

On this, Palm Sunday, we hear about Jesus' arrest, trial, crucifixion and death which is called '**The Passion**' of Christ.

As your pastor I always try to implore us that, whenever we read or hear scripture, that we not do so as passive observers.

That is to say we don't look at bible passages like we're looking at a story through a window about someone else.

But, rather, we look at it as a mirror in which we see ourselves in the story and the lessons that God is teaching us.

So this morning I want to specifically remind us in our reading or hearing of the the Passion, to not merely be objective observers.

That we not just 'watch' this as if we are in a movie theater but, instead, try seeing ourselves in the story.

At different times and circumstances we may be various characters, but *today I want us to see ourselves as disciples.*

We are not among the crowds who welcome Jesus, (although we too give him praise sometimes) for they are just fair weather fans.

And we are not the religious leaders who plan to remove him.

Nor are we the soldiers who torment and torture and kill him.

The truth is that what we are supposed to be (and in fact, most times in life are),.....***is his disciples.***

I want us to read/hear this story putting ourselves among Jesus' followers since *that is who we really are as Christians.*

So, you can go ahead and feel proud to be with him when he's popular and cheered as the new to be 'king' entering Jerusalem.

See yourself as loyal companions who share a sacred meal with him and receive his wisdom and his teaching about love.

We are even one of them as we try to understand what he is saying as he explains the meaning of his death.

But also,... let us put ourselves among them who betray Jesus (because that is what we sometimes do).

Betray him when the allure of money or things pervert our loyalty.

Let us be among the friends of Jesus who that night who got tired and faded in their devotion to him,....

because sometimes we too allow ourselves to grow weak in our dedication to Jesus.

Hear to the story with ourselves as those who deny our affiliation with, and affection for, Jesus, as we also can do at times.

When we refuse to say we are with him when others make being on his side uncomfortable.

Engage and enter the story as one of those who flee Jesus to protect themselves when he is arrested and then mocked and belittled, and tortured and killed.

Because,...truth be told,... we sometimes flee him and his ways when it might cause us discomfort or even suffering.

This morning, let's not forget that our failure to stand with, be loyal to, and totally follow, Jesus, helps add to the;

indifference to injustices in the world,....

abandonment of those who are suffering,.....

love of possessions that takes precedent over things of God.

and fear and flight from doing right and the good that he desires.

We are the disciples,... before,... during,... and after this ordeal.

Yet, their indifference,... betrayal,....abandonment,.... and fleeing his death are not the end of this story, for them or for us.

Like the disciples, we will be with Jesus in the days ahead.

As we both succeed and fail as his disciples, we remember that this death ensures our forgiveness.

So we look forward to being re-born and resurrected at the end of our story, but also, as his disciples, each and every day of our lives.

Amen