

ROOTED
Submission
April 9, 2017
Luke 19:28-40

Palm Sunday Scripture Luke 19:28-40 (Triumphant Entry)

There is a book written on the spiritual disciplines by a guy named Richard J. Foster that has become a staple on the subject of living life in such a way that one's spiritual life is constantly being elevated to new levels. The book is called *The Celebration of Discipline*, and in this book, Foster defines submission as: ***the freedom to lay down the terrible burden of always needing to get your own way.*** Now, notice that this could easily be misconstrued as resignation but, submission is voluntarily laying down the burden of needing get your own way. Resignation is surrender – submission is willingly giving over the need. Make sense...turn to someone and say – you just need to submit.

As we take time today to celebrate Palm Sunday and all it means, we can't forget that for Jesus, this week will lead to betrayal, humiliation, beatings, and then death in the cruelest and most painful way known to humanity at that time in history, the cross. At one point, in the course of the events of this week, Jesus will pray that if this can all be done some other way, he's open to a different plan. Instead, Jesus submits to a plan that is greater than all the pain and all the humiliation and all the agony that he is about to go through. I want you to hear this from me this morning, submission is not always easy not is the results of submission an easy road. It's probably the reason most people don't like the idea of submission, right.

We just heard the biblical account of Jesus' triumphant ride into Jerusalem when the people of the city were shouting Hosanna. He is hailed by young and old from all over Jerusalem and people are throwing their cloaks on the ground and praising his name. Yet, by worldly standards, Jesus entry doesn't look very triumphant—he's riding on a donkey for heaven's sake. He doesn't have fancy armor or luxurious clothing or cape and a huge sword by his side. Instead he's wearing the robes of a common person and the sandals of a man who has been homeless for three years and walking everywhere he goes.

And don't let the crowds are shouting Hosanna fool you, let's be honest, they're being pretty self-centered. They want a Savior to ride into this town and free them of their oppression, defeat the evil Romans and bring back a peace ruled by the King of the Jews. They want life to start turning their way. And this Jesus, maybe he's the guy, right. And Jesus' calm and peaceful ride on the donkey reminds us of how the Spiritual Discipline of Submission means putting down our own way of thinking and taking up God's greater way. Because if we're honest too, there are times when we want Jesus to come riding triumphantly into our lives and save the day, save our marriage, save our loved one, restore our health, or heal a friend. But, if we're going to submit to a higher authority then the first thing we will need to be okay with is:

SUBMISSION MEANS NOT HAVING TO GET YOUR OWN WAY.

"So they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their garments over it for him to ride on." (Luke 19:35 NLT)

Scripture Luke 19:45-48 (Cleansing the Temple)

Our society has been built on doing it ourselves. Pull yourselves up by your bootstraps. And in fact, we can see in many areas of our society where it has been more step on others to get ahead. The scandals of recent years with companies like Enron, the big banks only thinking about making money instead of thinking of others points out just how greedy we can be and how we, as a people, have the amazing capacity to ignore others – if it means we can get ahead. Just look at the way people will try to get an advantage when there's construction on the highway and everything is bottlenecking down to just one lane. And yet this is anything but the way Jesus lived his life. And this is anything but the way we are to live in submission to the greater

and higher calling of God. Jesus embodies submission and giving to others instead of worrying about what he got...and then he says to all of us, live like me. Ouch!

Immediately after entering Jerusalem, Jesus heads to the Temple. But instead of finding a holy site to worship God, he finds what some translations call "a den of thieves." You see, at this time in history, the Old Testament laws say you had to bring a certain type of animal to the temple to be sacrificed to 'pay' for your sins. Now you had to have the 'right' kind of animal and so there was a system established to buy the right kind of animal in the outer courtyard of the temple. This courtyard is filled with all these sellers hocking their 'right kind of animal' at extremely inflated prices. Now these inflated prices at this monopoly in the outer courtyard made it a huge burden for the poor. And so, the sellers, under the watchful eyes of the religious elite are fleecing the people and making a profit off the faith and hard work of others.

So, Jesus gets righteously mad and flips over the tables. He's mad and upset that the temple has fallen to the greed and desires of people who are only serving themselves instead of a place of awe and reverence to God, a place of prayer. For the religious elite of the day, this is the last straw. They have already felt jealous about and threatened by Jesus. Nobody ever threw a parade for them and now this guy is trashing their side business.

This is the last straw, from here on out in the week they are looking for a reason to kill him...to get him out of the way. Jesus is threatening, their livelihood, their position, and their power base as rulers over the people. So, they desperately and intentionally want to remove this Jesus guy.

And Jesus knows all of this...He knows what will be said about him if he overthrows the tables and calls out the religious leaders for taking advantage of the poor and faithful. And he will not be stopped. He is placing his faith in the Higher plan and his consideration for the poor, the lost, and the needy above his own life. But, it's not about him...the spiritual discipline of submission is all about putting others first, telling others that they are valuable.

SUBMISSION MEANS VALUING OTHERS.

"After that, he taught daily in the Temple, but the leading priests, the teachers of religious law, and the other leaders of the people began planning how to kill him."(Luke 19:47 NLT)

Submission chooses others over the mentality of I'll get you before I get got. Or I'll get you twice as hard because you got me. Jesus teaches us that submission means putting God first and valuing others over our own safety and security. And if we're honest, that's hard to do...but God must think it's possible or He wouldn't have...well, thought we could do it.

Scripture Luke 22:39-53 (the Garden and arrest)

Submission has long been abused in the area of religion. Submission was used for centuries to keep African Americans in slavery, inaccurately using Paul's texts like 'slaves submit to your masters.' Submission has been abused for decades as a way to tell women to stay in abusive relationships and to submit at all costs. Submission led millions of Jews to their death during the holocaust. And yet these very instances are not at all what the spiritual discipline of submission is all about. And while submission has been abused, we can't dismiss it as a spiritual discipline that God calls us to. God has been calling people like us to submit...to deny our desires for those that are greater than our own for thousands of years.

Where we get in trouble is when we want it our way, right. Think back in history at the times when it was bad, they were often driven by selfish people who wanted it their way. And the thing that we admire, that we celebrate as a people is when brave men and women submit their lives for the higher calling of peace, and freedom, and justice, liberty. Yes, it means that to submit to the Lord our God comes with a level self-denial, a willingness to say it's not about what I want, or what I need, or even – about my life. We are called to self-denial through submission to what God wants...not to hurt or harm others but, to advance God's plan and to advance the Kingdom of God, on earth – as it is in heaven.

SUBMISSION MEANS SELF-DENIAL.

"Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." (Luke 22:42 NLT)

For Jesus, this all comes out of his living and abiding with the Father. He knew who he was and over and over again emphasizes that we are God's Children. To submit to another and to submit to God, first and foremost comes out of our obedience and trust of a God who is with us and creates us and calls us good.

Jesus throughout this week will indeed embody the discipline of submission and deny himself for the sake of our salvation. In Luke 22, Jesus prays so hard and so earnestly that he sweats blood. He does not want the path that lies before him, and YET through submission he finds the power to pray, ***"Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."*** And in this very real, authentic and honest prayer Jesus teaches every one of us about the true power of this discipline. To lean upon the Word of God and trust in a way that walks with Christ ... even to the point of denying your life and knowing that God's will be done.

Ways to apply this ... (pray for those strutting around because they are valuing themselves, pray to put down your strutting, etc)

TO SUBMIT TO GOD, I WILL _____.