



MATTHEW 21:1-11

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. 3 If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once." 4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, [a] the foal of a beast of burden.'" 6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. 8 Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" 10 And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" 11 And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

NOTE TO LEADERS

Diarise our prayer meeting at 7pm on the 3rd of May. Dinner will be on sale from 6pm so why not make a night of it and enjoy a meal and community! Childcare will also be available.

START TALKING

1. What is one thing that stood out to you in Sunday's message?
2. If you had a time machine that would work only once, what point in the future or in history would you visit?

START THINKING

1. Read Matthew 21:1-11. In what ways can being caught up in the excitement of a crowd be dangerous?
2. The donkey ushered Jesus into the presence of the crowd without drawing the focus to itself. On a practical note, how do we usher Jesus into the presence of people rather than ushering ourselves into the presence of people in the name of Jesus?

START SHARING

1. On Sunday, Dusty used a well-known statement: Jesus doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called. Share about a time that you were called by Jesus to something that you felt unqualified for (something that was perhaps way out of your comfort zone). How did you respond? What personally changed in your relationship with Jesus when you followed His call?
2. The same crowd that welcomed Jesus into the City, recognising Him as the Messiah and King, called for Him to be crucified on a cross like a criminal four days later. Is Jesus on the throne in all areas of your life? In what area of your life have you crucified Him on a cross like a criminal? What action do you need to take to put Him back on the throne in that area of your life.

START PRAYING

Heavenly Father, search our hearts and show us anything that is dishonouring to You. Help us to learn how to live for You. Open our hearts to greater understanding of Your Word, so that we may grow in grace and in a knowledge of You - in Jesus name, AMEN.

START DOING

It's very easy to be influenced by a crowd. Do you see yourself in the crowd that welcomed Jesus or the crowd that called for Him to be crucified? Spend some time this week praying and meditating on areas in your life that you're being "influenced by the crowd that is calling for Jesus to be crucified". Where do you need to "die to self" and put Jesus back in His rightful place on the throne?

This weekend, Dusty shared a powerful message from Matthew 21:1-11, where we learned some great lessons from the donkey in the story...

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. 3 If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once." 4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, [a] the foal of a beast of burden.'" 6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. 8 Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" 10 And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" 11 And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

This triumphant entry into Jerusalem took place just days before Jesus was going to be crucified, but He knew that His earthly ministry was coming to an end. This moment grabbed everyone's attention, fixing all eyes on Jesus and prepared the world to witness the death and resurrection of Jesus.

There are moments in this story that point to the Kingship of Jesus:

Jesus shows that He has divine knowledge of what was coming. Secondly, we see the fulfilment of a prophecy 550 years earlier from Zechariah: "say to daughter Zion, 'see, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

The cheering crowds recognised that Jesus was the Messiah:

"Hosanna to the son of David!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the lord!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "who is this?"

the crowds answered, "this is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

And yet four days later, the same crowd called for Jesus to be crucified: "away with him, crucify him!"

Jesus went from King on the throne in the life of this crowd to a criminal crucified on the cross. In this situation, we can recognise a similar behaviour in our lives - that Jesus can often go from King to crucified in our lives. How often do we move from acknowledging Jesus as our Lord and Saviour to crucifying Him?

How do we keep Jesus as king in all areas of our lives?

1. Know our position

As we read this story, there is a character that understood that Jesus was King. This character never turned on Jesus, and he found safety in Jesus. This character is the donkey.

Some facts and characteristics of donkeys:

- They can live for over 50 years.
- They have incredible memories and recognise areas and other donkeys they were with more than 25 years ago.
- They have a reputation for stubbornness (much like many of us), but this is due to their highly developed sense of self preservation.
- It is difficult to force or frighten a donkey into doing something it sees as contrary to its own best interest and safety.
- Donkeys will make decisions based on their safety.
- Training a donkey relies upon showing them, by words and action, that they can trust you to protect them from harm.

For 1000's of years, donkeys have been the "helping hooves" of mankind. We are donkeys! Servants to Christ, His ways and His people. The downfall of the crowd is that they moved positions - turning from "hosanna" to crucifying Him was that they

moved from the donkey position (created to serve God, His ways and His people) to the entitled, people-pleasing position. They moved from being the donkey to being the master. When we move position from donkey to master, we move ourselves out of the Rulership of the Father. And it's within our control to move back into the position of servant.

Throughout biblical history, things went badly when heroes of the faith moved from servant to master. When you look at certain characters in the Bible, their downfall was the moment they switched positions. David fell to adultery because he saw Bathsheba bathing on the roof when he was meant to be at war with his army. Have you switched positions and lost the kingship over your life? Maybe you have moved from father to CEO, friend to gossip, husband to pornography, church participator to church viewer, daily devotionals to daily business, young person of substance to a young person of substance abuse, from giver to keeper...

We may not lose the rulership of God over our whole lives, but we can lose the rulership of God in certain parts of our lives that can eventually consume our whole lives! What positions do we need to restore again under the rulership of Jesus? In what parts of our lives has Jesus been crucified as a criminal instead of enthroned as King? We need to go back to the position of the donkey again - a servant to Jesus in all areas of our lives.

In this story, Jesus is ushered into the presence on His people on a donkey; representing the position of humble, servant rulership, but Revelation 19 contrasts this - when Jesus returns the second time, He will be ushered into the presence of his people on a white horse representing his victorious rulership over the world! We live in between these two realities: that we look back at Jesus' humility so we can emulate it and look forward to His return so we can anticipate it!

2. Know your mission

If you want to keep Jesus as King over your life, stay on a mission! We are here for a purpose, not by chance! our purpose is:

- Christ
- Christlikeness
- Community
- The common good
- The great commission

The donkey's job and mission was to take Jesus into the presence of people. Just like the donkey ushered Jesus into the crowds, our mission is to usher Jesus into the lives of everyone around us.

What can we learn from this donkey about being on mission?

The donkey wasn't qualified: "go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which **no one has ever ridden**. Mark 11:2 - A perfect example of God not calling the qualified but qualifying the called. Many of Jesus's disciples were uneducated fishermen. God will use everyone and anyone for His mission! When we say "yes", God will do the rest e.g. Moses. Regardless of age or experience, every single one of us was qualified when Jesus was crucified on the cross.

4 but because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6 and god raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in christ Jesus. 8 for it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 for we are god's handiwork, created in christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:4-10. Grace is a gift - the cross did it all (not by our works, so that no one can boast)

The donkey pointed all attention to Jesus. No one noticed the donkey - it simply ushered Jesus into the presence of His people. Are we ushering Jesus into the presence of people or ushering ourselves in the presence of people in the name of Jesus?

In desperate times of need, the devastation we go through, it is so easy to try to become the hero... but Jesus can offer so much more than any of us.

So let's take these lessons from the donkey in the story and move Jesus from criminal on the cross to King and Ruler over our lives.