

Following Jesus Even When You Can't See The Full Picture

Mark 11:1-11

PRAY

Today we are going to learn how to have faith even when life is like murky water

- And your trying to follow Jesus but His plan doesn't seem that clear
 - Or it doesn't seem to make sense in the moment

Have you ever had a hard time knowing what God's will is?

- Has life ever felt confusing?

I believe you are going to love what God's word has to say today!

- Did you know we have the privilege today to study the world's bestselling book

I remember one summer when I was a student at Bible college

- I felt God was leading me to Montana for a summer internship at a church
 - And I ended up in prison in Alaska

Today we are going to study the triumphal entry

- as Jesus enters the final week leading up to the cross

the triumphal entry shows up in the Bible four different times

- because Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all record this story

We've been studying the Gospel of Mark, and the theme of the Gospel of Mark

- is all about how Jesus came to serve & save us & that He was the chief servant
- And we notice words like "immediately" Jesus did this. "and He did this," "and that,"
- It's a very action-packed, fast-paced Gospel.

Chapters 1 through 10 have all been about Jesus as the Servant;

- now in chapter 11 we will see that Jesus is the suffering Servant.
 - And the rest of the book is about the final week of Jesus on the earth.

If you look at all four Gospels what is recorded in terms of real estate,

- out of all the chapters in the four Gospels,
 - only four chapters describe the first thirty years of Jesus' life;
- And 85 chapters describe the last three and a half years of Jesus' life.

Of those 85 chapters, 29 give us the details of the final week of Jesus

- before his death, burial, and resurrection;

and 13 of those chapters concentrate on the final twenty-four-hour period of his life.

- So the focal point of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John is on the sacrifice
 - that Jesus gave for our sins and conquering death by the resurrection.

it's rare to find an event mentioned in all four Gospels.

- But whenever God repeats himself,
when God says something 4 times, he wants us to really get how important it is.

This is the most important week in the history of the world ever.

- What happened in this last week has influenced humanity
 - and the universe more than any other week that has ever existed.
 - It is worth our time and attention

1 Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to [a]Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples; ² and He said to them, "Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it." ³ And if anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it,' and immediately he will send it here."

Jesus sends two of his disciples to find a donkey tied up that he could sit on

- when he rode into Jerusalem.

Now, why did he want to do this? Because **Zechariah 9:9** prophesied that Jesus

- would come into Jerusalem riding on a donkey.

Jesus wasn't just going to take a tour of Jerusalem on the back of a donkey

- he was actually fulfilling biblical prophecy
 - hundreds and hundreds of years before it ever happened

now it must have been interesting for the disciples to have these instructions from Jesus

- go into the City and bring a tied up donkey back...
 - if anybody says hey why are you taking it
 - all you have to say is this ***the Lord has need of it***
 - and they'll let the donkey go

The Disciples were confused & probably felt silly about this instruction from Jesus

- Jesus wanted them to get a donkey That wasn't theirs

as you follow God, There are going to be times when life is murky.

- When you only get step one before you get step 2
 - When you don't fully understand what's going on
 - or why God is calling you to do something.

In those times, its so important to **trust your master, not your master plan.**

- And a lot of us love to have a master plan.
 - We want to understand what's going on.

And so it can mess with us to not have clarity But God wants us to trust Him in those moments

I love how a lack of clarity didn't keep them from compliance & obedience

- They didn't have the master plan, but they trusted the master anyway.
 - it made no sense, but they did it anyway.

That means for us its not our job to understand, Our job is to obey Him.

- And His plans will often not make sense in the moment.
 - The cross in the beginning made no sense to the disciples.

When Peter first heard about the cross, he tried to talk Jesus out of going to it.

- And Jesus said to Peter, get behind me, Satan. Your not mindful of the things of God.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

- We cannot trust our perspective & plans

What God's doing in our lives is not going to make sense always in the moment.

There is several things we must remember in those murky moments

- when God's calling you to do something that you don't understand.

It reminds me of Muscle confusion as You don't progress without things being mixed up.

- God's like a good trainer. He needs to introduce instability and get us off of our norm
 - and then we can grow bigger muscles. Otherwise, we'll plateau.
 - So, he has to mix things up to get us to the next level.

Which is why James 1:3 says, "Knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience."

- Jesus allows trials to come that mix us up and get us off of our control & comfort
 - so we can trust him.
 - And then he works in a different way to get us to a different level.

And he calls us out onto the waters

- where we have to take steps of faith.

So take heart if you feel like your spiritual life right now is disoriented.

- God might just be trying to grow you.

God uses strange methods sometimes and does strange things.

- And he admits that.

He said in Isaiah 55:8, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways, my ways, says the Lord." God can do exceedingly abundantly more than we can imagine

- And he knows a lot more than us so its important to roll with His plan.
 - Trust his Plan & perspective.

When you follow Jesus, you have to get used to different.

- God spoke to Moses through a bush on fire.

He brought the walls of Jericho down by his people marching around it and yelling.

- He ordered Elijah to wet a sacrifice before he lit it on fire.

In the NT, God brought Jesus into the world through a virgin.

- He performed a miracle by telling servants to take water
 - and bring it to the master of the feasts.

He then used five loaves and two fish to feed 5,000 men plus women and children.

- None of these things add up.

So, when we get into situations where God is calling us to do something

- that doesn't align with our master plan, we usually freak out.

We may not understand what God is doing now, but clarity often comes in hindsight.

- You'll often see the fingerprints of God in your life

- **when you look in the rearview mirror**
- and we often say, "I didn't understand it at the time,
 - but I'm so glad I was willing to say yes."

The disciples eventually connected the dots. They were fulfilling prophecy.

- They were blessed because they were willing to walk by faith & not by sight.
- Its good to Say this. **Here am I, Lord. Send me.** I don't need my master plan.
 - I trust that I have a good master.

this donkey that Jesus told them to go get, was out of eyesight.

- He said, go to the village opposite you and get them.
 - In other words, he didn't point to them and say,
 - Hey, see the donkey over there. Bring it to me.

Apparently Jesus knew that there was a donkey over there.

- And I think all of this points to and speaks of Jesus knows all and Jesus sees all.
 - we're not hiding anything from God.

Hebrews 4:13 says **there's no creature hidden from his side. All things are naked and open to him to whom we must give an account.**

Proverbs 15:3 says, **the eyes of the Lord are everywhere. He sees the good and the evil.**

- **God knows all & He sees what each and every one of us are going through today.**

The struggles, the difficulties, the heartache, the headache, the backache,

- **whatever we're going through, whatever circumstances we're dealing with.**

God knows and sees and God cares.

- And that should bring great comfort & rest to each and every one of our hearts.
 - knowing that God's on the throne

and it's all being filtered through the fingertips of God.

Paul said in **2 Corinthians 1:3** **Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The God of all mercy and the God of all comfort who comforts us in our time of tribulation**

⁴ So they went their way, and found ^[b] the colt tied by the door outside on the street, and they loosed it. ⁵ But some of those who stood there said to them, "What are you doing, loosing the colt?" ⁶ And they spoke to them just as Jesus had commanded. So they let them go.

- Don't you wish you could still do that today? You need a car, you walk onto a car lot
 - "Hey, what are you doing touching that car?" "Lord has need of it."
 - "Okay, here's the keys." Awesome!

Jesus already knew what was going to happen before it happened

- which is amazing & proves again that Jesus is God & knows what He is talking about

the owner did question them as they went to loose the donkey.

- They said, "Hey, what are you doing untying that donkey?"
 - And they said, "The Lord has need of it."

And he let them take the donkey b/c Jesus needed it.

could you imagine coming out of your house in the morning,

- getting ready to go to work and someone's in your car?

Hey, what are you doing? The Lord has need of it. Oh, really?

Our church truck was donated to us because God touched the owners heart

- and said the Lord was in need of it

Our family mini van was donated to us because God put it on Shawnas parents heart

- to be generous to us because the Lord was in need of it

God loves to partner with men & women surrendered to him to get his work done on earth

- God wants to do a powerful work in this community, in our families, in our life,
 - but he'll do it with us for His Glory

7 Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it.

- 500 years before Jesus, the prophet **Zachariah 9:9** prophesied about this day.
 - He said the king is going to come riding on a donkey & here its fulfilled

This was a very specific/important time regarding Jesus coming as the King on a donkey

- B/c it was on this exact day that the Passover lambs would be selected,
 - to be without spot, without blemishes. So that 5 days later,
 - they could be sacrificed, there blood shed to atone for their sins

Now this is a very important day, because it's the exact date predicted in the scripture

- by the prophet Daniel Of when the Messiah would come!

This so interested the lead detective years ago Sir Robert Andersen,

- that he wrote a book on it, called **The Coming Prince**. All of his calculations are in it.

Sir Robert Anderson calculated not just the years, but the days of the years.

- And it happened to be, the 10th of Nisan, the very day Jesus said,
 - go get me a donkey. I need to fulfill Zechariah 9.
 - I need to come on the exact date as given to the prophet Daniel,
 - And Jesus came riding on a donkey on that date!

Now let me ask you a question. Is our God precise & exact? Is our God on time or what?

- This is awesome! So if He's that exact,

what are we worried about? He knows what He's doing and He's right on time.

- And He can pull any string He wants to get whatever He wants.
 - **This shows me we can relax when it comes to trusting God.**

Conquering kings usually come riding in on white stallions impressive horses

- But here Jesus comes in on this humble pickup truck.

- b/c he is the humble suffering servant about His fathers business
 - & has the most important work to do

In those days kings would ride donkeys in times of peace.

- they would ride a stallion, a warhorse in times of battle.
 - Here Jesus is coming in on a donkey offering peace.
 - b/c He's the Prince of Peace.

But in Revelation 19, when we see Jesus coming back the second time,

- He's not riding a donkey, but riding a horse.

Philippians 2:5 Paul said, "Let this mind be in you, which is also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God did not think it robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation **coming in the form of a servant** and coming in the likeness of men and being found in the appearance of a man. He humbled himself to the point of death, even death on the cross." Here we see the example that Jesus set for each and every one of us

- as it pertains to humility.

One problem we battle in our lives is pride. We're a very proud people.

James 4:6 says, **God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.**

1 Peter 5:5 says, "We're to be clothed in humility."

Titus 3:2 says, "Show humility to all men."

So when Jesus came the first time He is offering them peace, he didn't come on a white horse with a sword to bring freedom from roman oppression,

- he came in all humility on a donkey to bring freedom from the bondage of sin.
 - peace between us and God,
 - **and he came to give you and me peace!**

in **john 14:27** Jesus said peace I give unto you, not as the world gives, but my peace therefore do not let your heart be troubled nor be afraid,

- there is a lot of things going on in the world today
 - that causes us to loose our peace, when we turn on the TV or read the News
 - we see what is going on in our country and our state and the world
 - and we get frustrated, and we have a tendency to loose our peace
- Jesus gives us a peace that is greater than anything we might face

As Paul said in **Philippians 4:7** He will give us a peace that passes all understanding and guards our heart and mind in christ Jesus our lord,

in **Ephesians 2:14** the bible says **Jesus is our peace,**

- and he came on that donkey to bring peace.

⁸ And many spread their clothes on the road, and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

As Jesus is now at the top of the Mount of Olives preparing to go to Jerusalem

- the disciples take off their outer garments and they place it over the donkey
 - for him to sit on, others are taking their outer garments
 - and they're laying it on the road for him to walk on

this was symbolic in a sense of saying our lives are submitted to you

- we are surrendering to you

it was an outward demonstration of their recognition of Jesus being the King

A good question for us is are we submitted to the King? have you surrendered to Jesus

- Do we welcome him to lead and guide and direct your life as your king?

that's what this crowd did on this particular day

they also cut down leafy palm branches and they began to wave them

- that is why so we call the week before easter Palm Sunday

People would put the palm branches on the ground so when the kings came through

- on their horses, or donkey, there wouldn't be a lot of dust and dirt flying up
 - onto the king. It would keep the king nice and clean.

when the people were laying down their own garments,

- it was a picture of their submission to the king,
- but it also showed they were going to submit to his authority

Revelation 19:16 says he's the king of kings and the Lord of Lords.

⁹ Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:

"Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' ¹⁰ Blessed is the kingdom of our father David That comes  in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" ¹¹ And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.

as the people took down these palm branches and began to wave them

- they ended up quoting the Messianic Psalm 118
 - that refers to Jesus as the Messiah

and it's interesting to me because the word hosana means save now be our King

- the only problem was Jesus had not come to save them from the Romans
 - which is what they were hoping for that Jesus would remove the Romans
 - and be their King and lead them to Victory

but rather Jesus was coming to save them from their sins they didn't quite understand that

in fact at the beginning of the week on Palm Sunday people were saying save now

- but at the end of the week some of these same people would be saying crucify him
 - we won't have this man to Reign Over us

b/c they didn't understand that his first coming he had to come as the suffering Messiah

- before he would come as the reigning king

the people were looking for a conquering king to free them from the slavery of Rome,
▪ not from the slavery of sin.

Here the crowd was honoring & praising him with words quoting scripture

○ **their praise was scriptural.**

▪ **I think it's important that we worship God in a scriptural way.**

That we worship him as the Bible says **in spirit and in truth.**

- you just can't offer to God any kind of praise that you want to offer.
 - It's important to offer God the kind of praise that he wants to be praised with

As men when it comes to Christmas time or birthday time for your wife,

- you can't buy her the present that you want.
 - You need to buy her the present that she wants.

And so if you golf and your wife doesn't, don't buy her a set of golf clubs.

- Don't buy your wife power tools unless she specifically asks for them.
 - If It's not really for her she'll know you bought it for yourself.

God sees our hearts

If you want to please your wife, you find out what pleases your wife and do that for her,

- not what pleases you.

Now, it's the same way when we worship the Lord. Find out what pleases the Lord.

- And where do you find out what pleases him? **You find it in his word.**

in **Psalm 100:2**, it says that **we're to Serve the Lord with gladness;**

Come before His presence with singing. God wants to hear you sing.

- Nobody else may want to hear you sing, but God wants to hear you sing.

And you may be holding back and say, "Well, I'm not going to sing. I'll empty out the church.

- God wants to hear you sing. He says, "Come into his presence with singing."
 - it's not about pleasing you. It's about pleasing him. And he says he wants it.

So if he says come to him with words, that's how we come.

in **Psalm 134:2**, it says that we're to come to God with hands lifted up. **Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, And bless the Lord.**

- **Maybe the first time you've come to church**

○ **and you saw people raising their hands in time worship, it seemed so strange.**

Maybe you've asked What are people doing? I don't understand why they do this

- they're just doing what the Bible says.

So I want to encourage you to **Get your hands up. Surrender to God.**

SHARE GOSPEL & PRAY