

**NOW IT BEGINS!**  
**Mark 11:1-10**

**I. STORM WARNINGS**

- A. The clouds gather.
  - 1. This is the beginning of the holiest week of the Christian year!
  - 2. It begins in beauty, moves down in the middle with incredible suffering, and ends in glory.
- B. Inevitable suffering and the parade of pain.
  - 1. Chances are some of you are about to get caught in a storm.
  - 2. You've done everything possible, but your marriage won't make it.
  - 3. The tests were positive. The tumor is malignant.
  - 4. They took the other bid.
- C. Three storms:
  - 1. Futility – What's the point?
  - 2. Failure – You blew it!
  - 3. Finality – It happens all the time, but now it has happened to you.

**II. THE JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM**

- A. When the sky is clear.
  - 1. It's easy to love God on Palm Sunday, but faith is tested on Good Friday.
  - 2. It's easy to love life when the sky is blue, but faith is tested when the storms hit.
- B. Let's just skip Holy Week!
  - 1. Palm Sunday's and Easter's are great, but why can't we ignore what lies in between?
  - 2. "The church I grew up in skipped past the events of Holy Week in a rush to hear the cymbal sounds of Easter." (Philip Yancey)
- C. Three anchor points:
  - 1. Life is not futile.
    - a. "Those who suffer loss live suspended between a past for which they long and a future for which they hope." (Sittser)
    - b. God is in every wilderness. Hang in there!
  - 2. Failure is not fatal – Look at Peter and Judas.
  - 3. Death is not final – God took the worst the world could do and transformed it into the best that could happen for us.

**III. CARRY THE CHRIST**

- A. Called to be a donkey.
  - 1. "If the ministry of the church is to carry Christ into the world, then each of us is called to be a donkey." (Leonard Sweet)
  - 2. Donkeys are known for strong backs and sure feet.
- B. When the cheering stops.
  - 1. Having a "crowd" mentality.
  - 2. Are you willing to carry Christ when the cheering stops?

**Prayer Concerns:** Burney Biesel, Deborah Hendrix, Mac Kerr, Joe McDowell, Melvin Dowling, Albert Fowlkes, **Gordon Freeman**, Anne Miller, Vicki Page, Mildred Sentell, Joe Tidwell Jr., Ray Billings, Kenneth Blackburn, **Sarah Clark**, Cledus Creel, Jimmy Eubanks, Angela Fisher, Nancy Godsey, Dorothy Huffstutter, Kristi Jackson, Jeff Joyner, Ava Grace Keleher, **Van Lynch**, Judy Malaquias, Catherine Mattheus, Macy Morgan, Taylor Murray, Judy Owen, David Petrie, Patrick Ramage, Florine Rickeman, Mary Elizabeth Roberts, **Storm Victims ...**

**Christian Sympathy** is extended to **Nancy Petty and family** in the death of her cousin, **Janie O'Brien King**, who died on Monday, April 3, and to **Deborah Davison and family** in the death of her mother, **Margaret Moore**, who died on Monday, April 3.

### PASTORAL PRAYER

O Loving God, as we pause for a moment at the beginning of the most holy of all weeks, we remember what you endured for our sakes. We also remember what we have endured. Nobody knows the troubles we have seen – the hurt, the sadness, the bad mistakes, the crippling losses – but you know.

At the beginning of this Holy Week, we remember how you survived the shouts of praise turning to shouts of rejection. We also remember how we have survived our moments of joy turning to moments of pain. After all these years, we have made it to this year, this day. There were times when we never thought we would. O Lord, what does this mean – our surviving?

It means that weak as we are, a strength beyond our strength has pulled us through at least this far, at least to this day. Foolish as we are, a wisdom beyond our wisdom has flickered up just often enough to light us to a path that leads forward, that is bearable. Faint of heart as we are, a love beyond our power to love has kept our hearts alive.

Who or what do we have to thank for our survival? It is you, O Lord, who has been with us through it all. It is you, O God, that we have to thank for having made it somehow to this day. It is you, Lord, who willingly took the road to the cross so that we could bear the cross on our road to today. Thank you, Lord Jesus.

Hear us now as we pray the prayer you taught us to pray ...

**THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### Mark 11:1-10

And when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, and said to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat; untie it and bring it. If any one says to you, “Why are you doing this?” say, “The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.”” And they went away, and found a colt tied at the door out in the open street; and they untied it. And those who stood there said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” And they told them what Jesus had said; and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus, and threw their garments on it; and he sat upon it. And many spread their garments on the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. And those who went before and those who followed cried out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming! Hosanna in the highest!”

### SERMON SCHEDULE

#### In the Sanctuary:

April 10-14	<i>Services at Noon</i>	<b>Holy Week</b>
<b>April 16</b>	<b><i>Speechless</i></b> Mark 16:1-8	<b>Easter Sunday</b>
April 23	<i>Touch the Wounds</i>	John 20:19-31
April 30	<i>Seeing Is Believing</i>	Luke 24:36-48

#### On the Radio (1450 AM):

April 16	<i>Touched By Life</i>	John 20:1-18
April 23	<i>Our Joyful God</i>	John 15:1-11
April 30	<i>Hurry Sickness</i>	Luke 8:0-15