

C. When you feel like that about doing God's will consider the lessons we see in today's text:

God has a plan each time he calls for your service
Following God's plan may require courage and trust
Doing God's will brings you into God's purposes and promises
God is amazingly patient

D. Remember all those people to whom God said, "I need it?"
When you feel unqualified or unprepared think of this:

Noah got drunk
Abraham was too old
Isaac was a daydreamer
Jacob was a liar
Leah was ugly
Joseph was abused
Moses stuttered
Gideon was afraid
Samson was a womanizer
Rahab was a prostitute
Jeremiah and Timothy were young
David had an affair
Elijah was suicidal
Isaiah preached naked
Jonah ran from God
Naomi was a widow
Job went bankrupt
Peter denied Christ
The Disciples fell asleep while praying
Martha worried about everything
The Samaritan woman was divorced, more than once
Zacchaeus was too small
Paul was too religious
Timothy had an ulcer ... AND
Lazarus was dead!

And you think God won't use you? What's that in your hand?
When God says "I need it" what will you say?

"The Lord Needs It"
Luke 19:8-36

3/28/10

RMBC
Pastor Dennis

Introduction

A. I'm guessing that at this moment most of you have something in your hand – a pen, a paper, a Bible, the hand of your wife or girlfriend/boyfriend, some keys, or a purse. Our question this morning is: What if Jesus said, "I need it"? What would you do or how would you respond if the next time you have something you value in your hand Jesus said, "I need that"?

B. In our text this morning Jesus was about to make a daring ride into Jerusalem—daring because the opposition was organizing an all-out search for him. He said to some disciples, (two guys standing around like Cal-Trans employees), "Go over to the next village and get a donkey colt for me. And if anyone gives you any grief about it just say, "The Lord needs it."

C. So I'm asking you to play the part of the owner this morning as three scruffy disciples ask for your colt. You're already poor, you co-own the donkey with two other farmers; you can't afford to lose this small, valuable animal. But the men say, "The Lord needs it."

D. As I thought about this it occurred to me that God doesn't actually need anything from us. But looking through the lens of history I remembered how often God used what people had in their hands:

Noah had a hammer in his hand and God said, "I need it."
Moses had a staff in his hand and God said, "I need it."
David had a sling in his hand and God said, "I need it."
Jeremiah had a scroll in his hand and God said, "I need it."
Joseph owned a little carpenter shop and God said, "I need it."
Mary had an innocent, tender heart, and God said, "I need it."
Peter's boat was docked on the shore when God said, "I need it."
Paul had access to officials and leaders and God said, "I need it."
William Wilberforce had a seat in the British parliament when God said, "I need it" to stop the horrors of slave trading.
Menno Simons had an ability to write spiritual truth and God said, "I need it" to establish a new movement of true believers.
Martin Luther King had a preacher's voice and a passion for justice when God said, "I need it" to awaken a nation.
Dr. Schlichting had a heart for Hispanic people and God said, "I need it" to establish five churches around Reedley.
Horatio Aleman had a supped-up car with lots of chrome when God said, "I need it" to reach cruisers and gangsters for Jesus.

What's in your hand?
Read Luke 19:28-36

God's Plans and Purposes

A. Friends, there will be moments in your life, when God will look at what you have in your hand or in your pocket. He will see what is in your heart, or within your sphere of influence. The Lord will recognize that you have ability or a skill and he will say, "I need it." The Holy Spirit will whisper, "The Lord needs it."

Let's unpack this account that we call *The Triumphal Entry* for a few moments. What Jesus did on that day in Jerusalem had deep, deep meaning.

1. It was carefully planned.

Jesus didn't just think up this idea one moment and then send the disciples off to find his ride. I don't think there was ever a time when Jesus left things to the last minute so that his actions were impulsive. Oh he could have worked that way. But I rather believe that the phrase, "The Lord needs it" was a pre-arranged password chosen just for this day and this moment.

The assurance you can have when God asks something of you is that he has a plan. God is never haphazard in his work. Nothing ever takes him by surprise. He's never late and never in a hurry. Be assured that God knows what he is doing in your life. The question is, Will you let him have his way?

2. It was an act of great courage.

By this time in Jesus' ministry there was a bounty on his head. The religious leaders were so incensed at his popularity and his disregard for their legalistic interpretation of the Law that they were looking for the next opportunity to arrest him and kill him.

The most natural plan would have been for Jesus to slip into town under cover of darkness. It would have been the safe and prudent thing to get inside the city unnoticed through a back street or alley. But in a great act of courage Jesus rode in a procession with crowds greeting and praising him.

I would be less than forthright if I didn't say that at times what God asks of us requires courage. Christianity has always been a minority movement and not that popular with the establishment. We tend to forget that in America where freedom of worship and freedom of religion is guaranteed by a 200+ year old constitution. When Jesus says, "I need it" some courage will be required.

3. It was a deliberate claim to be king.

All through the O.T. God had made promises of a coming deliverer. The expectations of Messiah coming were particularly high at this time in Israel's history. And what Jesus did, the manner in which he came into Jerusalem, was a bold, clear statement of who he was.

It was not unheard of for a king to ride on a donkey, but it was more common to ride a horse – a symbol of power and conquest. A donkey was a symbol of peace. Isaiah predicted that God's

servant, the Messiah, would be the Prince of Peace, and here was Jesus declaring for the whole city to see, "I am the Prince of Peace, I am the King who comes in loving humility."

Here's the truth for us: Every time God asks to use what we have, it will be in line with his purpose. God has purpose behind everything he does; nothing God has ever done has been in vain or without meaning. So you can know that when God invites you into his service it will be for a great purpose. God fulfilled a promise in Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem and you can count on it: God always keeps his promises because they fulfill his purposes.

4. It was one last appeal.

One thing we often forget is the amazing patience of God. We see his judgment and forget that it comes at the end of great patience. Jesus came to Jerusalem that Palm Sunday with his heart open as if to say, "Will you not receive me? I'm coming once more to be your true king. Will you receive me?"

John writes in the opening to his Gospel, "He came to his own and his own did not receive him." The praise of the crowds would turn to hatred in only a few days, but Jesus offered them his love one more time.

When Jesus says of your resource, "I need it," be pretty sure that it's not the first time he's asked. We are slow to hear and even slower to answer. Many times God has to speak again and again before we are ready to hear his voice, whatever form that may take – circumstances, godly people, the Scriptures, or the inner urgings of the Holy Spirit. I thank God for his great patience.

Can I or Will I

A. It is not uncommon for us to look at our lives and ask questions like, "Can I make a difference? Can I love others that are hard to love? Can I keep going when life is so hard? Can I really change?"

I think God has a different question for us. His question is, "Will you?" God wants to know if you will be the one who reaches out to the hurting. He wants to know if you will answer "Yes" when he says, "I need that or I need you."

B. Remember Moses? He knew he couldn't do what God asked of him. His complaints seemed valid; he couldn't speak well, he was too old, and he had no desire to accomplish the task at hand and he basically said, "Here am I Lord, send Aaron."

He finally agreed after God permitted his brother Aaron to go along, but life didn't get easier. ***It got more difficult.*** On the journey back to Egypt he got into a terrible fight with his wife, and almost lost his children ([Exodus 3-4](#)). In Egypt the Israelites didn't trust him, Pharaoh didn't listen to him, and the magicians matched him. Moses turned to God again and asked, "What's up and why me?" (Paraphrase of [Exodus 5:22-23](#))

Introduction

What’s in your hand?

What if God said, “I need it”?

What if it was something of _____?

God doesn’t really _____ us. But throughout history he has used what people held in their “hands.”

God Plans and Purposes

In the Triumphal Entry we learn the meaning of Jesus action:

1. It was carefully _____

When God _____ something of you he always has a plan.

2. It was an act of great _____

Following God’s plan may _____ courage

3. It was a deliberate claim to be _____

Each time God asks to use us it will be in line with his _____
God’s purposes bring us into his promises

4. It was one last _____

When Jesus asks for your _____ it’s probably not the first time he has asked. He is amazingly _____

Can I or Will I

We often ask, _____ I?

God usually asks, _____ you?

Before life gets _____ it often gets more _____

What’s in your hand?

What do you hold that God could use?

What will you say when Jesus says, “The Lord needs it”?