

## Palm Sunday Sermon 2019

You may recall several years ago how Felix Baumgartner made a world breaking sky-diving attempt from near the edge of the earth's atmosphere.

At 39 km above the earth he jumped from a small pod that hung suspended below a giant balloon.

In the moments after the initial jump he reached a speed of 1,400 km per hour.

As he came closer to the earth the atmosphere became thicker and his speed slowed to about 200 km per hour.

At that point he deployed his parachute and landed safely on terra-firma.

When Jesus descended to His earth 2000 years ago he hit it. He hit it hard.

Paul tells us that he did not consider equality with God a thing to be held on to.

Instead he emptied himself and became obedient unto death, even a horrible death by crucifixion.

Jesus did not use his divine nature as an opportunity to make a safe and smooth landing on the rocky terrain of this hard-hearted world. Not by any means.

Let me say it again in the words of Philippians 2:7- 8.

“Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;

he took the humble position of a slave

and was born as a human being.

When he appeared in human form,

he humbled himself in obedience to God

and died a criminal's death on a cross."

Bam! No soft landing for Jesus!

The cross marks the spot where Jesus hit the earth.

He hit it with outstretched arms. He did it for you and for me.

Jesus, as it were, dived from the platform of heaven with its crystal clear atmosphere into the putrid and polluted depths of our sin filled world.

From there he dragged us safely from the treacherous seas of this fallen world onto the shores of heaven, and breathed new life into us.

We should never lose sight of Jesus willingness to give up everything so that we could attain heaven.

Jesus the almighty Lord of a trillion galaxies was willing to step down from his throne and take the lowest place for you and for me.

It would be fair to say that none of us will ever be able to understand what it meant for Jesus that he humbled himself and obediently took the road that led to Calvary.

In the words of M Scott Peck it really was the road less travelled.

I recently heard school children practicing some sort of war-cry.

They were no doubt preparing for some upcoming sports event. It was loud, intense, fierce, even threatening.

I couldn't help wonder about the jeers directed towards Jesus on that first Good Friday.

Not a cry of support, but a rage of hatred. Crucify Him!

The words to the song, "Above All" came to my mind.

"Like a rose trampled on the ground – he took the fall and thoughts of me above all."

In Psalm 31:14-15 we read, "I am trusting you O Lord, saying, 'you are my God!' My future is in your hands. Rescue me from those who would hunt me down."

That's what Jesus did. He entrusted himself and his mission into the loving hands of his father. His trust was vindicated as the text relates in Philippians chapter two.

*"Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honour and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

This one who became obedient unto death for you and me is crowned "Lord of all".

On the last day All creation will bow the knee before Jesus our Lord.//

Let me ask you. "What do you think is the main point of the events of Palm Sunday?

Is it found in the donkey? Is it found in the palm branches? Is it found in the shouts of Hosanna?

For me the key to this day is found in verse 5. "Look your king is coming to you, he is humble..."

In Lewis Carroll's book, "Through the Looking Glass", Alice discovers a world where everything is reversed. Up is down. Forward is backward.

Christianity is a kind of Looking Glass world where everything works on principles opposite to the world.

In Philippians 2:1-11 we discover that for Jesus the way to greatness is via the low way. The way up is down.

If you want to get a handle on what Jesus did to save you, CS Lewis suggests we think of what it would be like to become a slug or a crab.

Because he emptied himself in true humility and obedience and because he was willing to die on the cross on Good Friday.....God filled him with glory and power and gave him the name that is above every name, before which every knee will bow.

I don't know about you but I want to commit my life to follow someone who would do that for me.