

## *Sermon Notes (Palm Sunday)*

- **When I prayed this week about the message, I felt like God said a strange thing back to me. He said, “I don’t want you to preach about waving palm branches. Talk about the palms of my hands and their hands (meaning you all) instead.”**
- **So, with a bit of a spiritual pun, or play on words, I am going to talk about His palms and your palms today. How much your palms (point to hands) can change the world.**
- **This must be God, because anyone who knows me knows I don’t even like puns.**
- **As we begin this Holy Week, we especially remember Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. How the Gallop poll numbers were high. The crowds waving the branches as accolades to a conquering king.**
- **How Jesus rides in on a colt to shouts of Hosanna, hosanna (which means “Save us now!”). Hosanna in the highest.**
- **But this palm Sunday, I invite you to think of the hands of Jesus. Those hands that healed**

so many sick people of diseases. Hands that released many blessings of forgiveness. Hands that rebuked demons from tormented oppressed souls.

- Hands that would soon break the bread of the first communion. Hands that held little children, and marked in the sand when an adulterous woman was set free.
- Hands that taught the people with authority. Raised-up hands in praise and prayer to the Father. Comforting hands for the sisters of Lazarus.
- Hands that waved to Peter and John and Matthew to come and fish for men. Hands that dared to touch the untouchable: Lepers.
- Hands that turned water into wine. Strong hands—calloused from years of carpentry—yet **gentle enough to hold a mother's heart.**
- Little hands with curled fingers in a manger, destined to rescue the whole world. Even all of us.
- Hands marked with this **[HOLD up nail to wrist].** [Pass nail to the people to pass around think about the sacrifice as I speak].

- **The price of our rescue. The cost of our faith and our hope. The coming of the Kingdom of God and life everlasting.**
- **The palms of His hands is the place where Jesus sacrificed His life for you and me.**  
[Explain how the wrist was considered part of the hand].
- **That our sins might be forgiven. Every shame cleansed;** healing for our hearts, and the certainty of a new and eternal life with Him.
- **Sometimes when times get hard, we wonder if God cares. We fear God has abandoned us.**
- **I want you to know this truth today. No matter what you are facing, God holds you, you personally, in the palm of His hand. He will never forget you.**
- **Isaiah spoke these prophetic words about the Messiah, the servant savior. God's deep compassion for His people.**

## **SLIDE 1**

**“Shout for joy, O heavens; rejoice, O earth; burst into song, O mountains! For the Lord comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones.**

**But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me.”**

**“Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!**

**16 See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands...”**

**(Isaiah 49:13-16a)**

- **Jesus the Messiah literally has inscribed us on his hands. That place of His power that He never forgets, has your name and my name and millions of other names right there. A permanent inscription made with nails.**
- **Do you remember the accounts of Jesus after the resurrection? All the scars of the scourging and the whips, even the cuts from the crown of thorns are healed. BUT the nail marks in the palms of His hands remain.**
- **We are written forever in the palms of His hands. THAT is the depth of His love; the intensity of his compassion for you and me.**

- **No, in your worst trials, Jesus does not forget you. Run to Him; he will comfort you there in the palm of His hands.**
- **He will touch you with love, healing and His Spirit. Hands that will grip you when you are tempted to run away. [Pause]**
- **Much of the Old Testament is a picture or proto-type of what came later with Jesus and His Kingdom. There is a tabernacle and temple practice that applies to us that I want to show you.**
- **So, let's look at Leviticus 14: 15-18**

## **SLIDE 2**

**“15 The priest shall then take some of the log of oil, pour it in the palm of his own left hand, 16 dip his right forefinger into the oil in his palm, and with his finger sprinkle some of it before the Lord seven times. 17 The priest is to put some of the oil remaining in his palm on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot, on top of the blood of the guilt offering. 18 The rest of the oil in his palm the priest shall put**

on the head of the one to be cleansed and make atonement for him before the Lord.”

(Leviticus 14:15-18)

- **So you thinking: That’s strange. All this sprinkling of oil by a priest on a sinner. In a tent of meeting in ancient Israel. So what.**
- **Like I said much of this is a physical picture of spiritual truth and practice with Jesus and the Kingdom we now serve in.**
- **What about the oil? What does it convey or present in biblical religious practice? [WAIT] The Holy Spirit; anointing; God’s presence; and power to heal.**
- **Where is this stored? In the palm of the priest’s left hand. What does he do with it? With his right hand (often the instrument of power in the Bible), the priest sprinkles it before God’s presence.**
- **What in the world does that look like? Well, maybe the closest thing might be this. [SPRINKLE oil at cross 7 times]. Why would the priest do that? GOD does not need healing, or presence or atonement for sin.**

- I think it may have been a sacramental way for the priest to sacrifice or give back to God AND declare our utter dependence on God for any atonement and healing that would occur. It was a way of declaring that God is the source of life and forgiveness of sin.
- **Seven times** was a number of perfection of completeness. **Wholeness** before God.
- Next the priest took the oil and placed it on the sinner seeking atonement for sin.  
[SPRINKLE oil on volunteer]
- On his right ear lobe, on his right thumb or hand of power, and on his right toe. A picture of being **cleansed top to bottom**, head to toe. Complete healing.
- Notice that spiritual empowerment even was placed on the **sinner's hand** as well. Finally, from the palm of the priest, he places the rest of the oil on the head of the sinner. [PLACE hand on head of volunteer]
- Marking him with the atonement, cleansing and healing of God. A picture of the anointing (presence and power) of God resting on the person.

- For us, this temple practice was a forerunner for our life with Jesus. WHO are the priests in the Kingdom of God? What does the Peter say? [WAIT] Yes, he calls the Church [US] a royal priesthood.
- What do priests do? [WAIT] They are intermediaries. They bring the lost back to God. They pray and intercede for people. They are ambassadors for Christ. They help bring people to Jesus.
- They take the hands of the hurting and place them in the hands of God. They also use the anointing invested in their palms; in their hands, and use that power to bring healing and atonement for sin.
- That is the picture here for us. We who follow Jesus have spiritual oil in the palms of our hands right now. We have the power to bless and bring atonement for many, many people in our lives.
- With your hands, you can transfer the blessings of the Kingdom of God already in your palms. The Bible says the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead also lives in you, if you are a follower of Christ.

- **So, even more anointing and power than even the OT priest had lives in you. You hold it in the palm of your hands. So what are we to do? What can you do with your hands?**
- **You can pray for forgiveness, healing, and deliverance for people. You can share the love of Jesus with a touch. You can pray a blessing on someone. You can pray assurance on someone and comfort. You can even bless even with a wave of your hand.**
- **A touch from you may be the only touch from God that some people have ever known.**
- **You can even pray for God to come and help. You know the old Vineyard psalm prayer: “Oh God; Oh God! Help!” And wait for him to work through a touch from your already anointed palms.**
- **The only catch is to be willing. You must be brave and willing to care enough to pray. You must have enough compassion for someone that your fears are overridden by a desire to help someone in pain. **Love must trump fear.****
- **Now Satan, the devil, is hoping you will be too timid to ever do this. He knows how much anointing, how much spiritual oil, already is**

**deposited in your palms. And he will do anything to stop you from ever praying for someone else like this. He will throw the book, the kitchen sink, the kitchen itself at you to stop you, if you let him. He'll even tempt you to push people away and curse them with rejection from your hands.**

- **He'll whisper at you, "You are not qualified for this; this is stupid, it will not work. This is not your gifting. Leave it to the preacher." All of these are lies for hell. I implore you: In Jesus' name, command the devil to leave you.**
- **Then, let love win and bless the people God brings to you. Share a touch from God with them.**
- **Palm Sunday is much more than waving tree branches. It's about the triumphal coming of God's Son. It is about sharing that blessing from the hand of God. The blessings Jesus has placed in the palm of your hands.**
- **CLOSE: As we close, I would like us all to join hands. As a sign of unity and thanksgiving to Jesus for what he has done.**

**And as a way to transfer the blessings and anointing He has given us to empower every member of this church.**

- **Pray with me: Lord Jesus, we celebrate your presence with us today. We bless your Name and we thank you for coming to fight for us. To save us from sin and death. We thank you for dying the death we deserve and for cleansing us from every sin and shame.**
- **Thank you that by your Spirit, Love and Power already rests in our hands. And now, I invite you Holy Spirit to move amongst us. Transfer MORE of your anointing throughout this Body. Move in us as we stand united with you and each other. [WAIT].**
- **God, grant us bravery and insight to share these blessings. Prompt us when we should put our hands on someone's shoulder or head and offer to pray for them. Even grant us tangible signs, so that we might be assured of your Spirit working.**
- **Lord, may we be your hands. May this church share boldly the spiritual oil you put in the palms of our hands. AMEN.**