



Discipleship **Ideas for the Iowa District West**

Introduction

The following “Discipleship Ideas” from the readings are not intended for any other purpose than to provide ideas of application from each reading that may be included in the taught and preached Word for this particular Sunday to help teach a life of discipleship. L.C.M.S. pastors are gifted at preaching Law and Gospel, but often lack in the matter of personal applications to the Word. This tool is for no other reason than to offer some seeds of thought to do that.

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT - SERIES C
November 29, 2015

From C.P.H. About the Cover: The shouts of the people, particularly the children, resounded around His ears: “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!” At the start of this Advent season, we remember the humble way our King rode into Jerusalem to offer His life as a sacrifice, and we even take up their words on our lips to greet the King, who comes to us still in His Means of Grace.

First Reading; Jeremiah 33:14–16

¹⁴“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’”

1st Reading Discipleship Notes: Jeremiah’s prophetic promise of the messiah cannot be more clearly proclaimed than it is in this reading. But what application can one glean from such a reading? Perhaps it lies in verse 16 where it claims that in those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell securely. The Jerusalem talked about here is the Church. The world is saved because of Jesus Christ and the Church of Jesus Christ does dwell securely. An application for modern day followers of Christ is to dwell in that security. That doesn’t mean to

sit back and do nothing, but it does mean that being assured of our salvation, we can now go about the business of making the Gospel known to the world without fear, without hesitation, without question and without dread because we are secure in our salvation and we are at peace with God.

Epistle Reading 1 Thessalonians 3:9–13

⁹ What thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, ¹⁰as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?

¹¹Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, ¹²and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, ¹³so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Epistle Discipleship Notes: Paul clearly offers application for the believer in this reading as he first of all directs our thoughts to prayer and thanksgiving for the work of fellow believers and the fact that God is causing increased abundance of love for one another. As the day of the Lord approaches with haste, this kind of encouragement in prayer remains high on a priority list of things disciples of the Living Lord Jesus can and should be doing. Because the love of Christ has been given us, we are empowered to carry this kind of response to God in behalf of others and rejoice in the constant and consistent mercy of our God.

Gospel Reading: Luke 19:28–40

²⁸ When he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

²⁹When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰saying, "Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.'" ³²So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. ³³And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" ³⁴And they said, "The Lord has need of it." ³⁵And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. ³⁶And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. ³⁷As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, ³⁸saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" ³⁹And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." ⁴⁰He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

Gospel Discipleship Notes: The account of Palm Sunday used for the first Sunday in Advent certainly seems out of place with the exception that we can see the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ as King from an earthly perspective. When He comes again, it will not be humble and riding on a donkey, but will be with glory and coming in the clouds. Then as was true in our text, there will be rejoicing and praising going on among the believers. But why wait until then? Perhaps the application best suited for this reading lies in the response of God's people at the time of this Palm Sunday parade. It lies in the eagerness of God's people to praise God for His salvation. Anymore it seems the matter of praise is often reserved for special occasions. But each time we gather around Word and sacraments is a special occasion and should be viewed as such. By the grace of God at work in our hearts and minds, each worship opportunity can become a time of praise and rejoicing in the mercy of our Living Lord.

Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

Read **Jeremiah 33:14–16**

¹⁴“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’”

1. What is meant by “the days are coming” in the first verse of this reading?
2. What is meant by the “righteous Branch” in this reading?
3. What is meant by “Judah” and “Jerusalem” in this reading?
4. What does “name by which it will be called” imply?
5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

Read **1 Thessalonians 3:9–13**

⁹ What thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, ¹⁰as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?

¹¹Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, ¹²and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, ¹³so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

6. What does it mean to feel joy for the sake of someone before God?
7. How does one supply what is lacking in another’s faith?
8. What does it look like to “increase and abound in love”?
9. What does it mean for God to “establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God”?
10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

READ: **Luke 19:28–40**

²⁸ When he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

²⁹When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰saying, "Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.'" ³²So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. ³³And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" ³⁴And they said, "The Lord has need of it." ³⁵And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. ³⁶And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. ³⁷As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, ³⁸saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" ³⁹And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." ⁴⁰He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

11. What is the association we might find with Palm Sunday and Advent?
12. Why did the multitude of the disciples begin to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice?
13. How might that response of the disciples translate to modern day disciples' lives?
14. There seems to be a connection to what Jesus responded to the Pharisees about stones crying out and what is recorded in Habakkuk 2:11. What do both of these readings say about our God?
15. What application of this Gospel reading will you apply to your life as a result of hearing it today?

Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline (Leader's Guide)

Read **Jeremiah 33:14–16**

¹⁴"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'"

1. What is meant by "the days are coming" in the first verse of this reading?

The promise made to the patriarchs, to David, and to the ancient people of Israel was coming yet in the future, but it was coming. Sinful people have difficulty waiting on God, but this reading reassured the listener that God's promise was still secure. The salvation of our God was still coming in spite of the fact that it seemed as though it would never arrive.

2. What is meant by the "righteous Branch" in this reading?

This is terminology pertaining to the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

3. What is meant by "Judah" and "Jerusalem" in this reading?

Judah was the tribe of promise and Jerusalem was the city of our God or the Church. It can therefore be understood that Judah is the people of God's promise and Jerusalem is the Church on earth.

4. What does "name by which it will be called" imply?

This Church is named after Christ. We are the Christian Church. We are also made righteous because of Christ. Therefore the name, "The Lord is our righteousness" implies what Christ has done for us in making us righteous.

5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

Read: **1 Thessalonians 3:9–13**

⁹ What thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, ¹⁰as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?

¹¹Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, ¹²and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, ¹³so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

6. What does it mean to feel joy for the sake of someone before God?

This is to rejoice and be glad for the salvation God has given to other people. To rejoice in that is to feel this joy that Paul felt. This is also a feeling that people in the Church ought to feel about others and something that needs to be cultivated.

7. How does one supply what is lacking in another's faith?

This can only be done through the continued teaching and proclamation of God's Word.

8. What does it look like to "increase and abound in love"?

Answers will vary, but it is a good time to do some brainstorming about how this can be done both personally and corporately as a congregation.

9. What does it mean for God to "establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God"?

It means to receive God's forgiveness and eternal life in us through His Word and Sacraments.

10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

READ: Luke 19:28–40

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highest!" ³⁹And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." ⁴⁰He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

11. What is the association we might find with Palm Sunday and Advent?

Advent means "come to" and as Jesus came to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, we also consider how during Advent, we consider how God in Christ Jesus came to earth in the birth of Jesus, child of Mary.

12. Why did the multitude of the disciples begin to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice?

According to the reading, they did so because of the mighty works they had seen Jesus do.

13. How might that response of the disciples translate to modern day disciples' lives?

We also have experienced the mighty works of God in our own lives, having redeemed us and making us His own in Holy Baptism. We, too, ought to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice.

14. There seems to be a connection to what Jesus responded to the Pharisees about stones crying out and what is recorded in Habakkuk 2:11. What do both of these reading say about our God?

They both say that even the creation recognizes the mighty works of our God and cries out in praise and honor to God.

15. What application of this Gospel reading will you apply to your life as a result of hearing it today?

Discipleship Bulletin Blub

Advent means to “come to” someone or to something. As we begin the season of Advent, we think of Christ “coming to” this world for the sake of the salvation of all mankind. We also consider the fact that He has promised to come again to judge both the living and the dead. Today we focus on the coming of Christ which is reason for believers to rejoice and praise God. This is the response of God’s people for all the mighty works He has done.

Discipleship Prayer Thought

O Lord, grant us Your grace to rejoice and praise You for the mighty works You have done for us in sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, to become our righteousness and provide our salvation. As the arm of God, help us to always rejoice in the salvation You have given and find great joy as well in the salvation of others around us. Fill us with joy and a zeal to make that joy known to those who have not come to know their salvation in Jesus’ name. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**