

Prayer Not Protest

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Well, welcome to our **4th Sunday** doing *Pajama church*. I think the church on a whole is doing well responding to being, an *analog church* in a *digital world*.
- B. *Mark Foreman* reminds us, the **early church** and the **persecuted church** worldwide has often found herself in *lockdown* and unable to meet publicly.
1. Despite these limits, the church has typically **grown** and **thrived** out of these kinds of circumstances, and **WE** are no different.
 2. Even though **our lockdown** is not from *persecution* it has still forced us to come to grips with what it means to *truly follow Jesus* and **reinvent how to do this together, when we can't gather in person**.
- C. **Slide2 Community Food Drive** - (our office will remain closed at this time) **Yet Food needs are *still growing* in our area**. Check out our main page on our web site. Showing you 4 opportunities to **give**. In Murr, Tem, LE, & a group that works w/our homeless population. (U drop off direct to them).
- D. **Slide3 Hey this Friday (Good Friday)** Join **Kelly & I** in our home as we would like to share some **thoughts** on Good Fri **And we would like to share in communion with you**. **So**, have any kind of **bread/crackers** ready, with **grape juice** or anything comparable. **Fri morn 7am** (or anytime you watch after that).
- E. **Slide4 1 more thing**: If your kids are watching with you, **hit pause**, run outside, **cut a palm frond for each of your kids &** watch the service together. **This is Palm Sunday**
- F. *Ok, welcome back. Prayer: that I may know him and the power of his res, & may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.*

II. Slide5 Palm Sunday Intro:

- A. Same challenge **today** as there was on that **1st Palm Sunday**. A willingness to throw **everything** in your life **down**...for **Jesus**. (Connect Acts text, w/Palm Sun)
- B. Acts 4:32 *Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.*
- C. Slide6a Mt.21:7,8 *They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them **their cloaks**, and he sat on them. 8 Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others **cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.***
1. On **Palm Sunday** not only did some place their **clothing** on the animal as **a saddle**, some threw their **robes** to **the ground** as a gesture of **reverence**, indicating their willingness for him to **have everything** - even to **trample** their property if **He** so desired.
 2. Slide6b Are you willing to throw **everything** in your life **down**? Anything you're **not**?
- D. Slide7a **On Palm Sunday** the church celebrates Jesus at the **End** of His journey (His last week on earth).
1. A busy itinerary in this **final journey** which **he** started **9 months earlier**. **He** ministered in at least **35 localities**. Even timing the journey to end in **Jerusalem**, **right at Passover**.
 2. The **Passover** now only a few days away. **Throngs** around Him. **Everyone** spreading the news about Him. The **religious leaders** counseling on how to kill Him. The **Roman Soldiers Special Forces** on Heightened alert, **Threat Level Orange** for potential Terrorist attacks.
 3. Slide7b Would Jesus make a move? As the pressure mounts, Jesus took **definite, calculated, premeditated & purposeful** action.
 - a) **He carefully ordered everything**. The day & hour were selected from eternity with **countdown precision**. He chose the **1st day** of the week, **Sunday**, **Palm Sunday**, for his **Triumphal entry**, which would **precipitate** his **terrible death** on **that Friday**.

4. We pick up on this **same theme** this morning...God works with **definite, calculated, premeditated & purposeful** action.

E. Title: *Prayer Not Protest*

III. Slide8a **FELLOWSHIP OF THEIR SUFFERING (23,24a)** *read All*

A. What peace, upon their release from prison, for Peter & John in returning to **their friends/companions**.

1. **I can't wait** to be **released** from **our quarantine penitentiary** so we can once again **go to our friends**.

B. Everyone ought to belong to the **best possible company**...and that is **the Church**.

1. Slide8b For we are the only society that...**Has God as Founder. Christ as its Savior. It has a qualification for entrance (Jesus blood). The Deep human fellowship. Reputation for best work done worldwide. And a guarantee that it will last forever.**

2. We all agree it will be such a blessing when we are able to gather once again with our own companions/friends/church family.

3. **There are many things that unite us humans:** some are united by **music, art, literature, similar political views, ideas, principles**. It's **birds of a feather** flocking together.

C. We have here a **report of the church's prayer of gratitude** for God's deliverance.

1. Peter & John just freed from an overnigher in jail. Released because of **the people** (pressure) **& the healing** (the paralytic healed). **Warned not to preach again. They said they must.**

IV. Slide9a **FELLOWSHIP IN THEIR PRAYER (24a,31)**

A. (31) **Note**, this was about **Prayer not Protest!**

1. Back to verse 23, it **doesn't** say, that being **released they gathered together, rallied together, stormed the Antonia fortress, then wrote a letter to the editor in chief of the Jerusalem post. No. They prayed.**

- B. Slide9b Didn't **Protest** they **Prayed**. They gathered together & *appealed to God*
1. Their reaction **against** the world was to pray **for** the world.
 2. The early church were a bunch of **spiritual activists**. Activists? Yep, **but Spiritual Activist!**
 - a) Slide8c R.A.Torrey said, *Pray for great things. Expect great things. Work for great things. But first and foremost, Pray!*

V. Slide10a **FELLOWSHIP IN THEIR ADORATION (24b-28)**

- A. They depended on **prayer** & directed it towards a Sovereign God who **made** everything, & **can do** anything.
1. Note also, it starts with **Adoration**. Often our prayers sound like, *Our Father up in heaven...gimme, gimme, gimme. w/an amen at the end. No. Our Father who are in heaven, holy is your name* [adoration b4 petition]
- B. Slide10b They had a **3-Fold** reason to **Adore** God the Father as **Creator**. As the **Anointer** of Jesus. **And** God as One who **Predestined**/predetermined.
1. Slide10c Based on **Ps2** which is a wonderful song when you're *being attacked*
- C. So, why do the Gentiles rage/nations rebel? Cuz they seek **freedom**, **but w/o** God.
1. Slide10d P.T. Forsythe said, *The purpose of life is not to find your Freedom. The purpose of life is to find your Master.*
 2. Authority demands submission. Mt.11:29 *Take My yoke upon you & learn from Me, for I am gentle & lowly in heart, & you will find rest for your souls*
 - a) The world is a mess even outside of this Virus...*morally, intellectually, socially, politically, economically and ecologically because it has defied God.*
 - (1) History shows that the Gentile nations have rejected **God's Word, God's Christ & God's people.**
 - (2) They are like *little* proud Nebuchadnezzar's, **who want their own way & refuse to admit that God Rules in the affairs of men.**
 3. The world is trying to **drown out** the truth. **Its voice of defiance** is clear.

- a) Over the noise of *the Nations*, **listen** for the assuring voice of *God*.
- b) **Take inventory** of *the voices* you are listening to.

VI. Slide11a **FELLOWSHIP IN THEIR PETITION (29-31)**

- A. So because God is *Absolutely Sovereign*...they ask, *stretch out your hand to heal*... See they already acknowledged, *that Your hand and Your plan* was **active** in *Your predestination of the crucifixion of Jesus*.
 1. Which means they're aware **the hand of God** brings about **horrible things** like, *the death of the son of man, for a good end*. And throughout **Slide11b** Acts, God ordains **painful things** for God's people.
 2. **But** here they now move from *Adoration* to *Petition*...here they're asking, *Lord, with all you do with your hand, ohh use it to heal and bring about signs and wonders and confirm your word*.
- B. **Slide11c** Their 3-Fold REQUEST is **not** for *their protection*, **but** for **boldness, healings, signs & wonders**.
- C. **Slide11d** The 3-Fold RESULT was their assembly was **shaken** (last night 4.9 in Anza. 5 after shocks) They all were **filled** with the Holy Spirit. **Boldness** was granted.
 1. **Slide11e** Now that's a prayer meeting. *It's great to make things shake down here, but isn't it even better to shake things up there...in prayer?*
 2. Their prayer was *immediate, united, unselfish, undaunted, & Scriptural*.
 3. **May we 1st respond with Prayer not Protest!**
- D. Uhh, so Brian, **why the Palm Branches?** Well, AP had a great idea he saw. Put a **Palm branch** on your door, in a window, or out front by the curb & let's remind our neighbors, *its Palm Sunday* (the Sunday b4 *Resurrection Day*).
 1. Don't forget have **communion** ready for this Friday.