

You Can't Do This Alone

John 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Matt 26:40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

I. Introduction

1. On the Christian calendar of events, this is Holy Week, or Passion Week.
2. It was a week when multitudes gathered together, starting with the Sunday called Palm Sunday.
3. On that day “a very great multitude” spread their garments and palm branches in the way before Him.
4. He went to the temple and healed many.
5. And there in the temple and a crowd of children gathered around him to praise Him.
6. Throughout Passion Week, Jesus taught large groups of people who had gathered at the temple to hear Him.
7. But then as the week went on, the crowds grew much smaller, down to just Jesus and the 12 apostles, then Jesus and the 11 apostles, then Jesus and the 3 apostles, then Jesus alone.
8. And as we read in that opening passage, when Jesus was alone, He asked his closest friend, *What, could ye not watch with me one hour?*
9. I want to preach to you from this thought, “You Can't Do This Alone.”
10. I felt this message is particularly appropriate as most of us are in some form of isolation.
11. This year is different from any other year, with us having church in our homes at this most important season on the Christian calendar.
12. And it looks like for the first time ever, we will be sharing our Easter service next Sunday in our homes and not at the church house.
13. But today on April 5, 2020, I believe the messages from Palm Sunday and Passion Week, are perhaps more relevant to us than they have ever been.
14. You Can't Do This Alone.

II. Passion Week

A. Triumphal Entry: the world is gone after Him

1. So let's look at some of the events of Passion Week for some help with where you are today.
2. Start with the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and notice the crowds who praised Jesus at the start of the week.
3. Examine each verse for a word that refers to the crowds that gathered:

Matt 21:8-11

*8 And a very great **multitude** spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.*

*9 And the **multitudes** that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the*

*Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.
10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, **all the city** was moved, saying, Who is this?
11 And the **multitude** said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.*

4. So do you know why it is called Palm Sunday?

John 12:12-13

*12 On the next day **much people** that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,*

13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

5. Notice the response of the Pharisees when they saw the crowds following Jesus into Jerusalem:

*John 12:19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, **the world** is gone after him.*

B. Crowds worshiped Him

1. Notice what the whole multitude was doing:

Luke 19:37-38

*37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the **whole multitude** of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;*

38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

2. And there were other types of people who gathered close to Him who needed Him.

3. Those who were in need of healing:

Matt 21:14-16

*14 And the **blind and the lame** came to him in the temple; and he healed them.*

Children who wanted to praise Him:

*15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the **children** crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,*

16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

C. Private Passover meal

1. Jesus returned to the temple many times through that final week and taught the crowds.
2. The disciples saw the increase in crowds and increase in expectations and figured it would just be this way.
3. But then the crowd size began to get smaller. On Passover, it would be just the disciples gathered with Him for an intimate teaching.
4. From multitudes to just that relatively small family group, at least 13 were there, shut in for that last supper together before Jesus' arrest.
5. Things started to get even more fragmented.
6. Clearly the disciples missed the significance of what was happening and began to bicker among themselves:

Luke 22:24 And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

7. That was an unneeded division caused by pride and self-exaltation.
8. But Jesus tried to bring them closer by washing their feet—an act of true humility exemplified by the truly greatest One among them. (John 13:1-17)
9. And further fragmentation of their group occurred when Jesus said,
Mark 14:18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.
10. Privately, Jesus spoke to Judas:
John 13:27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.
John 13:30 He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.
11. And to that smaller group, Jesus spoke that it was about to get even smaller:
John 16:32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

D. Small group prayer meeting

1. Jesus took that smaller group of 11 went into the garden to pray.
2. And the week that had started with multitudes gathering and praising the Lord together, touching each other, touching Him, and Him touching them, had come to a very small group that was about to get even smaller.
3. He leads the 11 into the place called Gethsemane and instructs 8 of them to sit in one place and takes 3 of them further with Him:
Matt 26:36-39
36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.
37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.
38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.
4. Then Jesus went on ahead, leaving Peter, James and John behind. And now all alone, Jesus cries out:
39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.
5. Jesus felt a great aloneness. He went back to check on His team of 3 closest disciples, Peter, James, and John. Yet they were asleep.
6. He woke them and asked:
Matt 26:40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?
7. What we are seeing in these passages is that Jesus understands on the human level what loneliness is about.
8. Did you catch the heaviness of Jesus' words to His closest friends?
Matthew 26:38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

9. Please, won't you hang in there with me?
 10. Jesus went back to praying the same prayer, and then came back to his 3 friends. Did He find them interceding in prayer for Him this time? No. They were asleep again.
- E. Acquainted with grief
1. The point we need to glean from this passage is that Jesus understands loneliness. Jesus felt the pain of loneliness.
 2. Jesus felt the pain of being "*exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.*"
 3. And although Jesus was God in the flesh, He was also with flesh—human flesh. The same type of flesh you and I have with the same type of human emotions we experience.
 4. For quite some time now, I have had a favorite passage to turn to.
 5. Of course there is the comforting truths of Psalm 91 that so many are receiving encouragement from these days (remember it this way: when in trouble, call 911—Psalm 91:1)
 6. But what has been even more close and personal to me as I minister to hurting people, is Isaiah 53.
 7. This prophetic passage not only foretold the rejection and suffering of Jesus the Messiah, but revealed why He was rejected and why He suffered.
 8. When you have to endure painful sorrow and grief, you can take heart that the One who promises to never leave you nor forsake you, is One who has been through it and rose out of it in victory.
 9. So instead of asking, "Where was God when all this happened to me?", push past the anger and open your eyes by faith.
 10. You will see that He is there WITH you suffering alongside you, and comforting you.
Isa 53:3-5
3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; ...
 11. **I believe that** is why people will ask, Where was God when I needed Him?
 12. We hide from the God who suffers alongside us because we would rather have a God who removes all suffering.
 13. But that is not the reality of this present world. That is a reality of the world to come.
 14. Until then, don't hide out from the God who wants to come and sit beside you or walk along the road of suffering with you **holding your hand.**
3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.
5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.
 15. The reason Jesus endured such suffering alone was to bear OUR griefs and to carry OUR sorrows.
 16. When He was on the cross, I was on His mind.
 17. When He was being rejected, I was on His mind.
 18. When He was enduring grief, I was on His mind.

19. When His soul was exceedingly sorrowful, I was on His mind.
20. When He took those stripes on His back, my healing was on His mind.

III. You Can't Do This Alone

A. Don't go alone

1. So today's message is, "You Can't Do This Alone."
2. You can look at that from two perspectives.
3. One message you can get from that phrase is, don't try to go at this crisis by yourself—look for help and lean on others.
4. While proper sanitizing, self-isolation, and social distancing have proven effective to prevent contracting the corona virus, it is still very important to lean on others.
5. Many articles and commentators have spoken about the need to engage in human interactions in other ways because you can't do this alone.
6. We need to lean on others because humans are hard-wired for lasting relationships and we suffer emotionally when we distance ourselves from others.
7. So if you are suffering physically or emotionally, reach out to others for help.
8. That is one way to read that phrase, "you can't do this alone."

B. You won't be alone

1. But the message I feel you need to hear today is a different message.
2. The reason you can't do this alone is because **Jesus is there with you** in your suffering. You **can't** do this alone because Jesus is with you and you are not alone.
3. He promised:
John 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.
4. You see, you can't do this alone, because even in the shadow of death:
Ps 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
5. You see, you can't do this alone, because even in the middle of tribulation:
John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.
6. You see, you can't do this alone, because even in the middle of trouble:
2 Cor 1:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.
7. Not only does Jesus remain with us in our suffering to comfort us, but another truth of this life, is, after you have reached out and found God's comfort in your suffering, you can share your testimony to others and give that same comfort to them.
8. You see, you can't do this alone, because even in the middle of temptation:
Heb 2:18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour [help] them that are tempted.
9. You can't do this alone because nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ:
Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

- C. The week of April 5 is Passion Week
1. I do not see it as a coincidence that today, April 5, 2020, Palm Sunday, the beginning of passion week, follows the day in the U.S. that the most deaths were recorded in one day so far.
 2. The headline of the CNN article this morning was: “US reports most coronavirus deaths in one day as 1,344 die on Saturday.”¹
 3. I believe that God wants this world to know that during this time of great suffering, passion week points us to the greatest suffering ever endured. Yes over 1300 passed away yesterday from the virus, but this week reminds us that Jesus suffered for the **whole world**, not just 1300:
*1 John 2:2 And he is the propitiation [atoning sacrifice] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the **whole world**.*
 4. Jesus tasted death for the whole world:
Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man [every one].
 5. So it is not coincidental that this passion week represents great suffering that was carried by Jesus for us.

IV. Conclusion

1. At first, I was going to title this message, Things You Can Do Alone.
2. On Palm Sunday, multitudes gathered to worship Jesus in the streets. People touching people, raising their hands and voices in praise to Jesus.
3. But for you and me now, even if you are alone, in the seclusion of your home, you can still worship Jesus on this Palm Sunday.
4. On that first Palm Sunday, a number of sick folks, blind and lame, found Jesus in the temple, and He healed them all.
5. Well, you don't have to follow the crowd to the temple to find Jesus as your healer. You can be healed there in your small family gathering, or even alone.
6. On that first Palm Sunday, a group of children gathered around Jesus in the temple and worshiped Jesus.
7. Well kids, you don't have to be in children's church with a bunch of other kids in order to worship Jesus. Kids can worship Jesus there in your small family gathering, or even all by yourself.
8. During Passion Week, Jesus returned to the temple many times and taught large groups of people who were hungry for God's Word.
9. Well there in your small family gathering, or even alone, you can satisfy your soul's hunger as you drink in the teaching of the Word of God.
10. And even as Jesus demonstrated at the end of that week, He gathered His 11 disciples to pray, but yet He went on further and prayed alone, so we can pray either with our small family gathering, or all alone.
11. There are some things you can do alone.

¹ <https://www.cnn.com/world/live-news/coronavirus-pandemic-04-05-20/index.html>

12. But the more I thought about it, I felt the Lord's gentle words, saying, You can't do this alone.
13. Whether it is worship, praying, or suffering great grief, you can't do them alone. Why? Because Jesus will show up every time.
14. You heard **Karrie's testimony** of how she is thankful that God has been there with her through covid-19.
15. Look at this picture. That is the exterior of Union Hospital in Terre Haute. What is the significance of that?
16. After Brian told me that Karrie was admitted to the covid-19 ward there, I asked him where he was. He sent me this picture. **[image]**
17. He sat out in the parking lot staring at Karrie's room. Karrie said she had to beg him to go home and be with the family.
18. So where do you think Jesus is when you are suffering? Well guess what? You can't do this alone because Jesus won't leave your side.
19. **[image]** Did you see that Miami-Dade fire department crew who put a guy on the top of their ladder truck at the hospital and lifted him to the 4th floor window of their fellow firefighter suffering from covid19 to carry a sign, "Get Well Soon."
20. You can't do this alone. Jesus walks with you through it all, however high or low, His blood reaches to the highest.