

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 28 March 2021

Sermon Title : Right Kind of Victory

Speaker : Rev John Foo

Text : Mark 11:1-11

INTRODUCTION

Palm Sunday marks the end of Lent and the beginning of Holy Week. Palm Sunday marks Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, Maundy Thursday marks His arrest, Good Friday marks His crucifixion and death and Easter or Resurrection Sunday marks His resurrection. These events mark the highs and lows of Jesus' ministry and we go through these series of events in our Christian calendar year after year, but is there anything new to learn from Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem?

1. God's intended victory for our life is far better than the kind of victory that we are asking for (Mark 11:8-10)

- The Jews were waiting for a Messiah to come rescue and free them from Roman oppression

Jesus's entry to Jerusalem is a triumphal entry for both Jesus and the people. The people spread their cloaks and leafy branches on the ground hailing Jesus as the One who will come to save them.

- The Jews were actually waiting for a Messiah who would come as a warrior-king

They expected a warrior-king to lead them back to independence as a people and reclaim their sovereign rights as a nation. With the signs and wonder Jesus had done, the people were thinking that Jesus would be the Messiah to rescue them and do everything they expected the Messiah to do.

- Jesus came to offer another kind of victory – Greater and Eternal victory

Jesus entered into Jerusalem riding on a donkey; not in the majestic way they had expected Him to. When the people realised that Jesus was not going to deliver them from Roman rule, they instead delivered Jesus up to be crucified. That is why at one time the people were shouting, "Hosanna! Hosanna!" yet in another moment they were shouting, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him!"

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

The people were expecting a military victory as the only way to break away from Roman rule but the way it was going to be done and the resulting victory was totally different from the military victory that the people were expecting.

Many of the victories we are looking for may not be the kind of victory God intends for our lives

We always go to God in hope that God will grant us the things we want with the “victorious” outcome we desire. We often think that if we have enough faith, if we pray earnestly enough, if we fast or if we claim His promises like “If God is for us, who can be against us” (Romans 8:31), or “We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (Romans 8:37), surely that will be the secret formula that will secure us the victory that we want.

When God does not give that victory that we desire, we start to doubt God, we blame God that He does not care enough for us or that He is not capable enough to give us that victory.

- The kind of victory that we are aiming for may not be the kind of victory that God intends for our lives. The “victory” that gets us out of a situation or help us gain a better position may not be the best victory (outcome) for us.
- God has a better eternal outcome for us.

We cannot push our own agenda

Sometimes, we may “commit” a situation to God but are actually asking God to do this and that for us in that situation. We often do that in our prayers “directing God” to do our desires.

- We will not know God’s will for us if we keep doing our will and so will miss out on God’s intended victories for us which are far better.

Sometimes His victory for us may not look anything like a victory

We have a certain mind-set on how a victory is like. We think that victory comes in a certain shape and form. When we do not recognise God’s victory in our life, we will not realise what God has done for us. We will go on thinking God has not answered us or helped us or He does not love us enough. We need to understand that:

- God’s victory may not look like a victory by our perception and definition. God’s victory may be beyond what we can comprehend. We need to believe God knows exactly what He is doing in our lives.

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

2. God is in full control over what will happen in the future (Mark 11:1-7)

- Jesus was giving a step-by-step breakdown of what was going to happen in that particular future. (vv1-3)

The events happened exactly as Jesus had predicted. (vv4-7) This shows that Jesus is in full control. He knows what will happen in our lives in the future, what exactly we need and what to provide for us which are the best for us.

- God often uses the stuff of human history to carry out His divine purpose and overall plan
 - God knows that there is a colt tied at the door in the street and uses it.
 - When the disciples followed Jesus instructions obediently, not only did they participate in God's plan but they became witness of the miraculous plan because they personally experienced the splendour of Jesus' power.

If the disciples did not follow the Jesus' instructions on getting the colt, God's divine plan will still continue as God is in full control and may have other people to do it.

- Whatever happens out there, God uses that and works through that

God knows the future of our life. He is using and working through what we have in our life to bring about the victory He intended for our life; to bring out the best in each one of us. (Romans 8:28)

CONCLUSION

God has given us victory. Let us open our eyes to recognise the victory that God has for us. Let us not chase our own type of victory and be blinded to God's work in our lives. Trust that God is in full control and allow God to help us recognize His hand in our lives by changing our perception and understanding of victories and abundant life in Jesus. When we stop struggling and surrender our lives to God, He will lead us to where He wants us to go so we may claim every victory that God has intended for us.

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

A. Review Sermon Content

Purpose: Reflect on one key takeaway.

Appoint someone to read Mark 11:1-11 twice, slowly.

1. At the end of the reading, the reader will say, ‘This is the Word of the Lord.’

All to respond, “Thanks be to God.” Our response reminds us that this is the Word of the Lord. Just as God had spoken to His people in the past, He is still speaking to us even today, right now.”

- a. As God's word was read, which verse speaks to you the most?

- b.
 - (i) What is the key takeaway for you from the sermon “Right Kind of Victory”?
 - (ii) How will you align the way you live to your key takeaway?

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

- 2a. Are you surprised that God's intended victory for your life and your desired victory could be different?
- 2b. Why is it important that we do not push our own agenda towards the kind of victory we expect in our lives if we want the victory that Jesus offers?
- 2c. After Jesus gave a step-by-step breakdown of what was going to happen in the future (Mark 11:1-3), the events happened exactly as Jesus had predicted (Mark 11:4-7).
 - (i) Do you believe that Jesus knows the exact details of what will happen in the future in your life too?
 - (ii) How can you allow Jesus to use the things that happen in your life to carry out His divine purpose and overall plan to bring about the victory He intended for you?
- 3a. What are some ways you have pushed your own agenda for the kind of victory you desire even in your prayers?
- 3b. What is one thing you need to change so that you will seek God's intended victory for your life instead of your own?
- 3c. How can your group members encourage or help you achieve 3b in the following week(s) until your next meeting?

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C. Testimonies and Prayer

Purpose: Give glory to God and seek Him.

4. Share your testimony on how, on hindsight, you realize God has given you a greater and eternal victory in a situation you prayed about, when you followed His leading, even though it was not what you had desired or asked for.

OR

Give thanks to God for allowing you to participate in God's plan by using the things that happen in your life, so you can become witness of the miraculous plan as you experience the splendour of Jesus' power in your life.

5. With a prayer partner, bring all that have been shared in 3a, 3b and 3c to God asking for the Holy Spirit to help you recognize that God is in full control over every situation in your lives. Commit to surrender the outcome of your lives into His plan by following His leading to the greater and eternal victory Jesus intended for your lives.

Ask also for the Holy Spirit's enablement to follow through in supporting one another to seek God's victory for your life instead of your own, for the following week(s) until your next meeting.

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