

Lent Devotion for Sunday, April 2

John 12:20-36

IT'S ALL ABOUT JESUS

“So Jesus said to them, ‘While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons [and daughters] of light (John 12:36, Lexham English Bible).”

Today is Palm Sunday, and Palm Sunday is all about Jesus. I realize I’m stating the obvious, but you may agree that the hustle and bustle of this week (including the crusting of your Easter ham or the flavoring of your favorite fixings) often prevents intentional time and reflection on this foundational truth. This season is all about Jesus.

In John 12:19, the Pharisees were perturbed (to say the least) that Jesus’ earthly ministry and influence were going viral. Their futile attempt to halt Jesus’ mission was “accomplishing nothing!” The Pharisees sought to wreck Jesus’ influence every opportunity they met. In contrast, the Greeks wanted to make his acquaintance not to mar his reputation but to learn about him and from him. They asked Philip, “Sir, we want to see Jesus (12:21).” These Greeks got the memo. They understood that time spent with Jesus was indispensable. Rather than exhibiting some social grace and shaking some hands, however, Jesus offers up a seemingly gratuitous lesson on agriculture about a grain of wheat (12:23).

Yet, in verses 27-36, we come to a greater appreciation of Jesus’ humanity in concert with his divinity. Jesus was troubled in his soul because he would soon offer his life on the cross of Calvary. Just as Jesus emptied himself, his agrarian tutorial on wheat instructs us to die to ourselves if we truly want to be his disciples. As we empty ourselves in this Lenten season, share Jesus (the light of God) with those in darkness. Encourage them to “believe in the light” while he is still available to them. Remember, Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Resurrection Sunday are all about Jesus and making Jesus known.

“Jesus, may we bring you and God the Father glory as we remember your suffering and share the gospel with this dark and broken world. Amen.”