

“Palm Sunday Reflections”
Mark 11:15-18
April 9, 2006

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It’s just like it was then. Everyone who has ever followed Jesus – everyone who has ever been touched by his healing, or found hope in his words, or been intrigued by his agenda, all of us have come to greet him here today.

Hosanna, we sing, which means simply, “Save us,” and we trust that he can, and he will. He’s already done so much for us, so much more than we hoped or imagined, for each one of us according to our need – and some of us are here because he called our name when we were sad and broken and in need, and he wasn’t disgusted, he reached out and touched our hearts and let us know we were not ever alone, and he used our wounds to make us somehow more whole than we had been before, and we are deeply grateful. And some of us are here because we were restless and edgy and we didn’t even know why, and he called us to turn around and trust that he would help us find our way. And we know now that there is meaning to our lives that is so much bigger than our jobs or bank accounts or beautiful possessions; we finally feel so free, so free to spend ourselves on things that really matter.

And some of us are here because we’re simply curious and searching, and we’re frankly not even sure this is it, because we’ve been turned off by all the empty promises of organized religion, and hucksters promoting their instant happiness and success, but deep inside we’re hoping, we’re really hoping that this Jesus is the real thing at last. And some of us are here because we’re at home when we’re here, when we’re with him, and we can’t imagine living life without him anymore.

That’s why we’re here, and countless other reasons, and that’s why we shout hosanna, save us, save us — because we trust that he can and he will.

But at what price — what price to him? No matter how young or old, how wise or faithful we may be, we’re never quite prepared for what his saving us really means.

How it means he doesn’t leave everything alone – he turns the world’s priorities upside down, and he doesn’t pretend that meanness is just fine or that children starve for bread or love or that innocent people are killed all the day long.

How saving means that he calls hypocrites on their dangerous bluff, and he doesn't pretend that "truthiness" is good enough, especially in the halls of power.

How it means that he gets angry with empty religion that cares about ritual and numbers and the guise of good feelings more than it cares about God's righteous agenda.

How it means he will end up at the cross for our sake —martyred for his faithfulness to God – sacrificed for the sake of truth – broken that we may be made whole. Hosanna, we sing, hosanna. Save us. Because we trust he can. Because we trust he will. Because we know he loves us so.