

## ***Preparing for Easter***

*March 15 & 16, 2008*

***Jesus went on toward Jerusalem, walking ahead of his disciples.***

*Luke chapter 19 verse 28 (802)*

- Jesus knew what awaited him in Jerusalem, but He still led the way
- What area of your life is God asking you to step-up in and lead, in spite of what is waiting for you?
- If Jesus were as committed to God's plan for His life as I'm committed to God's plan for mine, would Jesus be leading, in the middle of the pack, or straggling way behind??

***As they came to the towns of Bethphage and Bethany on the Mount of Olives, he sent two disciples ahead. "Go into that village over there," he told them. "As you enter it, you will see a young donkey tied there that no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.***

*Luke chapter 19 verses 29 & 30 (802)*

- We think they knew how the story would end...they didn't, just like us! This was an opportunity for them to obey & to build their faith in something little, ordinary, routine

God uses the common & routine to give me the opportunity to obey

- ***Jesus said, "If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest (unfaithful) in little things, you won't be honest (faithful) with greater responsibilities."*** *Luke chapter 16 verse 10 (798)*
  - ↳ What "little thing" in my life have I been blowing God off on?

***If anyone asks "Why are you untying that colt?" just say, "the Lord needs it." So they went and found the colt, just as Jesus had said. And sure enough, as they were untying it, the owners asked them, "Why are you untying that colt?"*** *Luke chapter 19 verses 31 - 33 (802)*

- Our "simple" obedience will not go unchallenged by those around us. The life of faith will be questioned, challenged, so expect it
- Do what Jesus tells you to do! Is he telling me to forgive someone? To help someone? To give something up? To take something on? To say "yes" to something? To say "no" to something?

***The disciples simply replied, "The Lord needs it." So they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their garments over it for him to ride on.*** *Luke chapter 19 verses 34 & 35 (802)*

- Where did they get the response, "The Lord needs it" from???

The life of faith means that I simply follow God, believing & obey

- There is a way out of every temptation - 1 Corinthians 10:13
- I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength - Philippians 4:13
- The power of sin has been defeated in me - Romans 6
- I don't need to worry because God knows all my needs & will give me everything I need - Matthew 6:26-34
- This life isn't about me, I am part of God's plan to reach the world - 2 Corinthians 5:18

*As they came closer to Jerusalem and Jesus saw the city ahead, he began to cry (violently). “How I wish today that you of all people would understand the way of peace. But now it is too late, and peace is hidden from your eyes. ...because you did not accept your opportunity for salvation.” Luke chapter 19 verses 41, 42 & 44 (802)*

- I need to see people the way Jesus sees them
- “Cry violently” - describes a gut-wrenching sobbing that comes deep from the emotions
- Jesus wept bitterly for the people of Jerusalem...NOT for himself, NOT for the cross that awaited him
- While everyone else was celebrating...Jesus wept because he knew the one’s celebrating were not even aware of their own sad condition
- How often do you weep for the people around you? For those who are hurting, those who are wandering apart from God, those who are searching, those who don’t even know they should be searching?
- Who are they? Your neighbors? Co-workers? Brother? Sister? Mom? Dad? Friends?

*The entire city of Jerusalem was in an uproar as Jesus entered. “Who is this?” they asked. And the crowds replied, “It’s Jesus...” Matthew chapter 21 verses 10 & 11 (751)*

- It’s my job to introduce others to Jesus!
- Pray & ask God who to invite & bring to our Easter services
- Take extra invitations so you are ready to hand them out when prompted
- At Easter, people are most willing & ready to come to church than any other time of the year
- The #1 reason people don’t go to church? Because no one ever asked them. So ask someone!
- We’ve planned a wonderful Easter service. Pray that hundreds will commit their lives in our services on Easter
- When you attend our Easter services, if possible, come to the Saturday evening or 9:30 am Sunday service
- Whichever service you attend, leave the best parking spots for our guests



Next weekend: Easter services