

Processional Gospel: Luke 19:28-40

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Luke 23:1-49

Sermon April 10th 2022 Palm Sunday

Jesus' Message Proclaimed Even on the Cross

There are times where we have a message that we think is important to proclaim to others. A message that means something to us. A message we want other people to hear, because we believe it will impact them similarly to how it impacted us.

Sometimes we struggle to proclaim this message. Sometimes people struggle to hear our message. For example, you are sitting at the dinner table with your family (**Image**). You have something really important to share with them. You start talking, but one of your children talks over you. Another one is trying hard to get your attention, because they want to show you something. Then there is your youngest child making random noises, which is cute, but distracting. Of course, your spouse is wolfing down the food at record pace, and can't hear you, because they are chomping so intensely. You get frustrated, and give up.

Or you are trying to encourage change in your community, but the crowd or authority you are proclaiming your message to doesn't take you seriously, because of your age, or your gender, or your race, or your ethnicity, or your social status, or you don't have enough voices standing with you to be heard (**Image**). So, they ignore you. They silence you.

Or you are at a sporting event, and want so badly for the players to hear your cheers. You yell so loud that by the end of the game you have no voice left. You doubt whether the players actually heard what you had to say. Still. What else are you going to do when you go to a game? Besides drink beer.

Or you share a message that you feel is profound on your social media platform, and yet, see a single like/thumbs up (**Image**). Your own to be precise. You can't help but feel rejected as your message has fallen on deaf ears.

Or you share a message that challenges people. They react to your message negatively, because listening to this message will come with sacrifice. Listening to this message will come with visible change. They react to your message, because they are afraid of what will happen to them if they actually listen.

Sometimes we struggle to proclaim our message. Sometimes people struggle to hear our message.

For three years, Jesus has been proclaiming a message about the kingdom of God to those who are willing to listen. Jesus has been proclaiming a message about God's hospitality, forgiveness, healing, and redeeming love. Thousands have chosen to follow Jesus, because of this message. Some of those follow Jesus into Jerusalem this morning, cheering for his message.

But, like everywhere else Jesus goes, some of the leaders in the community don't like what Jesus and his followers have to say. They try to silence Jesus and his followers. They tell them to keep it down. Probably out of fear of the repercussions they will face from the Empire if Jesus' message is heard in a way that threatens the Empire.

In response to this complaint, Jesus says that even if every one of his followers is silenced, the stones will proclaim his message (**Image**). All of creation will proclaim his message. The Empire, the religious leaders, won't be able to silence this message.

Not even crucifying Jesus will silence Jesus from proclaiming his message, as we see in Luke's passion narrative. Jesus is hanging from his cross, talking about God's forgiveness for the very people who put him there. Talking about God's hospitality as he invites someone who is hanging on the cross beside him into paradise with him.

Jesus doesn't let his suffering interfere with his proclamation. Jesus has a message he wants us to hear, and he will proclaim it no matter what happens to him. He will proclaim it with every last breath.

Now, if we take a moment and let this sink in. Jesus is proclaiming his message on the very cross that the Empire uses to silence their critics. Jesus is flipping the script. Transforming the cross into a place where God's Word is being proclaimed. Transforming the cross into a place where we experience God's hospitality, forgiveness, healing, and redeeming love.

Jesus' act on the cross inspires the disciples to keep proclaiming this message even as they bear their crosses.

Jesus' act on the cross inspires us today to keep proclaiming this message. Even as we bear our crosses.

Jesus' act on the cross inspires us to proclaim what we think is important to our community. Being assertive in getting everyone's attention at the dinner table, so to, share what is meaningful to us. Dedicating time and energy in creating partnerships with other social groups, so to, have a louder voice that is more likely to be heard by the crowds or authority we are speaking to (**Image**). Investing in an airhorn so our team can hear us cheer. Not giving up on a message just because we are lacking in the number of likes we receive. Continuing to speak up for the marginalized in our community. Continuing to speak up for God's creation. Continuing to speak up. Even if

our message challenges some people. But of course, as the disciples declare when Jesus enters Jerusalem. We proclaim this message peacefully. Reflecting God's hospitable, gracious, healing, and redeeming love.

Jesus passionately proclaims his message. We passionately proclaim his message. God's creation passionately proclaims his message. Because this message gives us hope in God's healing and redeeming love for all of Creation. Even as we hang from our crosses.

Let us pray, loving God, open our hearts to listen to your message of hospitality, forgiveness, healing, and redeeming love. Help us proclaim this message even as we bear our crosses. Give us hope in this message that we will all experience your healing and redemption. Including the stones, the waters, the trees, your entire creation who proclaims your message right along with us. In Jesus name we pray, **amen**.

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