

The Road to The Cross (Part 5)

Sunday, March 29, 2020

For several weeks' we have been following Jesus as He travelled The Road to The Cross

We have learned that this road...

1. Is Paved with CHALLENGING TRUTH...
2. Purchased the FREEDOM of our FORGIVENESS...
3. Must be travelled with FAITH NOT FEAR...
4. Will ENCOUNTER STORMS along the way...

Today I want to turn our attention to one of the tools that God has given us in our spiritual arsenal that helps us travel this difficult road

5. Worshiping on the Journey

Once again, I believe this is something we could use right now, in our current situation, as many people are facing very difficult and uncertain circumstances in their lives.

- Maybe you lost your job because of the shutdown
- Maybe you've tested positive for corona virus
- Maybe you have a loved one who is sick and, in the hospital, or worse yet, has died because of this virus
- Maybe you've been quarantined or self-quarantined and are feeling depressed because you can't get out
- Maybe your worried about what's going to happen next, how you're going to pay your bills, bet food and supplies, homeschool your children
- Maybe your circumstances have nothing to do with this virus but we're already difficult, uncertain and troublesome before all this began

From this position of worry and doubt, of question and concern, of fear and uncertainty, I want us to learn to Worship. Now, at first it may seem counterintuitive to say that the answer to all this is worship. Your response may be, "this is the last place I feel like worshipping." But remember...

2 Corinthians 10:3-4 New International Version (NIV)

3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. **4** The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

Or maybe you like the language of the King James that says...

2 Corinthians 10:3-4 New International Version (NIV)

3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. **4** The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

It may seem like The Road to The Cross is the least likely place we would find worship. But that's exactly what we find

John 12:1-19 New International Version (NIV)

12 Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. **2** Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. **3** Then Mary took about a pint[a] of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, **5** "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.[b]" **6** He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

7 "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. **8** You will always have the poor among you,[c] but you will not always have me."

9 Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. **10** So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, **11** for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him.

Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. **13** They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,

"Hosanna![d]"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"[e]

"Blessed is the king of Israel!"

14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

15 "Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion;

see, your king is coming,

seated on a donkey's colt."[f]

16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. **18** Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. **19** So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

Here in a John 12 we see two beautiful acts of worship, two powerful acts of worship, at the apex of Jesus journey to the cross. Today I want us to Learn how to worship on the Road to The Cross and what happens when we do...

It's Extravagant.

Every time a I read the account of Jesus being anointed, and by the way there is more than one...

Chronologically the first anointing of Jesus occurs in [Luke 7:36–50.1](#) This account is different from the somewhat similar passages in Matthew, Mark, and John. Happens at the home of Simon, a Pharisee, by a sinful woman who wets his feet with her tears, wipes them, kisses them and pours perfume on them. Jesus acknowledges her act as one of great and sincere love and says that what she has done will always be remembered.

The next account chronologically is the one in [John 12:1–8](#). It is quite different from Luke's account and very similar to Matthew's and Mark's in many respects, but also different in some details. Six days before the Passover t the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. Mary pours perfume on Jesus feet and wipes them with her hair

Both the [Matthew 26:6–13](#) and [Mark 14:3–9](#) accounts are the same and record the last anointing of Jesus chronologically. Occurs in the house of Simon the Leper, after the Triumphal entry and two days before Passover. Here his head is anointed with perfume

But every time a I read these accounts, I am struck by the extravagance of the worship

Worship should be extravagant... It should hold nothing back.

We are told to love the Lord our God with ALL our hearts, soul mind and strength.

I think some people are afraid to let go in worship. To allow the emotion of their relationship with Jesus to influence their worship of Him. Maybe we have been too guarded because of excesses that have been more in the flesh but in the spirit; but don't let that stop you from being extravagant with your worship.

That's why I like being Pentecostal. I like worship that is extravagant, powerful, emotional. I like raising my hands, I like being loud at times, soft at times, letting the tears flow, allowing the Holy Spirit to move.

King David once replied in response to the extravagance of his worship...

2 Samuel 6:21-22 New International Version (NIV)

²¹ ...I will celebrate before the LORD. ²² I will become even more undignified than this...

In other words, "I don't care how I look; this isn't about me it is about God."

On another occasion he said...

1 Chronicles 21:24-26 New International Version (NIV)

²⁴ But King David replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying the full price. I will not take for the LORD what is yours or sacrifice a burnt offering that costs me nothing."

²⁵ So David paid Araunah six hundred shekels^[a] of gold for the site. ²⁶ David built an altar to the LORD there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. He called on the LORD, and the LORD answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering.

I think some people offer God worship that costs them little or nothing. They are stoic, lifeless, spectators rather than participants, relying on the worship team to do the work for them, unresponsive.

Worship should be extravagant, and maybe that's why it often makes people a little uncomfortable.

During the triumphal entry the worship was extravagant. People took off their robes and laid them down on the road. They called him a king, they took palm branches and waved them, shouting at the top of their lungs... "Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

The Pharisees couldn't handle the exuberance of the people's worship and called upon Jesus to put a stop to it. (Maybe because they were convicted at their own lack of true worship of God). Jesus told them... (Luke 19) "If they keep quiet, the rocks will cry out." And in Matthew 21 we read that he quoted Psalm 8 to them, reminding them that God had ordained this kind of praise.

Even in difficult circumstances our worship should be extravagant... How extravagant has your worship been lately

It Exalts.

Psalm 34:3 King James Version (KJV)

³ O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

Worship focuses all the attention on God. It's not about the circumstances, and it certainly isn't about us. It is about God... It acknowledges His power, His presence, His Love, His Plans, His Purposes. It speaks the truth of His promises rather than the doubt and fear of the problems at hand

Worship on the Road to the Cross lifts Jesus up... And Jesus said (just a little later in this very chapter)... If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto myself."

How are you lifting up the name of Jesus during this time?

It is NOT Entertainment

One thing I want to emphasize in this message is that Worship is not entertainment. Too much of what we call worship today is nothing more than entertainment.

Worship is personal and requires our participation. It's not about lights and smoke and professional musicians, stages and video screens.

Matthew 23:5 New International Version (NIV)

⁵ "Everything they do is done for people to see: They make their phylacteries^[a] wide and the tassels on their garments long;

Let us not become as The Lord declared about the people of Israel...

Isaiah 29:13 New International Version (NIV)

¹³ The Lord says: “These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught.^[a]

It Encourages

In the account in Mathew Jesus says...

Matthew 26:10-12 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁰ ... “Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me.

¹¹ The poor you will always have with you,^[a] but you will not always have me.

¹² When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial.

I believe at a time when he really needed it, the worship of this woman encouraged him and prepared him for what was ahead.

Likewise, worship encourages and strengthens us to face the difficult journeys of this life.

Judas reaction represents those who feel worshiping won't do any good. We can't waste time on that. We have to hold on to what we have. Figure it out. But remember Mary had a habit of wasting things on Jesus (time at his feet, this perfume)

Our worship retells the story of what our God has done for us. It retells the story of his love and sacrifice for us. It retells the story of his power over death and the grave. It retells the story of his promise to prepare a place for us to be with him forever. And these stories encourage us.

Worship brings us into the presences of God

Worship is not designed to fill in the gap at church until it's time for the message. Often, it is the message. Worship is a lifestyle of laying our heart before God in reflection and meditation—tremendous joy and healing often take place. It is during this time that spiritual surgery cleans the vessel and opens the blockage so that restoration with God can take place.

A person who does not worship will have a difficult time hearing and discerning God's voice ... His truth. Worship positions the heart to receive, the eyes to see, and the mind to comprehend the will of God.

Worship heals, restores, renews, breaks, builds and encourages us toward God. Take time now and begin worshipping Him. Call upon His name and He will save you ... He will deliver you. – Shane Idleman

It Empowers

One thing that we often forget about worship is the power that it has...

Psalm 22:3 English Standard Version (ESV)

³ Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises^[a] of Israel.

Paul experienced this power one night when he and Silas were sitting in prison with their feet in stocks. Earlier in the day they had been beating and severely flogged. They began to worship God and the bible says the other prisoners were listening to them.

Acts 16:26 New International Version (NIV)

²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose.

That's power... And that's not all because that night the Jailer and his household got saved.

But my favorite scripture about the power of worship is found in 2 Chronicles chapter 20. Jehoshaphat is faced with an impossible battle. A "vast army" was coming to destroy the people of Judah. Jehoshaphat and the people began to seek God for help. God told them not to be afraid that the Battle belonged not to them but to God. They were to march out against the invading army and wait on God. Here's what happened...

2 Chronicles 20:21-22 New International Version (NIV)

²¹ After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his^[a] holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying:

"Give thanks to the LORD,
for his love endures forever."

²² As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.

When we worship, the invisible God is at work doing invisible and powerful things. We get realigned, refreshed and refueled; we find unspeakable joy and indescribable peace. We discover the breakthrough strength of God, which enables us to walk in the truth, live in His presence and see Him fight our battles for us. It is how we can put the beauty of the Gospel on display, receive His many blessings and at the same time be a blessing to the world. – Tommy Walker

It Evangelizes

Our worship tells other people about the greatness of our God. Remember Jesus said that the woman's anointing of Him would be remembered and retold wherever the gospel is preached. The Worship of those who received Jesus into Jerusalem continues to announce God's plan of salvation to the world.

Paul and Silas' worship brought an entire family to The Lord.

Worship Evangelizes... But I want you to remember, worship is more than just a song we sing it is the way we live our lives.

How is your worship (the way you are living and declaring the praises of God right now) leading people to Jesus?

It Can! Why not begin to worship Him right now. Worship him extravagantly. Worship him loudly, with your life. Exalt the Majesty of our God. Lift the name of Jesus high! Let Him fill you with encouragement and strength.

Psalm 138:1, 2, 7 New International Version (NIV) Of David.

¹ I will praise you, LORD, with all my heart; ...I will sing your praise.

² I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name
for your unfailing love and your faithfulness,

⁷ Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life. You stretch out your
hand against the anger of my foes; with your right hand you save me.