

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church

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Sermon Title: How Much More, Romans 5:6-21, John 11

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INTRODUCTION: *Hosanna* is the word for Palm Sunday! This morning, we celebrate Palm Sunday. We are celebrating and remembering the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem as he came riding on a donkey. And, you might know from your knowledge of history—when a king rode a donkey, it meant he was coming in peace; when a king rode a horse, it meant he was coming in war. There were people all around, with palm branches, waving them, and singing *hosanna*.

Jesus, is hailed as a king. We celebrate Palm Sunday because we remember a time on earth, people welcomed Jesus as a king. They welcomed him by waving palm branches and laying their shirts down on the street as he rode a donkey into Jerusalem as a sign of respect, similar to the way we roll out the red carpet for someone. They cried out, “*Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!*” (Matthew 21:9). The crowds had heard of Jesus. They had heard of his miracles, and they had come to see him.

In John 11, we read—Just before Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, he had brought this man named Lazarus back to life. But, before Lazarus even died, he was sick, and his sisters Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus, “*Lord, the one you love is sick.*” Upon hearing this, Jesus said, “*The sickness will not end in death*” (John 11:3). He went on to say the sickness was for God’s glory and so God’s Son would be glorified. What if today we looked at sickness this way?

But, even after this confidence in God’s plan, we see, Lazarus died. Martha was upset and told Jesus if he was there, it wouldn’t have happened. But, Jesus, already having wept for his dead friend, called Lazarus to rise from the dead, and he came out of the tomb he had been in for 4 days already. Can you imagine death after 4 days? After he brought Lazarus back to life, Jesus said to Martha,²⁵ *Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after*

dying. ²⁶ *Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?*” (John 11:25-26, NLT).

Many people had seen and heard what Jesus had done—how he raised Lazarus from the dead, and many believed in Jesus. But, at the same time, many of the religious leaders, feared Jesus would become too powerful and take away their status and pride and position of power. The high priest that year, named Caiaphas, said to the people, *“You know nothing at all. Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish”* (John 11:50). John writes this statement by the high priest was a prophecy from the Lord about how Jesus would be one man, dying for the nation of Israel but also for all the children of God scattered throughout the world. It was better for one man to die to bring many, many people to life.

Then, Jesus went to Bethany, where Mary anointed him with expensive oil. Oil was commonly used in Jewish tradition. Spiritually, it was used to inaugurate or bring into office prophets, priests, and kings. Jesus was all three—prophet (with the Spirit of God within him), priest (mediating on our behalf), and king (reigning in authoritative life).

So, when Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, the people knew he came in the Name of the Lord, and they called him “King of Israel.” Each Gospel writer wrote his own account of Jesus’ triumphal entry, but according to John, the reason why the crowd wanted to meet him was because they heard he had resurrected Lazarus from the dead. Don’t you know—everything about relationships is about timing? Everything about conversations is about timing. Everything about decisions is about timing. And, Jesus was the master of timing.

Today, we are continuing in the Book of Romans to answer the question: Did Jesus come at the right time for us?

The my last message, we were in Romans, I asked the question, “Have you made peace with God?” To review—we talked about two points of what it means to have peace with God: (1) It comes on God’s terms, and (2) It has substantial benefits. If you have peace with God, you know these benefits, and if you don’t, you know the terms—repentance and belief in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

Today, we will stand with the crowd in Jerusalem, hopefully with the same kind of awe they must have had after he brought a dead person back to life. There are three points to my message today:

1. Christ's death came at the right time.
2. Christ's life saves us from death.
3. Christ's reign is much more.

We pick up in Chapter 5, verse 6—

SCRIPTURE: Romans 5:6-8 ⁶ *For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.* ⁷ *For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—* ⁸ *but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

[TO CHILDREN: When I read the first point, stand up and wave your palm branches.]

First, CHRIST'S DEATH CAME AT THE RIGHT TIME.

Paul points out Christ died at the right time for the ungodly. And, when was the right time? The answer—*while we were still weak. While we were still powerless.*

EXPLANATION: Again, Christ died for us while we were still sinners. This goes back to what Jesus said at Lazarus' house. . . . “*Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die*” (John 11:25-26, ESV).

Those who live and believe in Jesus had to die. They had to be dead to be raised to life. So, if we were utterly dead in our sins, Christ says it was the right time for him to die for us. When was the right time to save? It seems a good answer would be, “When the people need saving.” Christ died at the right time for us. He entered Jerusalem on the donkey at the right time. The people were looking for the man who brought the dead back to life.

APPLICATION: So, when is the right time for you to make Jesus your king? I ask that question, and the answer is “right now.”

ILLUSTRATION: As a child and even as an adult, I remember hearing people say, “I want to become a Christian, but I’m just not ready yet.” I’ve heard people say, “I want to be baptized, but I’m just not ready yet. I’ll know when I’m ready.” Well, when you’re weak, that’s when you’re ready.

ILLUSTRATION: Michael Savage, the radio talk show host, said something on the radio recently. He said he didn’t normally tell his audience this, but he said the other night, he felt this compulsion to pray. He went out on his deck, looked up at the sky and the stars, and he felt this desire to connect with this God he knew exists. He said, “I prayed, then nothing. I lifted my hands and prayed, then nothing.” He said the problem was, “I’m not strong enough.” But, guess what, Mike? The problem is being humble when we are weak. He can come by repenting of his sin and trusting Jesus as his Lord and Savior. Until then, mental ascent or becoming stronger will not get anyone to God.

APPLICATION: The right time to be saved is when you admit your guilt before God—when you finally realize you are dead. How could you say with certainty Jesus Christ is Lord when you are still content living as a dead person? When you are content living in the dark, why would you want to live in the light? But, you see, if you realize you are dead and in the dark, the right time is right now.

So, we have: Christ died at the right time—

[TO CHILDREN: Children, I need your help. Get your palm branches ready. And, wave them as I say this next point.]

Second, CHRIST’S LIFE SAVES US FROM DEATH.

[Say it with me: Christ’s life saves us from death.]

Continue on in verse 9—

SCRIPTURE: Romans 5: 9-11⁹ *Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!* ¹⁰ *For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!* ¹¹ *Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*

EXPLANATION: Verses 9-11 should give all of us personal revival and a sense of joy. We've been reconciled through Jesus. Reconciliation means we were once apart, and now we're brought back together. If he was able to bring us from death and sin into relationship with Jesus, how much more will we also share in his resurrection! If he killed our life of sin, how much more will we have new life in Jesus!

Look at the state at which we were brought near to God....We were hopeless and weak and powerless and sinning, and Christ died for us...But, he didn't stay dead. He rose again and is alive. This death brought reconciliation. In this state of reconciliation, how much more powerful will he, as a living advocate for us and savior keep us in his love forever! He has been made both Lord and Christ—one in the same.

BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATION: Before Lazarus died, Jesus claimed victory about his future resurrection. We also know before Jesus died, he spoke of his future resurrection. We know he is king because of his resurrection, but see too, he is celebrated as king before his resurrection—anointed at Bethany and hailed on the road to Jerusalem with palm branches and shouts of *Hosannas*.

Reconciliation comes when two parties come together. Think about it. We were flesh. Christ became flesh. We were spiritually dead without Christ. And, Christ died.

Now, about the reality of reconciliation—It happens when two alive parties come together. Christ had new life. We have new life in Christ. As two alive parties coming together, how much more will we be saved by his life!

ILLUSTRATION: Many people say at the end of life, especially if a person is suffering from excruciating pain, death will put an end to their suffering. Have you ever heard someone say, "At least he isn't suffering anymore." No, folks, in this life we will have trouble, but take heart because Jesus has overcome the world. No, death is not our savior. Jesus Christ is our Savior. In him, we have life. Even in death, we have life.

BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATION: Remember what Jesus told Lazarus. "*Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.*" Lazarus did die, but he didn't really die. God brought him

back to life. Whether we die or live, all of it is for God’s glory. And, when we question why something is happening—why does this good person die, while this evil person lives—Go back to Lazarus. Jesus’ timing is all about him receiving glory—sometimes in mysterious ways we cannot understand.

So, we have Christ’s death came at the right time, Christ’s life saves us from death, and now—

[TO CHILDREN: Get your palm branches.]

Third, CHRIST’S REIGN IS MUCH MORE.

[Say it with me: Christ’s reign is much more.]

If we are saved from death through Christ’s life, what should our new life look like? What is the difference between the reign of sin and death humanity has been subjected to since the time of Adam and this new reign of our Lord, King Jesus?

Well, there’s a big difference. In the remaining verses in Chapter 5, Paul contrasts Adam and Jesus as two representatives of humanity. God gave authority to Adam to “*rule over the fish of the sea and the creatures of the land,*” but he sinned and lost his perfect relationship with God and with his kingdom. Christ, on the other hand, came at the right time, as the king over the new creation and new kingdom—a reign of grace, with final victory over death.

The word “reign” is used 5 times, and the word “much more” is used 5 times. Paul explains the difference between the result of Christ’s reign and the reign of sin and death that has existed since the first man, Adam. Both came from “one man.” The word “one,” by the way, is repeated 11 times. As we read the next 8 verses, listen to how Christ’s reign is “much more”—

SCRIPTURE: Romans 5:12-14 ¹² *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—*

¹³ *To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone’s account where there is no law.* ¹⁴ *Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.*

EXPLANATION: Sin entered through one man. Death entered through sin. Was it fair that one man’s sin brought sin and death for all people? One Biblical scholar, wrote: “It is not only fair, but it was wise and gracious...if God had tested each human being individually, the result would have been the same: disobedience. But, even more important, by condemning the human race through one man, God was then able to save the human race through one Man (Jesus Christ)! (Wiersby, p. 528). Paul said Adam was actually the pattern of the one to come—meaning Jesus.

SCRIPTURE: Romans 5:15-21¹⁵ *But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!*¹⁶ *Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man’s sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification.*¹⁷ *For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!*

¹⁸ *Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people.*¹⁹ *For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*

²⁰ *The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more,*²¹ *so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

EXPLANATION: The gift is not like the trespass, and it can’t even be compared to it. The word for “trespass” also translates as “offense” or “crossing the line.” God set boundaries for Adam. He could eat of any of the trees in the Garden except for the one tree, which he decided to eat from. He crossed the line God had set for him.

A crossing of the line is the exact opposite of Christ’s obedience. And, his obedience produced results that not only canceled the punishment but brought much more—new life. Many died, were judged, and condemned because of the sin. But, how much more did God’s grace and the gift Jesus’ grace overflow to people. Through Jesus many are justified, made righteous, and live.

CONCLUSION: As we move forward from Palm Sunday, I want to ask you all to think about Jesus, declared a king on his way to die.

We are all on our way to die, too. If we have been saved by Jesus, we have already experienced and hopefully are continuing to experience the death of our fleshly sin nature. But, unless Christ returns before our time, we are all on our way to die. But, what happened before Christ died? He was hailed as king. He raised Lazarus from the dead. He came at the right time. The people were sick, literally and spiritually. But, they didn't see death as their Savior. They wanted healing and new life.

The right time to accept his new life and victory is not in Heaven. It is now. He died for sinners. He died for you in the state you are now, so you can be raised to newness of life now. The Kingdom of Heaven is not later. The Kingdom of Heaven is right now. You can have a new life.

I think about this radio talk show host. He was sincere. But, he was sincerely wrong. He wasn't weak enough. And, in his weakness, all he has to do is say, *"God, forgive me, a sinner. I trust you Jesus as my Savior."*

I encourage you this morning to repent and believe, so you can walk victoriously and so you can also walk victoriously into your fleshly death and hope in eternal life with Jesus.

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