

**Sermon Series: “The Darkness and The Dawn”(Palm Sunday)—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN—
4/13/03**

Title: “More Than Conquerors”

Text: **Matthew 21: 1-11 & Romans 8: 35-37**

Intro: *Ills. Forgetting the Point of It All*

Theme: Often our life in Christ looks like anything but victorious; yet through the one who has rescued us and won our eternal deliverance, we can experience his victorious love no matter the surrounding circumstances.

Print and Read Matthew 21: 1-11

When you see Jesus, what do you see? (“who is this? vs. 10)

- Do you only see the outward trappings of a religion and its main figure as a great teacher/prophet?
 1. The Jews on that Sunday of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem saw a political Messiah, a prophet, a charismatic leader
 1. They did not see Jesus as the fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9– the humble Savior
 2. Turned on the man from Galilee because outward appearances where their focus and would fade by Friday
 2. Is Jesus and church the “civic,” or “righteous,” or “politically correct” thing to be doing right now in your life?
- Do you catch an “ah-ha” glimpse of something significant but let it pass by?
 3. The disciples had a faint glimpse that Jesus was fulfilling a greater destiny
 1. Matthew and others “after the resurrection” finally understood “*Did not our hearts burn within us?(Lk 24:32)*”
 2. Yet, they with many of the people got caught up in the trap of a *warm fuzzy* coming into Jerusalem only to have their *emotions dashed* the following Thursday and Friday when the mood of the crowd turned ugly
 4. Often our Christianity is nothing more than sound-bites, hair raised on the back of our necks, or self-help programs
 1. **Print And Read Matthew 11: 12-19**
- Do you see Jesus and his transforming life with eyes of faith?
 5. Seeing his redemptive plan
 1. Jesus always keep his redemption purpose of the world in front of his eyes
 2. “*Jesus gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. Titus 2:14*”
 3. Do you believe Jesus has and can redeem every part/circumstance of your life? Are you willing to let him do it?
 6. Seeing his gentle spirit
 1. Jesus did not come into Jerusalem like everyone expected but meek/gentle and riding on a donkey
 2. How is Jesus going to change you and your world?
 3. *‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the LORD Almighty. Zechariah 4:6*
 7. Seeing his transformational life
 1. **Ills.: Transformed by an elevator**
 2. Jesus did not come to overthrow world government or bring world peace or justice or answer daily bread needs
 3. Jesus came with the ultimate goal of transforming people not society or institutions
 4. “*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.*” *Romans 12:2*

When you view your life in Jesus, what do you see? (Print and read Romans 8: 35-37)

- Victorious living in spite of the heat of the battle
 1. Living in Jesus and for Jesus does not guarantee a “*happy and trouble free life*”
 2. Remembering that in Jesus, none of this can separate you from God’s love, eternal plan, and glorious purpose

- Victorious living by imitating Jesus rather than the world
 3. The world would try to convince you that “*might makes right*”
 4. Jesus shows us by his own example that the “*gentle shall inherit the earth.*” (Matt. 5: 5)
 5. “*Thought of as sheep to be slaughtered*” because we never lose when we lose our life in Jesus
- Victorious living in which the victory is already assured
 6. **Ills.: Watching the National Championship Game differently if you know the outcome**
 7. Paul says that we are “hyper-victors”(overwhelmingly) because Jesus gives us his victory which is already completed
 8. “*But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.*” 2 Cor. 2:14

Forgetting the Point of It All

wonderful tomato growers in central California. More successful at tomato growing than the tomato growers of all human history, they grew more tomatoes per acre than anyone ever had. But they did have one problem. That was to get their tomatoes into the salad bowls of Chicago and the fruit baskets of the Bronx un-bruised, because a magnificent bruised tomato, in the hands of the tomato squeezers of the world, is only a bruised tomato. So they set agrotechnology to work and accomplished two marvelous things. First, they got a machine to pick the tomatoes while they were still yellow but very firm. Then they put the tomatoes on an assembly belt, passed them under a certain kind of light for seven seconds, and they came out a rosy red--a rosy pink, almost red. And then they devised a packaging such that you could put a bunch of tomatoes in a Styrofoam crate, and lift it twenty feet high above solid concrete, and also take a bumper from a Chevy pickup, lift it twenty feet high above solid concrete, drop them both, and the bumper would come off worse than any one of those tomatoes. Agrotechnology wins again. But they had one problem: The tomato that the chef sliced into his salad in Chicago and the woman bought from the market in Boston didn't taste the way a tomato was supposed to taste. Enormous success at means, forgetting the point and purpose, the end of it all.

Transformed by an Elevator

A family from a remote area was making their first visit to a big city. They checked in to a grand hotel and stood in amazement at the impressive sight. Leaving the reception desk they came to the elevator entrance. They'd never seen an elevator before, and just stared at it, unable to figure out what it was for.

An old lady hobbled towards the elevator and went inside. The door closed. About a minute later, the door opened and out came a stunningly good-looking young woman.

Dad couldn't stop staring. Without turning his head he patted his son's arm and said, "Go get your mother, son."

Matthew 21:1-11

¹When they came near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples ahead of him. ²He said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you. You will find a donkey tied there and a colt with it. Untie them, and bring them to me. ³If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them. That person will send them at once." ⁴This happened so that what the prophet had said came true: ⁵"*Tell the people of Zion, 'Your king is coming to you. He's gentle, riding on a donkey, on a colt, a young pack animal.'*" ⁶The disciples did as Jesus had directed them. ⁷They brought the donkey and the colt and put their coats on them for Jesus to sit on. ⁸Most of the people spread their coats on the road. Others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The crowd that went ahead of him and that followed him was shouting, "*Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!*" (Ps. 118: 26) ¹⁰When Jesus came into Jerusalem, the whole city was in an uproar. People were asking, "Who is this?" ¹¹The crowd answered, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee." [GW]

Romans 8:35-37

³⁵What will separate us from the love Christ has for us? Can trouble, distress, persecution, hunger, nakedness, danger, or violent death separate us from his love? ³⁶As Scripture says: "*We are being killed all day long because of you. We are thought of as sheep to be slaughtered.*" (Ps. 44:22) ³⁷The one who loves us gives us an overwhelming victory in all these difficulties.[GW]

Matthew 11:12-19

¹²From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. ¹³For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. ¹⁴And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. ¹⁵He who has ears, let him hear. ¹⁶"To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: ¹⁷"We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.' ¹⁸For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.'
¹⁹The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners." 'But wisdom is proved right by her actions."