



Coming King To Crucify Him

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GROUP ICE BREAKER

What's the most selfless act someone has done for you? What impact did it have on you?

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- I will practice giving generously in secret.
- I will take steps toward being more generous.
- I will use technology to translate good intentions into action.

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Jerusalem was overflowing with pilgrims to celebrate Passover. The crowd was growing in excitement that Jesus was the promised Messiah who would bring the kingdom of God and overthrow Rome. They laid palm branches on the road as Jesus approaches, representing victory and as a symbol of revolution. Expectation was building of what Jesus must have come to do; save them!

John, in a moment of hindsight, says the disciples didn't understand what was happening. This is the tension when you're so caught up in the moment, you lose sight of God's movement; when your expectations and His intentions are not in alignment.

Jesus reflects on his life's purpose and why he came. He knows his death is coming. He sees the cross on the horizon. He's troubled. Why? Because in his death, he took on the total weight and penalty of sin past, present, and future. But he does not doubt, and reaffirms "it was for this reason" he had come.

The people in the crowd didn't understand either. This wasn't adding up to their expectation of what a coming king would do. Kings conquer, they don't come to die. They ask, "Who is this 'Son of Man'?" Jesus responds to understand that, you have to believe. As the week wore on, the palm branches were forgotten, and days later, would be traded for the wood of the tree and Jesus would be hanging on a cross.

Who is Jesus to you? He claimed to be God. That's either true or it's not. The "trilemma" argument says, If Jesus is not God, he would either be a *fraud* or a *fanatic*. If Jesus is God, then he's your greatest *Friend*. If Jesus is a fraud, he has pulled off the greatest scam the world has ever seen and Christianity is a hoax. If a fanatic, he was divorced from reality and simply a man with a delusional disorder. But if he's neither of those, Jesus is a Friend.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think of a situation in which you expected to receive something or for something to happen, but it didn't. How did it make you feel? Have you had an experience like this with Jesus? How did it make you feel?
2. What kind of king were the people expecting Jesus to be when he entered Jerusalem? Read Zechariah 9:9. What kind of king did he arrive as?
3. Read Matthew 16:21-22, 17:22-23 and 20:17-19. Why do you think the disciples, and the crowd, did not understand what Jesus was saying?
4. Does it surprise you that Jesus was "troubled" at the thought of his approaching death (John 12:27)? How would you explain Jesus' emotion?
5. The crowd in Jerusalem asked the most important question any of us could ever ask: who is this "Son of Man," in essence, who is Jesus? If someone were to ask you, how would you respond?
6. Read John 1:1-2, 8:58, 10:30, and 12:44-45, Why does it matter that Jesus made the claim to be God?
7. What keeps people from believing who Jesus is? How did you come to faith in Jesus?

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)

Use these as a guide to take your next step and commit to what you learned this week:

- I will read John 12-19 this week.
- I will pray that my expectations and God's intentions are in alignment.
- I will tell someone of my decision to follow Jesus.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- John 20:30-31
- John 12:9
- John 12:12-36
- John 12:44-45
- Zechariah 9:9
- Romans 6:3-4
- Matthew 26:38-39
- John 19:12-16
- John 15:13

PRAYER REQUESTS

Take time to share how you can be praying for each other over the next week:

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