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Honor Requires Action
Mark 11:1-11

In 1989 there was great excitement in San Francisco. The pope was planning to come visit the city on his first tour of the States in many years. The protest groups were just as excited as the Catholic groups. Everyone was excited about this famous and religious leader coming to their city. I was working in the city, as an Engineer, for Pacific Gas and Electric. I was in the gas pipeline construction department which proved to be quite interesting at times trying to lay pipe in congested downtown San Francisco. If you think the traffic is mixed up above the streets, you should look at the spaghetti bowl of Electric and water and sewer and gas and cable TV and phone lines underneath those streets.

Well, the pope was coming to San Francisco and the mayor wrote PG&E a letter stating that all construction trenches within two blocks of the parade route must be backfilled with dirt and temporarily paved. Any trenches on the actual route must be permanently paved. They wanted to eliminate potential hiding places for bombs and terrorists. The pope's route went right through the city and 6 of our projects, so we worked overtime to undo and backfill all our careful digging. The foremen were not excited about the pope coming to San Francisco. We were only a small part of the vast preparations that took place to prepare for his coming.

On the day of the great parade, thousands of people lined the route. And as planned he rode through the crowds in his bullet proof glass enclosed, white, Mercedes popemobile. He waved to the cheering crowds with his popelike wave.

There was great excitement. Thousands strained to see. Thousands watched and cheered his presence...but when he went home...they went home too. They were attracted to the parade, attracted to the show, but when they left the parade route, they left unchanged. They left with no desire to change...it was just a big parade. They honored him with their presence at his parade, many honored him with

their cheers and hand waving and claps... but it was just for fun. It was a superficial acceptance. They did not honor him with their actions.

There was a king who entered His nations capitol city to the shouts and cheers of the crowds. They laid their garments and palm branches on the road for him to pass. There was great excitement amongst the people. Thousands lined the parade route, but the honor only went so deep. There were those that first Palm Sunday morning who honored Jesus with their lips but it failed to pass down to their heart. Many that day turned their backs on the parade route and went back to their homes and businesses, unchanged. Many that day cheered with superficial acceptance. Do you honor the king? True honor requires action, not just words.

Turn in your Bibles to Mark chapter 11. Marks gospel or good news account recounts the life of Jesus, his experiences with the disciples the crowds and conflicts with the religious authorities. This passage in Mark 11 records the final week in the life of Jesus. The passion week begins on Sunday in verse 1 of chapter 11. The king enters the Holy city. (READ)

Jesus and his disciples were coming up from Jericho to the city of Jerusalem. As it was the time of the Passover, the city swelled to triple it's normal size. The roads were crowded with travelers eager to celebrate the Passover. There would be little chance of finding room to stay in the city itself, so it is likely they stayed in Bethany with Jesus good friends Mary and Martha. Bethany is just on the other side of the Mount of Olives, about 2 miles from Jerusalem. We read in verse 2 that Jesus sends two of his disciples ahead into a village. This village is probably Bethphage, a district just outside the walls of Jerusalem.

It is in verse two that Jesus spells out specifically what He wants his disciples to do, and exactly what they will expect to find. He tells them to enter the village. Immediately you will see a colt. It will be tied up. No searching no doubt. The first colt you see when you walk in that city. That's the one I'm interested in. Now Jesus shares some of the history of this animal they are to bring back. It is not a trained animal. No body has ever ridden on the back of this colt before. It has been spared for a special purpose.

Have you ever tried to ride a horse that has not been broken in to ride? They don't appreciate the weight very much. My sister Ann won a radio contest when she was in high school and one of the prizes she received was a shetland pony. She named it Jeremiah. Good name for a bullfrog I suppose, but this one was certainly no friend of mine. Now Shetlands are small and cute, but they are not known to be the most friendly of animals, and this one was particularly evil. It would snivel and buck us kids off when we'd try to ride and lead it around. If you got close it would bite you. One day after he sank his teeth into my brothers chest, it was agreed he would have to be sold. That's the horse, not my brother. Jesus must have known something about this animal or had control. Few would choose a unbroken colt to ride through a crowd of people. But, Jesus did. His plan was detailed, even down to the colt. Untie the colt and bring it here. If anyone hassles you tell them the Lord has need of it and I'll bring it back as soon as I finish with it. Jesus told them the detailed plan. What He says will happen. Jesus the king speaks the truth. Jesus knows the details of what will happen in our future. He may not always share with us those details, but we can have confidence in the one who speaks truth and knows our future.

Point #1 The truth of His Words encourage us to honor the king. Verse 4 we see the two disciples heading towards the village to see if what Jesus said was true. They are eager to look for a colt. They are very interested to see if what Jesus said is true. How about you? Are you searching? You have a choice to make. Have you ever honestly spent time examining the bible to see if what Jesus said is true? or have you just grown up listening to the skeptics the critics? Is there truth in His words? Are you eagerly searching to see if what Jesus said in the Bible is true? Verse 4 they went away and found what? (a colt) Where? tied outside the door standing in the street. They ran right into it. Exactly as Jesus had said. Jesus had even anticipated the neighborhood crime watch ladies giving them a hassle about taking the colt. Verse 5 "What are you doing? Ripping off my neighbors colt? No, the Lord has need of him, he'll bring it right back." The events happened exactly as Jesus said they would. His words are true. What He says will happen. The truth of His words encourage us to honor him. This happened to also be a fulfillment of prophesy of hundreds years earlier in the book of

Zechariah 9:9 "Behold your king is coming to you Humble an mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey" The truth of his words, encourage us to honor him. Are you willing to search for His truth?

Point # 2 We honor the king by allowing Him to use the things we have. The two disciples enter the village and there is the colt tied on the doorknob of this guys house, standing in the street. The owner of the colt had taken it out from the stable and was possibly getting ready to take that colt for it's very first ride. He comes out and the colt is gone. It's like someone ripping off your brand new car. The response. The Lord has need of it, he'll bring it back just as soon as he's done. The owner had it ready for some specific purpose waiting outside his house, but Jesus had other plans for it. I can just picture that guy walking out of his house with his riding clothes on and seeing his new colt heading out the city gates. hey! Hey! Where are you taking my donkey. "The Lord has need of it" we'll bring it right back when he's done.

Is there something of yours that Jesus wishes to use? to borrow? something that could bring glory to his name? What would that thing be? What skill? possession? talent? Point #2 We honor the King by allowing him use of what we have.

Point #3 We honor the king by following His plans and not our expectations. The crowds and the disciples were all very excited. They saw the king preparing for his entry into Jerusalem. This was the first time He had ever agreed to go public. Always before when He'd perform a miracle, Jesus would instruct them to tell no one. Not now. He was planning an entry fit for a king. The expectations ran high. Many who were familiar with Him from the region in Galilee were in Jerusalem visiting for the Passover celebration. The crowds line the parade route as Jesus enters the city. Palm branches are thrown down at his feet. People pave His way with their garments. They expect a political conquering hero that will rally the people and throw off the Roman oppression. They are looking for a military deliverer. They expect Jesus to use His power to kick out the Romans and restore the former glory of Israel with a kingdom like David. Key verse in Mark 10:45 "The son of man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many" They expect a conquering hero, not a servant who is sacrificial killed. They don't understand what Jesus purpose is what His mission

was. Jesus entered as a king because He was a king. But, his reign would come later. At this time his mission was to die, in the place of many so that all could be free. Many misunderstood Him on that morning. Have you ever failed to understand what in the world Jesus was doing? In your life? Do you find yourself praising Him one day and questioning Him the next? We honor the king by following His plan and not our own expectations for what should happen.

Point #4 True honor requires action. Words without the deeds to back them up do nothing to honor. In the next few months we will elect another president and there will be an official presidential inauguration. They usually sing the song "Battle Hymn of the Republic". The words in this song call down for the judgment of God upon sinners. "Trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored." Is this not a hilarious picture? Here we have a bunch of pagan politicians calling down God's judgment on themselves. At Christmas the malls pumps 'Joy to the World" through their sound systems, "The Lord is come!" People are shopping away singing words that mean absolutely nothing to them.

Here in verses 9,10 we listen as the crowds of people sing words that are right on. Hosanna. Hebrew word. God save us now! The kingdom is coming. Save us O one high from heaven. It sounds great. The words are right on, but the words for most are empty. These folks are merely caught up in the excitement of the parade. Most will go back to their homes unchanged. True words of honor are backed up by action. A child who truly honors his parents will back up his words with action. One who truly desires to honor the king Jesus, will back up his words with action.

Are your actions during the rest of the week supporting your words sung on Sunday morning. The wrong response is not, "Your right you caught me, I'm hypocritical, I struggle with following God at work, during the week with the guys. Therefore I will no longer go to church. Wrong. That's the worst thing you could do. That's like avoiding that doctor's appointment because your afraid he might find something wrong. Hurting people go to a hospital to get healed. Hurting struggling folks know they don't have it all together, so they come together in church.

Some of the same folks at Jerusalem that were cheering on Sunday were Jeering on Thursday. Jesus went from being handed the keys to the city, to carrying a cross to a hill. He went from Hero to goat in one week. More like hero to lamb.

Many who watched the paraded wondered, Who is this man? You may know all the right religious sounding words and phrases. but not know the King? Now is the time to honor the king. True honor is backed by actions. One day all will bow before the king, but I want to be there when they crown Him King of Kings and Lord of Lords. I want to be there at His coronation. The parade that first palm Sunday morning was not the victory, it may have looked like the pinnacle of success, but the parade was not the victory. The big crowds were not what made the angels sing in heaven. It was Jesus death on the cross and resurrection that was Jesus ultimate victory. Jesus rarely come forcing his way in. The king comes quietly. Have you received the king? Have you received his offer of hope? His death conquered sin and death itself so that we might live! Now is the time to honor the king. With your words back by your actions. Now is the time to honor the king.