

We need a saviour

Because of Jesus, we can now have a direct relationship with God. But sometimes our hearts seem so far from his. How can we ever hope to have the heart of Jesus and the relationship with our Father as he did?

We can let God lead. When we let God lead, sometimes we may do things that are not up to Jesus standards, similar to my kids eating sand. God will come and clean us up, but we often don't enjoy the cleansing, and we put our foot down and admit that we can eat sand if we want to, which is true we can. But if we do, the loss is ours, God has a better offer, he wants us to be just like Jesus, and he will help us get there.

But isn't that good news! Christ is present to us and a present for us! This means we are not stuck! We are tweakable, we can change!

Now we may push back, we may even hear ourselves say "oh it's just my nature", but it's not your nature!

Would we make similar statements about our bodies? If you had a broken leg, would you say "oh it's just my nature to have a broken leg and not get it fixed? Of course you wouldn't, so can we not do the same with our hearts? We can ask for help,

Jesus can change our hearts, he wants us to have a heart just like his.

What does it look like when Jesus takes over your heart? I don't know for each one of you individually, but I do know that he has ambitious plans for each of us. The same one who parades in Jerusalem and parades to the cross, helps us parade through our life. We think the road ahead is perfect for us, and maybe if we were standing in the crowd we may have thought the road was perfect for Jesus. But we know the road ahead is not so perfect for Jesus and it is not so perfect for us either.

The good news, if you have given your life to Jesus, Jesus has given himself to you. The good news, you can have a personal relationship with God, and the best news, we need a saviour, we need Jesus, and that saviour can lead you through your parade of life.

Praise be to God, Amen.

"Parade to Promise"

April 13th, 2025 — Selby United Church — Scripture Matthew 21:1-11

By Tricia Cammaart

They Needed a Savior Who Could Restore Their Relationship with God

Palm Sunday marks an exciting week! We rejoice as Jesus comes riding on a donkey! The people wave their palm branches and lay down their cloaks they shout Hosanna to the son David, Hosanna in the highest.

They called him Hosanna, a word used only for adoration and praise for God. And the whole city is stirred with excitement for the long awaited Messiah!

The whole city is stirred! with anticipation and excitement, the scripture prophesied of a saviour, a king, a rescuer, a peacemaker. Someone to crush evil, someone to rule perfectly and never fail them, someone to save them from sin, someone to establish an everlasting kingdom, someone to be the perfect shepherd, someone to walk among them and a God to have a personal relationship with.

This scripture is written by Matthew, who is known in Luke and Mark as the name Levi. Matthew changes his name which means: gift of God. Despite being an outcast, a tax collector who was looked upon from the Jewish culture as a traitor and sinner for working with the Romans and overcharging people to fill their own pockets.

But Jesus called him to be a disciple. Matthew immediately left his tax booth and followed Jesus—an act of **grace and acceptance**. A gift of God.

Matthew writes primarily to a Jewish audience to prove that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the law and the prophets can find fulfillment in Jesus, and Matthew wanted to let everyone know that the Kingdom of Heaven is now open to Jewish and Gentiles, to everyone!

Based on Matthew's past he understood the **power of grace as he felt he was a gift of God**. He knew that the people of Jerusalem were feeling the need for grace and needed to feel the power of being a gift of God. The people needed a saviour who could restore their relationship with God.

When Jesus came to Jerusalem, the people stirred with excitement and shouted! They were so happy and hopeful. Hopeful because they needed a saviour. They needed someone who could restore their relationship with God. The people had God's law that they could follow but they couldn't keep it perfectly.

The Law showed them what was right and wrong, but it couldn't fix their sinful hearts. They needed a Savior who could deal with sin permanently. God's

presence was in the Temple, but only the high priest could enter. Most people, like Matthew, felt far from God. Many people had lost sight of God's true purpose, they felt unworthy and too sinful to approach God.

People longed for hope, but they felt stuck in religious systems and Roman laws that didn't bring them closer to God.

And then Jesus came riding in on a donkey.

And we need a saviour who will be the example of how to have a relationship with God.

What does it look like for you to have a Saviour, and build a relationship with God? What does your life look like when you let God take over? And particularly let God take over your heart.

If you were a car God would want to take over your engine, if you were a computer God would want to take over your hard drive. But you are a person and God wants to take over your heart.

He wants to build a relationship with you.

Now I am not saying that God wants you to be someone different, God loves you just the way you are but refuses to leave you that way!

When my kids were little, I would take them to the beach. They love the water

but they also love the sand, what kid doesn't. Inevitably they would start eating sand. Gross dirty sand, all over their face and in their mouth. Did I love them less, no, I loved them just the way they were, but I refused to leave them that way, reprimanding them "Gabby don't eat the sand" and using my hand or a wet wipe to clean them up. Leaving them a little bit better than when they were covered with sand. (and why is always the second child you have to say those words to!)

We all make bad choices, similar to my kids and the sand, when we make choices, good and bad, and if the choices are not good, God gives us grace, cleans us up and says I've got something better for you, if you follow Jesus's example and listen to me.

Jesus made it possible for ALL people to come directly to God and live in God's grace.

We need a saviour who will be the example of how to have a relationship with God.

We are not much different then the people of Jesus time. Wouldn't you agree that we need a rescuer, peacemaker and the perfect shepherd for us. We need someone to crush evil, someone to rule perfectly and to never fail us. Someone to give us grace and save us from sin.

The beautiful thing is that we have it. We can have it all because Jesus came riding on a donkey, stirring a city with

excitement, fulfilling a prophecy as our Messiah. So now we can have a personal relationship with God and we can let God lead.

Many people try to build a relationship with God. Some try to build it through good works, good deeds and good habits. Some want to build a relationship with God through religious rituals and some through personal efforts. But Palm Sunday reminds us that only through Jesus can we truly know the grace of God.

And so God send Jesus a saviour to his people.

Now if you were expecting a saviour, would you expect them to come riding in on a donkey? I don't think so. I think we would be expecting some kind of soldier warrior king riding on a big strong horse, with a calvary in front and behind. Yet Jesus comes riding in on a donkey. Probably not the expectation of the crowd. But still the crowd shouted Hosanna, hosanna in the highest and laid their cloaks and palm branches down on the road. God had sent them a saviour!

"A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,"

Jesus is pure, peaceful, purposeful, pleasant. Children flocked to him, he could find beauty and joy in any situation and found possibility in problems. That sounds like a wonderful saviour. Even though

Jesus wasn't the warrior king they may have expected, Jesus was adored by thousands! Jesus was God himself, who came to rescue his people forever!

But even with all the excitement, was Jesus the king everyone in the crowds was expecting?

Some people in that crowd **wanted a revolutionary**—someone like **Judas Maccabeus**, a past Jewish leader who led a military revolt against foreign rulers. Some of them had expected Jesus to **overthrow the Romans** by force.

This caused **disappointment and confusion** of those who wanted a political warrior but got a suffering servant instead.

It challenges us to think: **Are we looking for Jesus to fit our expectations, or are we willing to follow Him as He truly is?**

They wanted war, Jesus brought peace, they wanted a kingdom in heaven and Jesus was offering a kingdom on earth.

Jesus—came as a different kind of king. He wasn't leading an armed rebellion but bringing a kingdom of **peace, humility, and sacrifice**. Maybe not the saviour they wanted but the saviour they all needed. He was drawing us closer to God, opening the way for a deeper and more personal relationship with Him..