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Written for Sunday, March 29, 2015

6th Sunday of Lent – Palm Sunday

Lectionary Year B

Scripture: [Mark 11:1-11](#) or [John 12:12-16](#) [**Summary:** *Jesus exceeds expectations*]

Supplies Needed: A tennis ball or other type of ball that bounces and can be held in one hand

ASK (a.k.a [The On-Ramp](#))

- Good morning!
- [*show tennis ball*] Can you tell me what this is? (a tennis ball)
- And if I drop it from up here [*hold ball up high*] what do you think – what would you *expect* – the ball to do? (fall; bounce)
- How high do you think – do you *expect* – it to bounce?
- [*hold hand above ground.*] This high? Higher? [*move hand up*] Like up here?
- OK -- let's find out what happens when I drop it...
- [*Drop the ball but then **catch it** (most likely with your other hand) before it hits the ground*]
- So...did the ball bounce like you expected it to? (NOOO!)
- Why not? (Because you caught it!)
- How do you feel about this thing that didn't happen even though you expected it to happen?
- But how do you think the BALL feels about not crashing into the floor like that? (*Probably feeling some relief*)

TELL (a.k.a [The Freeway](#))

- A word I used a lot, there, was the word, "expected."

- To "expect" something or have "expectations" about something means we have thoughts and feelings about how something should happen.
- One problem with expectations, though, is that things don't always happen like we thought they were going to happen -- like with the tennis ball.
- When expectations are not met, we might feel upset or cheated or sad and let down.
- I bring this up because in today's scripture story, there are expectations from the crowd of people who are having a parade for Jesus.
- They are expecting Jesus to be their next king.
- But guess what -- that's not what Jesus is going to do or be!
- And that *will* upset the people a little bit, because that's not what they were expecting.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- Thankfully, Jesus does not have the expectations that the people in the crowd do.
- Instead, Jesus keeps his attention on God.
- And because Jesus pays attention to God, then something happens for Jesus that is far better than what the people expected.
- Instead of becoming a king, Jesus is resurrected.
- This is the good news for today -- when we pay attention to God like Jesus did, then God can show us and help us to do things far greater than what anyone was expecting.
- Let's pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,

Dear God,

Thank you for Jesus...

Thank you for Jesus...

...who shows us...

...who shows us...

...how to live your way...

...how to live your way...

...that exceeds all expectations.

...that exceeds all expectations.

Amen