

STBC IMPACT Bible Study: “I’D RATHER BE...”

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

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Our Opening Thought: The Apostle Paul wrote to the wealthy, childish, and oftentimes high-minded Christians in Corinth, reminding them that God chose the **foolish**, the **weak**, the **despised**, and the **base things** of the world to confound and put to shame the **wise**, the **mighty**, and the **noble**. God does this so that no one will be able to boast or glorify themselves in His presence (**I Corinthians 1:26 – 31**).

God did not call us to have a relationship with Him because “**we had something to offer Him.**” The truth is, regardless of what side of the tracks we came from, “**we had nothing to offer God**”—and yet—God still chose to call us to Himself. One reason the religious elite in Jesus’ day, i.e., **the Pharisees**, kept missing Him was that they didn’t feel like they needed Jesus, God’s Son. They thought they were doing God a favor by “serving” Him.

As we will see in the weeks to come, the religiously arrogant, then and now, read the scriptures from **the top down**. However, the spiritually humble, then and now, read the word of God from **the bottom up**. By reading the Bible from the bottom up, we can ascertain hidden, spiritual messages and see unsuspecting heroes that those who center themselves, worldly power, and systems of human domination typically miss. When Jesus said, “**the last shall be first and the first shall be last,**” He was ushering in a way of hearing, viewing, and participating in this new thing called **the kingdom of God**.

Our Text: **Matthew 21:1 – 11 (NKJV/KJV)**

Our Focus: “**I’d Rather Be A Donkey Than A Pharisee**”

*What was the purpose of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey? See **Zechariah 9:9**.

*In the days of the Bible, donkeys were seen as **beasts of prestige (Gen. 22:3, Judg. 5:10, 10:4, 12:14; I Kings 1:33, 38)**, but in our culture donkeys are seen as **beasts of burden**.

*Is there any significance to Jesus riding on **a donkey** to have His Kingship declared as opposed to a **white war horse** like the Romans? When will Jesus ride a white horse?

1. The donkey didn’t find Jesus; Jesus found the donkey because He knew exactly where it was (**Matthew 21:2; John 1:47 – 49, 12:15**).

If Jesus had a need and a purpose for the donkey and its colt that day, then surely Jesus has a need and a purpose for each one of us today.

2. The donkey belonged to a different owner. It was tied up (i.e. it was bound), but Jesus “loosed it” from that owner and took possession of it (**Luke 19:30 – 33**).

3. No one had ever ridden, controlled, or broken the donkey, but Jesus was able to ride it, control it, and break it (**Luke 19:30**).
4. The donkey had enough sense to know that Jesus was the Messiah. It didn't stubbornly resist the Lord like the Pharisees did (**Luke 19:39**). Instead, the donkey submitted to Jesus' Lordship when the Pharisees did not.
5. The donkey had enough sense to know that when the praise came in its direction, it was meant for Jesus and not for him. The Pharisees, on the other hand, were envious of Jesus and loved the praises of men (**John 12:43**).
6. The donkey knew that moment was about Jesus and not about himself because just earlier in the day he was tied to a post and under the ownership of another. His life existence was going nowhere until Jesus wanted Him, found Him, and called him.
7. The donkey also had a colt tied with it (**Matthew 21:2**). Both were loosed and brought to Jesus. Both were with Jesus in the triumphal entry. This means that every donkey can have a positive, spiritual influence on another donkey.
8. The Lord could have opened the donkey's mouth that day to speak because He's done it in the past (**Numbers 22:28 – 31**). But on this day, it was the will of God for that donkey to serve in silence.
9. Did you know that on the back of every donkey is a natural hair pattern that resembles a cross? This means the Lord could have possibly seen a cross on the back of the donkey before He actually died on one later that week.

Our Closing Thought: After studying this passage, who would you rather be like? The donkey or the Pharisees?

Our Discussion Questions:

1. What did you learn or need to hear from tonight's Bible study?
2. When do you find yourself sometimes resisting God? Giving money? Forgiving others? Going to church? Sharing your faith? Saying "No" to certain temptations?
3. Why is serving God in silence a challenge for us at times?
4. What does carrying your cross on your back look like in this moment?

Next Week: "I'd Rather Be A Sinner Than A Pharisee" (Luke 18:9 – 14)