

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.”

Matthew’s account of your Lord’s Passion is vivid. So are the other Gospels. The tradition of the church is to read all four Gospel accounts during this Holy Week with the Passion of our Lord according to St. John being read on Good Friday. Why so many details and so much of hearing the same story? Well, one theologian once said the four Gospels are Passion accounts with long introductions. I think he was on to something in that statement. The point is this is what everything was leading up to in the Gospels and the life of Jesus, this week in your Lord’s life. Not only that but you could say that all the Scriptures are pointing to this week in history. You could say that, and you’d be right.

When you listen to this whole story in faith, then, you are hearing with eyes that see and know the purpose of all this suffering and death. It’s for you. All of this, every single word and letter of the Lord’s Passion; his life, his suffering, and his death are all for you. Jesus endured this all, suffered this all, for you; to save you. To meditate upon this all, then, is to listen and take to heart your Lord’s work for you. It’s to cling to those words as the story of your redemption. It’s to hear all those things and think about when Jesus was suffering and undergoing it all it was for your benefit and that your sin would be forgiven and you have eternal life, and he’s done it, you have this all.

You see the mind of Christ in all this too as you see his work for you. St. Paul wrote about that in the words of the Epistle reading, “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

God calls you to have the mind of Christ. The mind of Christ, which is to be your mind, is a steadfast humility. It’s to look outside of yourself setting your mind and heart on the things of God loving him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and loving your neighbor as yourself. Going through this life you fix your eyes on Christ and find rest in him. You place all your trust in the one who emptied himself so that you are redeemed from sin, death, and the devil. It’s all yours as the burden has been borne for your sin and you are righteous before the throne of God.

The mind of Christ is to take on the form of a servant. This had to be done and who he is as God in the flesh. It is necessary for him to have done this all and this is his mind which set about to do it. In stanzas two and three of the Hymn of the Day, Paul Gerhardt, captures this mind of Jesus and the Father as the Lord is sent and willingly goes to do the will of the Father. Listen again to those words preach to you. Listen to them as the Father speaking to his Beloved Son and his the response of an obedient Son who loves his Father.

This Lamb is Christ, the soul’s great friend,
The Lamb of God, our Savior,
Whom God the Father chose to send
To gain for us His favor.
“Go forth, My Son,” the Father said,
“And free My children from their dread
Of guilt and condemnation.
The wrath and stripes are hard to bear,
But by Your passion they will share
The fruit of Your salvation.”

“Yes, Father, yes, most willingly
I’ll bear what You command Me.
My will conforms to Your decree,
I’ll do what You have asked Me.”
O wondrous Love, what have You done!
The Father offers up His Son,
Desiring our salvation.
O Love, how strong You are to save!
You lay the One into the grave
Who built the earth’s foundation.

Palm Sunday looks to the week ahead where there is great suffering to be sure, but this is your redemption as Jesus took your place and atoned for what you cannot. A new week, a new day, follows this week where victory death has

been defeated. In the reading today the prophet Zechariah is quoted, “Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt!”

Zion is called to fear not, and God means it when he says it, because Jesus goes forward steadfast toward the shame of the cross. That’s where he’s headed, and he knows it. He knows what’s going to happen in a few days and the cost that will be paid. But still, he goes as the Lamb uncomplaining forth bearing the guilt of sinners, your guilt. He goes on as the man of sorrows in love toward his people. His mind is set on your redemption and will accomplish it at the cost of his own life.

Dear people of God; sons and daughters of Zion. Behold your King has come in great humility, but this is his great glory as he has come to save you. What a joy this day to behold this all and receive what your Lord has done. You are on this side of this story now as the Passion has been accomplished. But you see you have all that has been accomplished. Baptized into Christ you have this all and the Lord delivers this all to you today through his word and sacraments. You are reaping the benefits of Jesus’s Passion. Ponder it all and consider what the Lord has done. Behold this glorious story and know that you now have the glory of your Lord’s work. Take it all to heart and consider yourself. Repent of your sin which tears you away from your Lord has been paid for it. Rejoice in the Lamb of God who takes away your sin and be hearers of this word this week, and every day, as you go forth covered in Christ and treasuring what your Lord has done. Greet, then, your glorious King. He’s your King and you are his people. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. . . Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” Blessed indeed is he and blessed indeed now are you. Hosanna in the highest.

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.