



Sermon Discussion Guide

An Entrance We'll Never Forget . . .

And Not What Anyone Expected

Jesus Makes Headlines – Part 5

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*“Jesus called out to them, ‘Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!’
And they left their nets at once and followed him.” Matthew 4:19-20 (NLT)*

The three groups who witnessed Jesus make his triumphal entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday had greatly differing reactions! The crowd, for example, was asking, “What’s in it for me?” The religious leaders were saying, “I’m in control!” The disciples were thinking, “Not like this!” Today, when Jesus enters our lives or situations, we find that: (1) Jesus creates a beautiful disruption, (2) Jesus brings a new perspective, and (3) Jesus offers us a Hosanna moment when we surrender. He gives us relief from the crushing weight of life without God and room to breathe in this world.

OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.

“Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the King of Israel.” John 12:13b (NIV)

1. Reading the verse above, picture in your mind the scene that is unfolding. Describe this scene and imagery in your group. How does it make you feel?

*“Rejoice, O people of Zion! Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you.
He is righteous and victorious, yet he is humble, riding on a donkey – riding on a donkey’s colt.” Zechariah 9:9 (NLT)*

2. John 19:15a (NIV) says, *“But they shouted, ‘Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!’”* Discuss the contrast in feelings that this verse evokes compared to John 12:13b above. Why did the Jews turn against Jesus? What did they expect? Read Zechariah 9:9 above. Do you think they expected Jesus to be riding on a donkey’s colt? Why or why not? Discuss how their self-centeredness had led them to self-deception.
3. In Matthew 4:19-20 above, Jesus created a beautiful disruption for the disciples when he called them to leave their predictable lives and follow him. He inspired them to trade their old ways of fishing with new ways of being God’s fishermen. Disruptions in our lives occur that at first we do not perceive as beautiful, but after walking through them with faith in God, we find the beauty in them. Can you think of a disruption that you have experienced that was transformed into a “beautiful disruption” through your faith in God? What ingrained patterns or habits surfaced that you were able to recognize and set aside – replacing them with God’s thinking?

“He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, ‘My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.’” Matthew 26:39 (NLT)

4. In the scripture above, Matthew describes Jesus’ complete and total surrender. Think about your relationship with Jesus and what you have surrendered to him. What are the boundaries or limits in what you have surrendered? How could surrendering to Jesus give you room to breathe – a Hosanna moment at your darkest hour?

Diving Deeper (optional)

REVIEW ANY ASSIGNMENTS OR COMMITMENTS MADE DURING YOUR PREVIOUS MEETING.

When we invite Jesus into our lives, he will beautifully disrupt it. This disruption will:

1. Challenge our control.
2. Reveal areas of deception.
3. Exchange our desires for his desires.

How have you seen this play out in your lives or in the lives of others? What would your prayer of surrender be?



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Sermon Discussion Guide Leader Notes

Suggestions for This Week’s Study

- Icebreaker:** What’s the most interesting entrance you’ve ever made?
- Goals:** Realize that just as in life, Jesus’ ministry and death were not what was expected by all involved.
- Final Prayer:** Heavenly Father, we surrender our lives to Jesus so that he may bring us new perspectives by offering us a Hosanna moment (giving us relief from crushing weight and room to breathe).

Preparing to Lead Your Group

- ✓ **PRAY** for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God’s wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God’s instrument to lead the group to greater understanding and a willingness to commit to becoming more like God. Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group.
- ✓ **PLAN** where you want to take your group in the next 60-90 days. Is your group strong in some areas and weak in others? How can you challenge the members to live more balanced Christian lives? Consider God’s five purposes for the church: Fellowship, Discipleship, Ministry, Mission and Worship, and make a plan to encourage your group members to growth and commitment in their weak areas.
- ✓ **PONDER YOUR PROGRESS** after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what didn’t. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. Consider whether your plan is being effective in moving the group to greater understanding and commitment. How are you doing with leading the discussion: is it stimulating, challenging, and meaningful? Are you able to keep the group on track? Do you need to make some changes?

Using This Sermon Discussion Guide

- Talk It Over is a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. We’ve designed it so it can be completed easily within 30-45 minutes. As the discussion leader, you should preview and evaluate the questions based on the needs of your group. Decide in advance what is most important to focus on, should time not allow for the entire lesson.
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, consider using the Diving Deeper section or add additional Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- The questions relating to Bible study methods are helpful to develop Bible literacy and spiritual maturity in our lives. You can help your group be aware of their needs in these areas by using these questions as a regular part of each discussion.
- Personal applications are essential for growth and should be included in every discussion. When discussing how they will apply principles, group members may state very general goals such as “I need to spend more time in prayer.” It is important for you to help people make goals that are very specific and commit to specific plans of action by asking, for example, “How are you going to begin?” An example is to get up 25 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- Your goal as the leader is to bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their needs for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.