

## **LIFE Group Leader Handout**

**Palm Sunday, April 9, 2017**

### **Redemption Unfolding**

Pastor Mike O'Connor

#### **Scripture—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, 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. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once." This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,*

*"Say to the daughter of Zion,  
'Behold, your king is coming to you,  
humble, and mounted on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"*

*The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 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!" And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."*

#### **Main Idea—The "Back Story" of Palm Sunday Shows the Workings Of God**

**God has a Plan**—It unfolds prophecies made about the Messiah; as we participate, we see God at work

**Your Part Matters**—Even the fact that Jesus rode a donkey gave a significant message

**It's not about you**—Ministry is always about the one we serve, not about us.

**What we are in danger of losing**—Jesus wept, not for Himself but for those who resisted the grace of God

**The Next Unfolding**—Revelation 19 shows Jesus returning, not on a donkey this time, but on a white horse

#### **Application—**

- Have you had opportunity to see a plan of God unfolding and the privilege of being a part of it?
- Jesus was moved to tears for those who were indifferent, even hostile to Him and His message. How does that compare or contrast to our attitude?
- How does Psalm 126 both instruct and encourage us? *Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.*

## **5 THINGS TO PRAY FOR YOUR SMALL GROUP**

By Rachel Jones

*Heavenly Father, please help us to....*

**Be at peace.** *“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts” (Col. 5:15). This is more than the absence of arguing! Thank God that your small group are all “members of one body”, knit together as part of Christ’s body. Yet all of us have, at some point, had mean thoughts, angry attitudes and bitter motives in our hearts, however well we cover them up! Repent before God, and ask that Christ’s peace would rule in your heart instead.*

**Teach one another.** *“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach..one another” (Col. 3:16). Pray that during your meetings, you would not only learn together, but also revel in the glorious riches of the message of Christ. Thank God that small groups also give an opportunity to learn from the wisdom of people at different life-stages. Pray that all of you would be willing to listen and learn.*

**Admonish one another.** *Small groups should be an environment where Christians can “admonish one another with all wisdom” (Col. 3:16). Pray for a culture of intimacy and honesty; that as you share your lives together, you would hold each other accountable, lovingly pointing out sin, and earnestly warn one another against wrongdoing. This is hard; but pray you would love one another enough to have these difficult conversations.*

**Love each other.** *“Both in “word” and “deed” in the name of the Lord Jesus”. Col.3:17). Pray that you wouldn’t be a group that just meets once a week to talk about the Bible, but a group that truly loves each other with words and deeds at other times too. Then think of a way you can put this prayer into action!*

**Be truly thankful.** *(Col.3:15, 16, 17: “Be thankful...with gratitude in your hearts...giving thanks to God the Father.”). Paul tells the Colossians three times in as many verses to be thankful. So as you think of your small group, think of three things that you can be grateful for; then thank God for them!*