

## WEEK SIX - What does the “coming kingdom” look like?

**Scripture:** Mark 11:1-11

**1** When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples **2** and said to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. **3** If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’” **4** They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, **5** some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” **6** They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. **7** Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. **8** Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. **9** Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! **10** Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” **11** Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

### Historical Background

*The Maccabees were a group of Jews led by Judas Maccabeus, who led the Jewish revolt against the Syrians in 164 BCE. The Syrian leader Antiochus IV tried to force the Jews to adopt Greek practices and turned the Jerusalem Temple into a shrine to Zeus. Judas and others revolted and, under his leadership, the Jews recaptured and rededicated the Temple in Jerusalem. This is the basis for the Jewish festival of Hanukkah.*

### Discussion Questions

1. What stood out to you from Dr. Blount’s reflections?
2. Dr. Blount believes Jesus devised a plan to enter the city safely, which included using a particular colt.
  - a. What do you think about Dr. Blount’s assessment? Does this seem plausible to you?
  - b. How might this highlight the humanity of Jesus?
3. Dr. Blount thinks the crowd genuinely believes Jesus represents “God’s messianic intent for the world” in this passage, but they don’t believe he’s the Son of God.
  - a. How might this understanding of the crowd foster a more sympathetic reading of their actions? (Remember - these are the same people who will call for Jesus’ crucifixion days later.)
  - b. What meaning arises when we see ourselves as the crowd?
4. How do we respond when God’s “new way” doesn’t align with our expectations?

5. Dr. Blount claims that if we focus on Jesus' interactions with people in Mark's Gospel, we can better embrace God's vision for the coming Kingdom of God.
  - a. How can we emulate these interactions in our own lives? What happens to us when we relate to people the way Jesus related to people?
  - b. How do we build relationships with people who are labeled as outsiders?
  - c. How do we enable "God's future to break into the present" of our lives?  
The life of our community? Our nation?
5. How does this passage inform our journey with Christ through Lent?
  - a. Dr. Blount encourages us to focus on Jesus' relationship with one marginalized community during the season of Lent.
  - b. What would it look like to "take on" that commitment in our own community during Lent?