

Sunday Morning Message

March 20, 2016

*Looking unto Jesus and then Turning Your Back on Him*

Text for Today's Message – John 12:12 - 19

Congregational Reading – John 12:12 – 14

**Our theme for the year is *Looking Unto Jesus***

Our theme verses are Hebrews 12:1 – 2

*"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2)*

This year, we will be preaching messages from the 4 gospel accounts in the New Testament and we will be closely examining the life of our Lord Jesus Christ while He walked the earth, learning the principles that He teaches us, specifically looking for ways to apply His life to our own.

## **Introduction**

### **(Read the text.)**

The people of Israel got it right on Palm Sunday. They recognized Jesus as the King of Israel, their Messiah, the One that they had long been waiting for.

However, we also know that in just a few short days, this same crowd that call Him King on Palm Sunday, will also be the ones crying crucify.

### **See John 19:1 – 15**

In John 12, on Palm Sunday, they cry out: "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." But then, just a few days later, in John 19, they are claiming that their only king is Caesar; and they are demanding that Jesus be crucified.

How do you go from claiming Christ is your King one day, and then demanding His death a few days later?

My contention is that these folks made a quick profession that was not backed by true Biblical repentance and conviction, which is based upon accurate Biblical knowledge. Their confession of Christ as King was not based upon Biblical Assurance.

This morning, I would like to speak to you about the subject of Biblical Conviction and Assurance, which is based upon an accurate understanding of the Bible.

Too many Christians have such a very minimal understanding of Bible doctrine, which results in their lack of conviction regarding their faith in the Lord, and a lack of assurance that God truly is real and that He is manifested in the Person of Jesus Christ.

A Biblical conviction is something that you can sink your teeth into, something you can cling to, when the feelings of your flesh are telling you to quit believing. A conviction is something you know to be true, not just something you hope to be true. Conviction is an assurance that the things that the Bible says are true about Christ are absolutely true.

Conviction is personal. It is not something that you can receive from your parents. You can see it in your parents, and be drawn to it because of their testimony and faith, but it is something that you will have to discover for yourself.

A person with conviction and Biblical assurance can say with the Apostle Paul:

*"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." - (2 Timothy 1:12)*

Paul's faith in the Lord was able to stand up through the attacks of the religious leaders, the atheistic and polytheistic philosophies of the world, the persecutions of the government. Nothing could move Paul from his position of faith that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah of Israel, and Saviour of the entire world.

### **See Acts 20:17 – 27**

Paul had assurance. Paul had conviction. Paul's faith in Christ did not waver when the crowd was going in the other direction.

Back in our text, the crowd got it right, at first, but soon changed their mind about who Jesus is.

Why was that? Why did they change their mind so quickly?

### **I They Had a Misconception About Who Christ Was and What He Came to Do.**

Jesus came to die for the sins of the world. Christ was headed to the Cross. Your sins and my sins, and Israel's sins needed to be paid for.

These people in Jerusalem thought that Christ was coming to put down the Roman authority that was oppressing them.

They thought that Christ was coming to put an end to the corruption of the religious leaders that had been abusing them.

They thought that Christ was coming to set up an earthly kingdom, where they would be protected, and provided for.

They did not think that Christ was coming to die; and they especially didn't think that Christ was coming to die for them, because they didn't recognize their need for a Saviour. They didn't see themselves as personally needing redemption; they just saw the nation as needing redemption from the enemy of Rome, and the corruption of religion.

Today, there are also many people who profess Christianity who have a misconception about Jesus.

They think that Jesus is going to take all of their problems away, and fix all of their boo boos. Isn't this exactly what Jesus was talking about when He explained the parable of the sower:

*"But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." - (Matthew 13:20-21)*

People become very offended when their expectations are not met. The people in our text had wrong expectations. People today have wrong expectations.

If you are saved, Jesus has removed the penalty of sin from your life, and you will never have to worry about Hell again, and praise God for that. However, Christ is not now your Genie who will provide you with your every desire. On the contrary, we are to live for His desire. We are to glorify Him, and sometimes He will ask us to do something that is very uncomfortable, and often times very painful in our service for Him. These trials that God puts us through will accomplish two things: they will bring us closer to Him, and they will glorify Him in front of people who do not know Him.

Illustrate – Pastor Frank Cuozzo, Pastor Charlie Horton, Pastor Rick Wedemeyer

## **II They Misunderstood the Scriptures**

Misconceptions about Christ and Christianity are caused by misunderstandings, and misinterpretations of the Scriptures. It is obvious that these people were very religious, but it is also painfully clear that they little understanding of the Bible.

Jesus told the Pharisees:

*"Jesus answered and said unto them, **Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.**" - (Matthew 22:29)*

This is why it is imperative that you become grounded in the Scriptures.

Remember when Jesus was on the road to Emmaus with two of His disciples:

*"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." - (Luke 24:25-27)*

Jesus basically told them that all that was misunderstood about His death was clearly explained in the Scriptures.

There is much that we do not understand about the Christian life, but all of the answers that we need are contained in the Scriptures.

This is why it is so important for young believers to go through our discipleship program.

This is also why it is so important for us to be daily in the Word of God.

This is also why it is absolutely imperative for us to be in all of the services, opening the Bible together, examining and searching out the nuggets of doctrine that we so desperately need to fulfill God's plan and purpose for our lives.

**The Scriptures provide solutions that educate us.**

**The Scriptures provide strength to help us endure.**

**The Scriptures provide samples to encourage us.**

### **III Their Desire for Misbehavior and Misconduct**

Here is another misconception about the Christian life. Unfortunately, there are many people that believe that the Christian life can be lived without repentance of sin.

We will always be sinners, but until a person comes to the place where he sees his sin the way God sees his sin; and until a person recognizes that the wages of sin is death, separation from God, eternally, in the lake of fire – until we see sin as it is – we cannot truly be his disciple.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." - (John 3:18-21)

We will always be sinners, but a true Christian will always be convicted about His sin, and will also have a desire to repent. He may not always win the battle with his sin, but he will

constantly be reminded of the inner working of the Holy Spirit, as He works to chip away at the sin and conform the saved sinner to the image of the Sovereign Son of God.

## **Conclusion**

Why do people change their mind about Christ? How could somebody call Him their King today, and then cry crucify tomorrow. Because they lack assurance and conviction regarding Who Jesus is, and what the Christian life is truly about.

They have misconceptions about Who Christ is, which are caused by misinterpretations of the Scripture, which in turn can lead to a worship of self, manifesting itself in a desire for misconduct and misbehavior (sin).

The solution is to search the Scriptures. Ask God to reveal Himself to you. Learn who the Jesus of the Bible really is, commit yourself to Him, and count the cost of discipleship.

There have been too many fickle people who have made snap decisions regarding Christ that have later turned their back on him. Jesus gave a warning to people like this:

*"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62)*

*"And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."*

(Luke 14:25-35)