

Friends,

Last Sunday was a beautiful Sunday where we celebrated the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem as King. This Sunday is another wonderful Sunday, where we will celebrate Jesus's incredible resurrection from the dead and his ultimate victory over death.

Many people will attend church on these two uplifting, joyful Sundays-- Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday-- but they won't be at the other Holy Week services during the week. There is nothing wrong with this, of course, but it is important that we take time to remember and meditate upon the events of Holy Week, and not simply skip past them. It may be tempting to go from celebration to celebration, glory to glory. But we must not forget about the events that occurred *between* Palm Sunday and Easter.

Jesus was betrayed, arrested, condemned, mocked, and crucified--all by people like you and me. Yes, that's right--by people like you and me. We may want to say, "I wouldn't have been in the crowd that condemned him!" or "I wouldn't have betrayed him!", but the point of the story is that all of us are guilty and implicated. Those who called for him to die were the same people who had worshipped him and sung his praises just days earlier. Jesus' own disciples, who had followed him for three years and hung on his every word, who had just had their feet washed by him, fell asleep in the garden, and later ran away to protect themselves. His very closest disciple, Peter, even denied he knew Jesus three times right after he told Jesus he wouldn't! It may be embarrassing and hard to admit, but we've failed Jesus in our lives just as much as they did. In fact, Jesus died for us just as much as he died for them, or for those who were part of the crowd that condemned him that day. We need his atonement just as much as they did.

So yes, we look forward to celebrating Easter. Yes, we look forward to hearing the good news that Jesus is risen. But we must first go through the ugliness and pain of this week, and come to terms with our own sinfulness and culpability before we get there. We must not sanitize what happened. Because it's only when we deal with all of what happened during Holy Week that we can truly appreciate what happened on Easter.

On the journey with you,
Pastor Jordan