and exalted God ...

... Jesus is the man of history whose:

Bodily death

yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach (Col. 1:22)

Bodily resurrection

¹¹ and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; ¹² having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (Col. 2:11-12)

... and **Bodily Exaltation**

Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. (Col. 3:1)

... are absolutely essential for our salvation and our Christian living.

Because Jesus was fully human

- He could be poor
- Persecuted
- Tempted
- Weak
- Despised
- Discouraged
- Vulnerable
- Sympathetic
- Killed

Jesus became like us so that He could make us like Himself!

As sinners who have come in faith to Christ we understand being alienated and hostile toward a holy God ...

... we've been redeemed, we understand that.

But we forget that Jesus was human like us and this is why we use grace as an excuse for our habitual sins.

... this is why we argue more about WHAT IS NOT REQUIRED OF US than we do about WHAT IS required of us.

One of the themes of Paul's letter to the Colossians is that we are being made into a NEW HUMANITY.

put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. (Col. 3:10)

The humanity of Jesus Christ should always remind us that Jesus Christ is both mediator and creator.

... Jesus mediates for us as He is creating us into His image.

3. Today we miss His Authority

He is the head over all rule and authority

Have you ever wondered with the affections of the Jewish people turned away from Jesus?

... when was it the Jewish people changed their minds from crowning Jesus to wanting to crucify Him?

Here is where I believed the people's affections turned away from Jesus.

Jesus rode the donkey's colt up to the temple ...

And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. (Mk. 11:15)

Why did the crowd even care?

The Jews cherished their institutions.

... Although these money changers extorted the people, they loaned money to the Jewish poor who were in danger of losing their land to debt ...

... these money changers were also loan sharks

In Mark 12 Jesus said that these ‘temple authorities’ devoured the houses of widows.

Jesus also stopped the dove sellers from blocking up the gentile court with their merchandise and doves ...

... but why should the Jews care about the Gentiles.

The people were furious that Jesus went into the temple, exerted his authority, declared that his house was supposed to be a house of prayer ...

... and disrespected their traditions.

... the people didn’t like ...

They came to Jesus and asked him “by what authority are you doing this?”

Shortly after clearing the temple with a whip, Jesus told a parable about a landowner who planted a vineyard and left it in the care of tenant farmers.

When harvest came, the landowner sent a group of servants to the vineyard to collect the fruit.

Instead of handing over the crop, the tenants decided to beat and kill the servants, and when the landowner sent a second group, they did the same thing to them.

Finally, the landowner sent his own son, whom the tenants killed for his inheritance.

If you miss Jesus’ deity and overlook His humanity you will detest His authority.

- Because He is God Jesus has authority over **everything**, and it belongs to Him.
- Jesus has authority over our **lives and behaviors** because He alone has lived a perfectly sinless life.

In the parable the servants didn't murder the son because they were confused about who he was.

...They hated him because he challenged their ownership of the field

... He declared His authority to be greater than theirs.

In reality this parable is a picture of how all of us are ...

... but I am so glad that Paul adds one other thing in this part of the letter to the Colossians.

Jesus didn't come to prove He was holy and righteous ...

... Jesus came, because he was holy and righteous to rescue us!

4. Jesus doesn't miss our Incompleteness

and in Him you have been made complete

Paul's theology recognizes both the full humanity and the full deity of Christ as critical components of his personhood.

I don't have time today to fully cover this point, but I want you to know that **"in Christ" is Paul's** favorite phrase.

And the phrase here "made complete" is exegetically powerful.

Back in verse 9 Paul uses the word **pleroma** to describe the fullness of God that is in Christ.

... and here in verse 10 Paul uses a compound of that word **popleromenoi** to describe the fullness or completeness that comes to us in salvation.

Jesus is God, Jesus is Man, Jesus has ultimate authority over everything ... and what is HIS big plan?

... To fill us in our fleshly bodies, with his presence, power and Spirit,

... to fill us in the same manner that He was filled with the fullness of the Godhead.

You might miss a lot of things but don't miss this!

Jesus is not just calling us to salvation, Jesus is calling us to divine and eternal completeness!

If you are lost, empty, and hopeless today it is only because you are missing one thing

Christ in You the Hope of Glory!