



Spring Study Discussion Guide #10

Sermon Title: Facing the Worst Week

Biblical Reference: Matthew 21:1-11

Date Preached: Sunday, April 2nd, 2023, @ 11am

Fall Study Date: Wednesday, April 5th, 2023

Ice Breaker

To get to know each other as a group, let us go around the room and have everyone answer the icebreaker question.

How do you react to bad news? Have you developed strategies to help you?

Sermon Summary

In this passage, Matthew tells us about Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, identifying Him as the Messiah and fulfilling the Old Testament prophecy. The "triumphal entry" is the event that began what many people refer to as "Holy Week." The week that started the "Passion of Christ." The triumphal entry is called Palm Sunday on our calendar. Jesus is facing the most challenging week of His earthy ministry. Seven days later will be the resurrection. The seven days in between contain the most brutal events any man faced. We heard about some of Jesus's hardships this week, including betrayal, denial, false trial, scourging, and crucifixion.

There is much we can learn from Jesus' example. Jesus calmly rode a donkey into Jerusalem, the place where all this would occur. He rides in with a purpose. Jesus was going to bear the burdens of the sin of humanity. He is humble and strong. Jesus is confident in God and obedient to Him. He judges sin and treats His enemies with love. Jesus shows us how to face the most difficult things in our lives. By choosing to do what God wants, we can be representatives of Him and positively impact others.

Quick Review

Ask a volunteer to read the following:

Mat 21:1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

Mat 21:2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.

Mat 21:3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

Mat 21:4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

Mat 21:5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

Mat 21:6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,

Mat 21:7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.

Mat 21:8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.

Mat 21:9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

Mat 21:10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

Mat 21:11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

- What's the most surprising or thought-provoking thing you learned from the sermon or your study of this passage?

My Testimony

- Imagine you are one of the people in the crowd welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem. You see Him riding on a donkey, surrounded by many people shouting "Hosanna!" and spreading their garments in the way. They expect Jesus to handle their problem and overthrow the Roman government.
- You may be facing some challenging problems right now, and you've been praying for help. What are your expectations of Jesus in solving those problems? Let's discuss our attitudes and expectations towards Jesus when it comes to the challenges we're facing in our lives.

Digging Deeper

1. He Faced It with Humility

This passage describes how Jesus demonstrated humility in His presentation and actions. He chose to ride on a humble donkey, rather than a war horse, wore no expensive clothes, and did not have a large entourage of soldiers. Jesus did not let the words or actions of the people move Him, but instead exhibited humility by resigning Himself to the task at hand and doing what God wanted Him to do.

Ask a volunteer to read the following:

Mat 21:6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,

Mat 21:7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.

Mat 21:8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.

Discussion Questions:

- What is most significant to you in this passage? Please explain.
- How do you think Jesus' mode of transportation reflected his character? How can we model this in our daily lives?
- How can you balance doing what you want with what God wants you to do?
- How can we face our hardships with humility, and what does that look like in practice?
- Jesus did not deserve this, yet he submitted to it. Why is it hard for us to accept difficulties in our own life? Why are we often disappointed or believe it should not happen to us personally?

2. **He Faced It with Strength**

This text highlights the strength of Jesus, His meekness. He faced His trials and impending death without asserting His will and personal desires, demonstrating His trust in God's plan. Jesus' strength was not in retaliation or seeking revenge, but in loving and serving His enemies.

Ask a volunteer to read the following:

Mat 21:5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

Discussion Questions:

- What, in this passage, is the most significant to you? Please explain.
- What is the difference between meekness and weakness? How can we demonstrate meekness in our daily lives?

- How can we show strength while maintaining control and submitting to God's will, as Jesus did?
- How does Jesus' example challenge societal norms of seeking power and control? How can we cultivate a meek and humble attitude in a culture that values strength and dominance?
- What is a good way to determine when we should exert our power and when we should allow what we have the strength to stop? How can we discern between cowardice and meekness?

3. He Faced It with Judgment

The first place Jesus goes is the temple. He overthrows the money changers. Dealing with the Jew's problems was not what the people desired; they wanted Him to confront their problem with the Roman government. Jesus first dealt with sin at His Father's house. Jesus shows the importance of addressing any issues in our lives before facing difficult situations.

Ask a volunteer to read the following:

Mat 21:10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

Mat 21:11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

Mat 21:12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,

Mat 21:13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Discussion Questions:

- How can we apply the concept of judgment beginning at the house of God to our own lives?
- Why is it important to address any unresolved issues before facing difficult situations?
- What are some practical ways to identify and address any issues before facing challenges?
- What role does personal responsibility play in addressing and resolving past mistakes or sins?

- How do you think the belief in forgiveness plays a role in taking accountability for past sins?

4. He Faced It with Obedience

In this passage, Jesus went into the city, knowing what awaited, out of obedience to the scripture. Jesus moved in obedience to God and in fulfillment of the scriptures every step of the way. This obedience to the scriptures serves as a guide for Christians in facing their worst trials.

Ask a volunteer to read:

Mat 21:4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

Mat 21:5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

Discussion Questions:

- What, in this passage, is the most significant to you? Please explain.
- In what ways can we encourage others to lean on scripture in their own trials and difficulties?
- How can we apply the scriptures in practical ways when facing difficult situations?
- Do you frequently observe a gap between what individuals profess to believe about God's instructions for facing trials and how they actually handle difficult situations?
- How can we have confidence in the ability of the scriptures to lead us through our most difficult trials?

5. He Faced It with Confidence

Jesus rode on a colt that had never been ridden before, showing that He had authority that no one else had. He came as a King, commissioned by His Father to do a job no matter how unpleasant. He faced His trials with confidence in God, knowing that God would do His part. We must face our trials with the same confidence and submission to God's authority.

Ask a volunteer to read the following:

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Discussion Questions:

- What, in this passage, is the most significant to you? Please explain.
- What does it mean to have confidence in God?
- Do you find it difficult to face trials with confidence? What has grown your confidence?
- What are the greatest obstacles to having confidence in the face of adversity?
- What advice would you give a Christian who is facing significant difficulty and is very unsure?

Taking It Home

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they can do because of discovering the truths and principles in the text:

1. What truth or principle in this text was most impactful for you?
2. How did this truth or principal challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?
3. How will you put into practice what you have learned today?