

Palm Sunday 5th April - Follow

“Follow” is a great word.

Children play “follow the leader” and copy the actions of someone else
We learn by copying and following others.

Secondly, we can follow ideas or principles. We say we follow political parties, or whole ideologies. We don't always agree with all of it, or understand all of it, but we follow.

Thirdly, we can follow something like a dream. We can pursue a vision or a person, and bring it into reality, make it happen.

All these 3 are perfect ways to talk about following Jesus.

we can do what he did - we see him healing, and so we pray for healing
we see him including the women or the lepers, and we too, can include those on the edge

secondly we can follow his upside down kingdom, his ideas about God not needing us to keep all the rules and all those things.

thirdly - we can persevere with trying to catch up with Jesus, to bring his reality into our lives.
Jesus told the story of the trader who sold everything for a pearl of great price, or that sometimes we must lay down our lives in order to get it. Such single-mindedness sums up “followers”.

We also know when we haven't followed as well as we should - we know when we're not following, and we need to stop and say sorry!

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They Followed Jesus -

some were hoping for a regime change - here comes our new king

he will be a new Messiah, a new King David,

he will kick out the Romans - thing will be like the good old days - 1000 years ago!

Others were less clear about Jesus, but it seemed like a nice day to join in a procession.

The kids loved it - they were excited but not sure why - they ran up trees, cut down branches, and shouted out old nursery songs - hosanna to the son of David - while the teachers of the law told them off!!

There were 2 crowds. - the ones that had been with Jesus on the road - seen him working, knew something of his promises

Others were the Jerusalem lot - although they greeted him with loud hosannas now, soon they would be shouting crucify

And that is the trouble with this story - we know how it ends, where its leading

Its like Star Wars - I am old enough to remember that we didn't know who Luke's father was!

What a huge shock, a plot twist - but now we know what's coming.

we know that this triumphal entry will turn into the darkness of the betrayal and crucifixion
but that it will come through that to earth shattering good news of resurrection and Easter Day.

but they didn't

those early followers- did not know what would happen.. they were hoping for this or that
but no-one was sure.

In our community, in the world, no one is sure what will happen next. We hope for more testing, we hope for a vaccine, we hope for a new world with a more equal economy or a more environmentally friendly way of life. But no one is sure.

I think we can be certain that things are going to get harder, before they get better. That we will journey, like the disciples, into times of fear, and testing

- but the thing our faith tells us, the thing we have to cling to - is that there will be resurrection at the end. But to find that resurrection, we have to follow, to go where he goes. And he will go with us.

Jesus knows the beginning from the end, he is the Alpha and the Omega, and we have been told that all things hold together in him

So let us look unto Jesus, the author and perfect of our faith, and since we have such a great a crowd of witness around us, let us throw off the sin that clings so tightly, and run with perseverance the race that is set before us.

Joseph's story is a true biblical epic - sold into slavery, wrongfully imprisoned, and yet he perseveres, and at the end, when he has forgiven his brothers, he says - you meant this for harm, yet God meant it for good - he realised he was born for this, at the right time in the right place

so we too - have been chosen and called by God, to follow him now, in this time and this place so let us realise that this is why we are here - to do good, to bear witness, for such a time as this