

Here's a guide to help your small groups dig deeper into Pastor Reuben's powerful message, "Donkeys for Jesus." Our prayer is that this will help your group members connect with the Lord, with His Word, and with each other, and ultimately, be transformed more into His likeness. Remember, you're not there to re-preach the sermon, but to facilitate a Holy Spirit-led discussion where everyone can share and grow. Trust the Spirit to lead!

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## Small Group Study Guide: Donkeys for Jesus

**Speaker:** Pastor Reuben **Main Scripture Passages:** Luke 19:29-46; Zechariah 9:9; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29; 1 Peter 5:5-8

**Goal for this Session:** To help group members understand that God sees, chooses, and uses seemingly ordinary, "tied-up," and even "stubborn" people for His glorious purposes, and to encourage them to live freely in His presence, casting their cares on Him and becoming a "house of prayer."

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### Getting Started (10-15 minutes)

#### 1. Welcome & Icebreaker:

- Greet everyone warmly. If there are new people, make sure they feel welcome and do brief introductions.
- **Icebreaker Question:** Pastor Reuben talked about donkeys being seen as foolish, stubborn, and burden-bearers. If you had to compare yourself to an animal right now (in a light-hearted way!), what animal would it be and why?

#### 2. Opening Prayer:

- Leader (or invite someone else) to open in prayer.
  - *Suggested Prayer Focus:* "Father, thank You for Your Word. Holy Spirit, we invite You into our discussion tonight. Open our hearts and minds to understand what You want to teach us. Help us to be honest, to listen to one another, and to be transformed by Your truth. Give us ears to hear what You are saying to Your church and to us individually. In Jesus' name, Amen."
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### Connecting with the Message (10-15 minutes)

#### 1. Sermon Recall:

- Ask the group: "What was one key point or illustration from Pastor Reuben's sermon 'Donkeys for Jesus' that really stood out to you or challenged you this past Sunday?"
- (Allow 2-3 people to share briefly).

## 2. Main Idea:

- Leader: "Pastor Reuben powerfully reminded us that just like Jesus saw and chose a humble, tied-up donkey to carry Him into Jerusalem, He sees us in our ordinary lives, with our struggles and insecurities. He desires to 'untie' us from what binds us, not for our own pleasure, but for His divine purpose – to carry His presence and be used by Him."
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### Digging into God's Word & Discussion (30-40 minutes)

- Have someone read the selected passages aloud before discussing the related questions. Encourage members to have their Bibles open.

#### SECTION 1: Chosen for Purpose

- **Read Aloud:** Luke 19:29-35
  - Verse 30 mentions a colt "on which no one has ever sat." Pastor Reuben highlighted this. Why do you think it was important that the donkey was previously unused?
  - Jesus said, "The Lord has need of him" (v. 31, 34). How does it make you feel to know that the Lord has need of *you*? Does this surprise you? Why or why not?
- **Read Aloud:** 1 Corinthians 1:26-29
  - Pastor Reuben said, "The people who think they're somebody without God, they're disqualified." And, "Rather than say, 'What can God do with me? I've got nothing to offer him. I'm a nobody,' you qualify."
  - How do these verses in 1 Corinthians affirm what Pastor Reuben taught?
  - Can you share a time when you felt unqualified, yet God used you anyway? Or a time you saw God use someone others might have overlooked?

#### SECTION 2: Set Free to Carry His Presence

- Pastor Reuben spoke about the donkey being "tied up" and how God wants to "set donkeys free." (Referencing Luke 4:18 - "proclaim release to captives...to set free all those who are oppressed.")
  - What are some things that can "tie us up" and keep us from being fully available for God's use today (e.g., fear, worry, past hurts, sin, wrong mindsets)?
  - The disciples put their garments on the colt, and the crowd spread clothes on the road. Pastor Reuben linked these garments to "the garment of grace, the robe of righteousness, the garments of salvation" and praise.
  - How does "putting on" praise and righteousness change our perspective and prepare us to "carry" Christ's presence?

- The honor the donkey received was because of *who it carried*. How can we remember that any 'honor' or 'success' we experience in serving God is because of Him in us, not our own abilities?

### SECTION 3: Exchanging Burdens & Living Care-Free in Him

- **Read Aloud:** 1 Peter 5:6-8
  - Pastor Reuben said Jesus was "not a burden to the donkey" and that "in his presence, there's an exchange of burdens." He highlighted, "You can't receive His care unless you cast your care upon Him."
  - What does it practically look like to "cast all your care upon Him"? Can you share an example from your life?
  - Verse 8 gives a serious warning about the devil seeking whom he may devour, in the context of those who *don't* cast their cares. Why do you think holding onto our worries makes us vulnerable to the enemy?
  - How does humility (v.6) relate to casting our cares on God?

### SECTION 4: Becoming a House of Prayer

- **Read Aloud:** Luke 19:45-46
  - Jesus cleansed the temple, declaring, "My house is a house of prayer." Pastor Reuben emphasized that *we* are God's temple.
  - What kinds of "merchandise" or "thievery" (things that distract or take what belongs to God) can clutter our hearts and prevent us from being a true "house of prayer"?
  - Pastor Reuben said, "Prayer really is the language of humility. You're saying, 'God, I depend upon you, I need you.'" How can we cultivate a prayer life that is built on dependence and fellowship, rather than just duty or a list of requests?

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### Living it Out (10-15 minutes)

#### 1. Personal Reflection & Action:

- "Pastor Reuben challenged us with the idea that God sees us, wants to untie us, and use us for His glory, making us a people of prayer who cast our cares on Him."
- Ask group members to silently consider for a moment:
  - Is there one "rope" (a fear, a burden, a sin) that you feel the Holy Spirit highlighting, from which you need Jesus to set you free this week?
  - What is one specific care you need to consciously "cast" on Jesus this week?
  - What is one practical step you can take to make your heart more of a "house of prayer"?

#### 2. Share (Optional):

- "If you feel comfortable, would anyone like to share one area they want to focus on applying this week?" (This is not to pressure, but to provide an opportunity for accountability and shared prayer).
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### Prayer Together (10-15 minutes)

- Transition into a time of prayer. You can pray as a whole group or break into smaller groups of 2-3.
  - **Suggested Prayer Points:**
    - Thank God for seeing us and choosing us despite our weaknesses.
    - Ask for His help to identify and be set free from anything that "ties us up."
    - Pray for a fresh anointing to "carry His presence" with humility and joy.
    - Pray for grace to consistently cast our cares upon Him and walk in His peace.
    - Ask for a renewed desire and discipline to be a "house of prayer," both individually and as a church.
    - Pray for boldness to be "donkeys for Jesus," willing to be used by Him in everyday life to show His love and truth to others.
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### Closing (5 minutes)

- Encourage everyone to reflect on the message and their commitments throughout the week.
  - Remind them of any church announcements or upcoming events.
  - Close with a blessing: "May the Lord Jesus, who rode on a donkey to bring salvation, ride in and through your lives this week. May you experience His freedom, carry His presence with joy, and find deep rest as you cast all your cares upon Him. And may you be a house of prayer, filled with His Spirit. Amen."
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### Tips for Leaders:

- **Prepare your heart:** Pray before the group meets. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you.
- **You are a facilitator, not a teacher:** Your role is to guide the discussion, not to have all the answers. Encourage participation from everyone.
- **Listen well:** Pay attention to what people are sharing. Ask clarifying questions if needed.
- **Create a safe space:** Emphasize grace and confidentiality. People share more openly when they feel safe.
- **Manage time wisely:** Gently guide the conversation to cover the main points, but be flexible if the Spirit is clearly moving in a particular area.
- **Point to Jesus:** In all things, keep the focus on Christ and His Word.
- **Embrace the "Donkey" principle:** You don't have to be perfect to lead; you just have to be willing to be used by Him!

God bless you as you lead your groups!