



NG Study Guide: Mark 11:1-14 “Exalting Jesus as King” [7.4.21]

Love God + know the Bible better:

1. Read the passage cited above, and try to answer the questions below before your group meets.
2. *Leader note: Please review the brief instructions for leaders at the bottom.*

The Study

Thesis: *At Calvary Nexus, the first of our four Core Values is “We are followers of Jesus: He is our King.” What does it mean to you for Jesus to be king over your life, and how does that influence the way you respond to Him? In the beginning of Mark 11, Jesus is preparing to enter Jerusalem where He will allow His disciples to do something He has thus far discouraged: To create a public demonstration in honor of Him. As we look at Jesus’ triumphal entry, let’s discover how we can exalt Jesus as the King of our lives.*

1. Exalt Jesus through Obedience [1-6]

Christ’s example of obedience [1-3]

¹ Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to 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 knew the persecution He was under from the religious leaders. Throughout His ministry, He discouraged others from making His presence known. Yet, as Jesus prepares to enter Jerusalem for the Passover feast, He recognizes that it was the appointed time to accomplish the Father’s plan for His earthly ministry: To lay down His life as a ransom for many. Rather than sneaking into the city, Jesus obeys the Father and prepares for the great works that lie ahead.

The disciples’ obedience [4-6]

⁴ So they went their way, and found ^bthe 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.

In preparation for His entrance into the Holy City, Jesus sends the disciples to procure the colt of a donkey. In doing so, Jesus fulfills prophecy (c.f. Zechariah 9:9), points the Jews towards their need of salvation, and offers to bring a kingdom of peace. Though the disciples were likely unaware of this task’s greater purpose, they obey Jesus, doing exactly as commanded, and in doing so get to witness God’s plan unfold before them.

Jesus’ entrance on the colt accomplishes several things:

i. Fulfills prophecy: Zechariah 9:9 “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

ii. Speaks of the people’s need for salvation: In our last passage, Jesus reminded the disciples of what would come: His crucifixion. And here is another reminder of God’s purpose for Jesus as the Messiah. Many Rabbis believed the Messiah would come in one of two ways: He would come humbly to an unworthy Israel, and mightily to a worthy Israel. As Jesus enters the city in humility, He’s acknowledging the people’s unworthiness and their need for redemption and forgiveness of sins.

iii. Points towards peace: Jesus could have chosen a number of ways to enter the city: On foot to minimize notoriety, or on a magnificent horse declaring Himself the conquering king. But instead He rides in on a colt - a young donkey - in this time sign of one who came in peace. Jesus knew the religious leaders were set against Him

and what it meant to be welcomed as a King. But despite their plots against Him, the agony that will follow in the coming days, and His death on the cross, Jesus makes a statement that His kingdom will ultimately bring peace. It's likely that the disciples weren't aware of Jesus' greater need for the colt beyond the physical benefit of not having to walk. Yet trusting in Jesus, they obey His command, and in doing so they got to see the inner workings of God's plan unfolding.

2. Exalt Jesus through Worship [7-11]

Worship through humble offerings [7-8a]

⁷ Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it. ⁸ And many spread their clothes on the road...

As Jesus prepared to sit on the colt, the disciples create a makeshift saddle for Him out of their clothes as a sign of honor. After Jesus sits upon the young donkey, the people begin to lay their clothes out on the road before Him. This was a sign of respect to Jesus as their King [2 Kings 9:12-13] as you allowed your garments to be dirtied and torn. Beyond the physical act, we can take note of the spiritual call: To lay down our lives (time, talents, and treasures) in order to make the name of Jesus known.

Worship through reverence [8b]

...and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

Palm branches held several significant meanings in this time: Palm branches were used to welcome kings and conquerors into a city, palm branches were a symbol of victory and well-being, and were used by the Jews in various festivals like the Feast of Tabernacles - the celebration of God providing for Israel in the wilderness in Exodus. While we don't know which of these reasons the people laid out palm branches for Jesus, we do know that their actions were a sign of deep respect to Him.

Worship through praise [9-11]

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.

Multiple times throughout His ministry Jesus discouraged those He interacted with from telling others about Him.

Here, Jesus gladly welcomes the public praise of His name. So much so that we read in Luke 19:39 And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." 40 But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out." Creation would welcome its King with praise and adoration.

3. Exalt Jesus through Bearing Fruit [12-14]

¹² Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. ¹³ And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it.

This was not a moment of "hangry Jesus". Rather, Jesus was creating an illustration through this tree. While it's not wrong for a tree to have leaves and not bear fruit, or produce neither fruit nor leaves, the issue was that it was not the season for figs, and these types of fig trees would typically only produce leaves in the same season it would pronounce fruit. In short, this tree gave the appearance of being a fruit bearing tree, but was only deceiving the onlooker. As Jesus entered Jerusalem the day prior, many of the people that were present who publicly honored Him as the coming king would turn their backs on Him in a few days as Jesus was tried and executed. The lesson to learn is that if we call Jesus our King, our lives should bear the fruit to match.

How can you bear good fruit for your King?

i. Plant yourself in good soil

ii. Nourish yourself

iii. Allow pruning to happen

iv. Understand your strengths and your season

The goal in bearing fruit isn't to look like the person sitting next to you. The goal is to bear fruit that you might look more like Jesus, thereby exalting His name.

Study Guide Qs

Q1. What might be some obstacles to submitting to Jesus as King?

Q2. What are some of the benefits of obeying Jesus?

Q3. How can you worship Jesus in addition to musical worship?

Q4. How can we bear good fruit for Jesus? How might we encourage others to bear good fruit?

“Digging Deeper” (optional or alternative study)

1. Here's a helpful article on how we can bear fruit: <https://www.compellingtruth.org/bearing-fruit.html>

2. Read through the entirety of Psalm 118. Mark down portions that stand out to you and begin to memorize them as so that you might praise God in spirit and truth throughout the day: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%20118&version=NKJV>

Love your neighbor *outside* the group better:

1. Who would like to share how they sought to befriend or build relationship with their neighbors where they live, work, study, or play this past week?

2. Are there some needs that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbor outside the group?

3. Here is a neighboring idea(s) for us to consider for the week(s) ahead:

Find ways to spend time with your neighbors in a low-pressure environment. At times, the idea of loving our neighbor can seem daunting. Find simple ways to grow in relationship through sharing a meal, coffee, conversations, etc.

Love your neighbor *inside* the group better:

1. Are there some needs in our group that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbor within the group?
2. What might we do about that need to help?

Prayer [Loving God and Neighbors better]:

Close the NG meeting with a time of group prayer. Encourage each participant to pray, but don't force anyone to pray. Encourage the group to keep their prayers brief so that each person can pray.

Leader Notes:

1. Seek to involve as many group participants as possible. A good group discussion time allows people to get to know the passage and one another better.
2. Feel free to pre-select the discussion questions that you want to focus on in case there isn't enough time to answer them all.
3. The "Digging Deeper" section provides some optional or alternative study and discussion activities. As a group leader, you can choose to focus on the "Digging Deeper" section, include part of that section in your group meeting, or not use it at all. Try to give the group sufficient notice so they can be prepared for the meeting.
4. Every time you meet consider asking:
 - a. What about this passage is particularly exciting, challenging, or confusing? If a leader is uncertain about a question of doctrine or theology don't hesitate to follow-up with your coach during the week. Then revisit the issue(s) when the group gathers next time.