

A Welcome Moment for Jesus

John 12:12–16

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Rev Joe Sanders

First Baptist Church Coshocton, Ohio

Most of don't like being the center of attention. We aren't divas or super-stars or celebrity. Even the people I know who are celebrities, don't like the status. They want to be like everyone else. They are like everyone else.

But there are people who go above and beyond. They make sacrifices, they give of themselves, their commitment and their effort are worthy of celebrating. Celebrations are fun. They give us the opportunity to recognize our heroes. We get to celebrate their accomplishments. Celebrations make us feel good.

Jesus had a few moments when people wanted to celebrate what He had done. When He healed them, many wanted to tell others. Jesus would keep them quiet. But, finally He was ready to be recognized. Finally, He was willing to let the celebration happen. Finally, He accepted the accolades of the people.

The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!" Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written, "Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt." At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him. John 12:12–16 (NIV)

Finally, Jesus is praised as the Messiah. This had to be a welcome moment for Jesus. He is again fulfilling prophecy. Thousands of years before His arrival in Jerusalem God made promises to His people. These promises included the Savior, the Messiah, the King. With Jesus coming into the city with the crowds roaring their approval of these promises were being fulfilled. God's plans and purposes, God's will is being fulfilled. God is saving His people. The Messiah has come. This is the coronation of their King.

Hosanna means the Lord Saves. I know this and you know this. People gathered for the Passover feast knew this. So they saw in Jesus the one sent by God to save them. Jesus has performed many miracles in Galilee. Many people from Galilee were coming for the Feast.

Jesus has raised Lazarus in nearby Bethany. Many people from Bethany were coming to Jerusalem for the Feast. So, a spontaneous welcome for God's Savior began. Soon this became the shouts of all those along the road. "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord" is a prophecy about the Messiah.

As the people came to Jerusalem they sang the songs of God's salvation. These songs are found in the book of Psalms. One person would shout out the words. Others in the crowd would shout the words again. One person would sing out the words. Others would respond with the next line.

As they traveled the hills leading up to Jerusalem and the Temple this would continue. One of the lines kept being repeated “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.” They were singing about Jesus. The long awaited king of Israel had come. For centuries the people were anticipating God’s savior. Over the generations people were singing these words. Now, with the arrival of Jesus, their anticipation had reached a climax. Instead of living in anticipation these words they were now being fulfilled. Jesus was coming to save His people. No political ruler could fulfill these promises. No leader could save the people. Jesus was the savior sent by God.

Jesus lived in this adoration. He soaked in the praise that He was due. He accepted the gratitude. He was blessed by their comments. After three years of ministry the crowds called Jesus their savior. The parade of their champion had arrived. Only one problem existed, He was not the champion, the king they wanted. Jesus arrived at this moment to forgive their sins, and to defeat the power of death. His victory would last for eternity for each person who believes.

What victory are you expecting from Jesus? How is Jesus saving you? What things in your life are keeping you from Him?

At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:10–11 (NLT) It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. 1 Corinthians 15:52 (NLT)

Jesus is waiting to be seen as the Savior of the world. When He returns everyone will know that He is God’s salvation. Today people don’t know Jesus as their savior. Regardless of everything that Jesus has done to save the world from sin, people still don’t know Him as their savior. Jesus healed the sick, calmed the storms, feed the masses, and raised the dead. Jesus took a beating, was mocked by those he came to save, was nailed to a cross, died as our sin.

People still don’t know Him as their savior. Jesus arrived once as baby, born in a most humbling and discouraging manner. People didn’t recognize Him as the one who takes away sin. People don’t see Him as the one who sets people free from eternal damnation. People can’t recognize His gift of eternal life free from sin. They want Him be their scape goat for all their problems. They want Jesus to be their lifeline, without admitting their mistakes. They expect Jesus to meet their needs, but they never trust Him.

Jesus will arrive again in the most glorious and magnificent manner. What happened when He rode in on the donkey will pail in comparison. He will appear suddenly. He will be seen by everyone. He will be recognized by each individual as Savior of the world. At that moment everyone will be on their knees. At that moment every voice will be proclaiming that He is the Lord over all. And in an instant all who believe will be swept away to heaven for eternity. All who have not believed will experience eternal separation from Jesus in hell.

Right now, Jesus wants people to choose His salvation. As spectacular as the crowds welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem, the confession of one sinner is more satisfying. Instead of parades into Jerusalem, Jesus wants sinners to call out His name. Instead of people laying down their coats on the roadway, Jesus wants sinners to lay down their sin. Instead of people waving palm branches, Jesus wants sinners to turn their lives over to Him.

Praise, adoration, thanks giving, singing, and prayers of gratitude are the work of the saints. We give thanks to Jesus for saving us. We lay down everything in gratitude for our salvation. We let our lives become a banner of His saving grace. Jesus lives in the midst of our lives. He is transforming us. He is empowering us. He is our salvation.

Jesus sees the millions of people who don't know Him. His heart is broken for them. He is calling to them. He wants them to be saved. He wants to overcome the power of sin in their lives. He is their only choice. Jesus walked this earth, faced temptations everyday, lived without sin to save every sinner. Jesus stood in front of his accusers, allowed Himself to be beaten and to die to save every sinner. Jesus rose from the dead to save every sinner. Jesus didn't do this in vain, without reason, without purpose. Jesus wants every sinner to become a saint. As each sinner confesses their sins a celebration takes place in heaven. This celebration is more wonderful than the procession Jesus took into Jerusalem. As welcoming and rewarding as that might have been for Jesus, a sinner turning to Him is rewarding beyond understanding.

Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7 (NLT)

When Jesus is proclaimed as your personal savior all fear is gone. You know that this is true. That moment you confessed your sins, gave your life to Jesus, not only was the fear gone, but joy filled your life. That is the peace that comes from being saved by Jesus. Nothing on this earth is like it.

People in every walk of life – any job, any homeowner, any renter, any age – are searching for this peace. They want this peace in the midst of their chaos. People who are bored want His peace. People who are tired want His peace. Every sinner wants His peace. Peace only comes from Jesus. Go skiing in the mountains of Colorado and you won't find this peace. Go stand in the forest and you won't find this peace. Go to the seashore, sinking in sand, seeking seashells and you won't find this peace. Those who proclaim Jesus as their Savior, saints, have this peace.

Now, the activities of daily life may try to take it away, disguise it, hide it but the peace of Jesus is always there. Parades, celebrations, crowning events may lift your heart, but unless Jesus is in it there will be anxiety, worry, and fear. Birthdays, anniversaries will come and go, but Jesus is the one who brings the peace. Surrounding yourself with money and possessions can give a false sense of security, but Jesus secures your place in heaven – that is peace.

We're being coached, coerced, manipulated to live in fear. Today is Palm Sunday, the day we celebrate Jesus arriving in Jerusalem as the triumphant king. For most people it's just another day. They'll go shopping at Walmart, go out to eat, work in the yard, pay the bills, and do the laundry without ever thinking about Jesus. He is not their king, they have nothing to celebrate. Jesus is not their Savior, they have nothing to celebrate.

Everyday, throughout the day, someone is coaching us to live without Jesus. They try to show us how to go through the day focused on ourselves. They present to us negative consequences to make us afraid. They use our emotions to turn on one another. They chase us around with the message that we don't need Jesus. We are being told we need a savior, but Jesus is never mentioned.

All the coaching, all the coercion, all the manipulation creates fear. People who are fearful can't celebrate. Those living in fear don't rejoice. Anyone trapped by their worries isn't at peace. When

Jesus is your Savior, even while being attacked, you can give Him your fears. You can celebrate Him as your Savior. Your heart will be protected by the peace He gives.

“Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 2:38 (NLT)

Shout “Hosanna, Jesus is my Savior.” This proclamation reminds you of your own salvation. For sinners who have been turned into a saints through faith in Jesus we need to remind ourselves that we are saved. That is we have nothing to fear. There is no greater power than Jesus at work in our lives. There are no longer any sins clinging to our necks. We have been set free. We are empowered. Glory, Hallelujah, Praise the Lord, Amen!

Every saint has been washed clean by the blood of the lamb. All our sins have been taken away and we have been saved. Jesus came as the lamb to take away the sin of the world. Once the people came to the Temple of the Lord. They brought a lamb to be sacrificed on the altar. That lamb became the ransom to pay the penalty for their sins. As the lamb was placed on the altar and it's blood was shed prayers of confession were made by the sinner. Those prayers include the request that the lamb's blood would be the substitute for their sins.

Jesus was the sacrificial lamb for all sinners, for all sin. Jesus became the sin of the world, just as that lamb took away the sin of the individual. Every person who believes that Jesus died as their sin is forgiven. Mercy replaced punishment. Grace is extended for all of eternity.

This is the testimony the world needs to hear. Mercy from God our creator, life giver, and sustainer instead of punishment. Every person needs mercy. From the youngest child to the oldest man and woman they all need mercy. Every person has acted selfishly, turned away from God, gone their own way, rejected the Lord. The only way to be saved from our sin, saved from ourselves is to trust Jesus as Savior. Believing Jesus died as your sin, died in place of you, died to save you is the only way to be forgiven and to live in peace.

From the youngest child to the oldest man and woman they all need grace. Until the day Jesus returns temptations and troubles will come against sinners and saints alike. Those who trust Jesus need God's grace to face each day. The grace of God paves the path before us. Living in God's grace empowers us when we face the challenges, distractions, and problems.

From the youngest child to the oldest man and woman they all need the love of Jesus. There is no sinner who could ever find salvation on their own. No sinner can change their own lives. No sinner can be at peace. Jesus loves every sinner. Regardless of the sin Jesus loves them. No matter what words have been spoken or actions taken or thoughts conceived Jesus loves each person. There is no greater love than to die to save another person.

How magnificent is the love of Jesus that He died to save every person every conceived. Who needs to know this message? Who in your circle of friends and co-workers needs to be forgiven of their sins? What stranger is out there who needs the mercy, grace, and love of Jesus? Everyone of them.

Shout, “Hosanna, Jesus is my Savior”. Make Him known to the world. Bless those around you with His mercy, grace, and love. Pray each day, throughout your day, for sinners to be saved.