

## RCC LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION (FACILITATOR)

### MARK CHAPTER 11

#### Discussion Starter

- Why do you agree or disagree with the following quote?
  - “God doesn’t give people influence so they can lead others better; He does it so they can love people more.” Bob Goff

#### Opening Prayer

- Ask if someone wants to volunteer before leading the prayer

#### Tell the Story

#### Read the Story (Mark 11:1-33)

- Read out loud as a group, 5 verses per person. Let everyone know they can opt out if they would like.

#### Breaking it Down

- All questions should be utilized as appropriate based upon group dynamics to facilitate both understanding and discussion. Don’t feel tied to the questions and don’t feel like you have to get through every question. Follow the Spirit’s lead! All questions are a matter of perspective in some way BUT there are specific questions that this is truer of and these questions have been indicated to be perspective/opinion questions.

#### Mark 11:1-11

- Although this section of text is labeled as “The Triumphal Entry,” this is going to be the last week of Jesus’ life. What starts out as “fanfare” for Jesus quickly disappears.

- What was the significance of the colt that Jesus requested His disciples to go and get in the village?
  - Yes, Jesus riding on the colt was prophesized about (Zechariah 9:9) but Jesus knew what setting He was going into and what people's expectations were in that setting so the colt represented so much more than what we might think.
  - When a king came for war, he rode on a horse but when a king came in peace, he rode on a colt/donkey. The people expected their Messiah to come crashing into the world to overthrow the Romans with power so Jesus coming into the last week of His life riding on a donkey was both a declaration and appeal.
    - It was a declaration that who He was had nothing to do with what people thought, believed, and/or expected. In fact, who He was ran completely contrary to the expectations of His people.
    - It was an appeal because Jesus wasn't coming in power as the King but in complete love.
  - How can you and I today continually make sure that what we think and/or believe about Jesus is actually consistent with who He really is?
    - This is an opinion and perspective question so please listen as the facilitator.
- Notice the things that the people say in verses 9 & 10. Why is this significant?
  - It seems like the people are praising Jesus. The word "Hosanna" has the meaning behind it of "Save now," and while we may use it as a word of praise, the word was actually being utilized as a cry for Jesus to save His people from the Romans with both authority and power. These

cries for deliverance will soon turn to cries for Jesus to be killed.

- With the knowledge that Jesus was going to totally go against His own people's nationalistic dreams for Him and their nation, how would you characterize Jesus' intentional and deliberate courage in entering Jerusalem boldly and going to the temple when He could have done this in secrecy?
  - This is an opinion and perspective question so please listen as the facilitator.

□ Mark 11:12-14 & 20-26

- It is important to consider the story of the fig tree as one story rather than the two it is broken into, separated by Jesus' cleansing of the temple. If we look at the story of the fig tree outside of the context it is in, it becomes very problematic for the following reasons.
  - Jesus never used His miraculous and supernatural power for His own sake.
  - Mark very clearly states that it was not the season for figs so it seems unreasonable that Jesus would curse the tree for not being able to do something it was incapable of doing in that particular season.
  - With these things in mind, Jesus is probably seeing and making a much larger point than just cursing the fig tree.
  - Jesus may have been referring to the nation of Israel as He spoke about the fig tree in that as God's chosen people, they were expected to bear fruit and receive Jesus eagerly but that wasn't at all the case. In fact, they were going to bear bad fruit. The fig tree was going to remain a promise unfulfilled, just as Jesus was going to remain a promise unfulfilled to the people of Israel because of their decision to reject Him.

## □ Mark 11:15-19

- Why do you believe that Jesus was so angry with the scene he witnessed in this passage?
  - The fact that people were buying and selling in the temple isn't the main point of the passage. People were coming from all over geographically to worship and there was a temple tax and they were required by the Old Testament Law to bring animal sacrifices. Because of the long travel distances, it made sense to purchase these animals in the temple BUT...
    - People who were coming to worship were being cheated because the individuals selling in the temple were basically price gouging at ridiculous amounts.
    - So, the very people selling (who were intended to be a part of individuals drawing close to God) were the very ones who were hindering people from drawing close to God.
- This passage and Jesus' reaction in this passage should cause us to ask many questions but here are a couple.
  - When individuals are exploited around me just as they were being exploited in the presence of Jesus, how do I respond and why?
    - With indifference?
    - With a "it's none of my business" attitude?
    - With a "I don't have time to really do anything" attitude?
    - With a righteous anger that moves me to action on behalf of the exploited?
  - Is the life that I am living drawing people into the presence of God or hindering them from coming into the presence of God?

- These are opinion and perspective questions so please listen as the facilitator.

#### Mark 11:27-33

- What do you think motivated the chief priests, scribes, and the elders to come to Jesus in the first place?
  - Do you see any similarities between you and them?
  - How do you respond when you are challenged to accept things of God that you do not like or go against your current way of living?
  - These are opinion and perspective questions so please listen as the facilitator.

#### Final Application

- What does this passage teach us about God?
- What does this passage teach us about mankind?
- What is a command to obey in this passage?
- What has God revealed in your life that needs changing?
- What truth can be applied to your life about the gospel?

#### Closing & Prayer Requests

- Have a designated person to capture and share (as appropriate) within the life group.
- What happens in life group, stays in life group.
- Don't forget get to confirm the next meeting date and time
- Also recruit someone to do the story for the following week (Mark 11)



## RCC LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION (STUDENT)

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