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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PALM SUNDAY | 04.14.2019

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Landing Point: Declare to live in peace, freedom, salvation and victory through life in Jesus Christ.

Read: Matthew 21:1-11

When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,² saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me.³ If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.”⁴ This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

*⁵“Say to the daughter of Zion,
‘Behold your King is coming to you,
Gentle, and mounted on a donkey,
Even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’”*

⁶The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them,⁷ and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats.⁸ Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road.⁹ The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David;

*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord;
Hosanna in the highest!”*

¹⁰When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?”¹¹ And the crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.”

LIVE IN PEACE

Jesus chose to enter Jerusalem riding a donkey. Kings of war ride horses, but a king on a donkey symbolized peace. From His birth to His death, Jesus came to give peace.

Zechariah 9:9-10- Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble and mounted on a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem; and the bow of war will be cut off, and He will speak peace to the nations; and His dominion will be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.



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Jesus came to bring peace:

Peace with God | Jesus became our sin offering, breaking the curse of sin and the reign of Satan and death.

Peace with yourself | Stress, fear, anxiety, worry, guilt and shame rob us of peace within. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, overcomes it all.

Peace with others | We carry hate, blame, anger, division, and simply cannot get along with others. We are united because of our common failure and find peace in Jesus our Savior.

Peace in any circumstance | Jesus is peace. Peace that passes understanding is ours through His generous love for us.

Isaiah 26:3- The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace because he trusts in You.

Q: "I just need peace." What are the circumstances or issues in your life that leave you playing that statement over and over in your head?

Q: What role should trust play in being kept in the perfect peace of the Father?

LIVE IN FREEDOM

Verses 7-8 tell us that the disciples put their coats on the donkey to provide Jesus with a saddle of sorts, but the people also spread their coats in the road. This spreading of their garments was a symbol of submission. We might say they were “rolling out the red carpet” for Jesus. (Also, see 2 Kings 9:6-8, 13 where Elisha anointed Jehu as King. Jehu destroyed the evil household of Ahab and all his wicked influence.)

The people are demonstrating submission to King Jesus. His entry is triumphant as it announces His mission to destroy the work of the enemy and bring freedom to captives.

John 12:31 - Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.



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John 14:30 - I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming and he has nothing in Me.

John 16:11 - and concerning judgment because the ruler of this world has been judged.

1 John 3:8 - the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.

Q: What are the works of the devil in our lives? Where does he work to steal, kill, destroy and enslave us?

Q: "In Jesus, you have been given the right to resist temptation." What about this statement resonates with you? What brings tension or doubts?

Q: The key to freedom is walking in surrender to Jesus daily. What might be at least one "coat" (v. 7-8) that you need to lay down before Jesus.

LIVE IN SALVATION

The people shouted "Hosanna" as Jesus entered the city that day, which means, "deliver us or save us." The Hebrew plea is in a passive form meaning, "We cannot save ourselves, only You can do this! Liberate us! Save us from evil and our troubles!" The shouts were at such a level that the religious leaders told Jesus to stop the crowd from shouting. Here's how Jesus replied:

Luke 19:39-40- Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, Teacher, rebuke Your disciples. But Jesus answered, I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!

Jesus came to save you from sin | Jesus came to save us from the *penalty* of sin (the wages of our sin is spiritual death), the *power* of sin (we get enslaved to sin, have besetting sins, and can be overwhelmed with temptation), and the *presence* of sin (we live in a fallen world that will one day be fully restored when Jesus comes back again).

Jesus came to save you from religion - Jesus never meant for you to try to please him or earn your way to Him. He wants you to rest in His love for you.



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Matthew 11:28-29- Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Jesus came to save you from passing worldly pleasures for the path of life - Jesus's plan for you includes fullness of joy and pleasures forever from the Father's hand as you walk the path of true life.

Psalm 16:11- You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy, in Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

Q: What are the smoke and mirrors of happiness and joy that the world sells us, and we have bought into?

Q: How might religion become a barrier to experiencing salvation?

Q: If Jesus was sitting in your small group, and you were shouting, “Hosanna!” (deliver us!), what would you ask deliverance from?

LIVE IN VICTORY

The people brought palm branches when Jesus entered the city that day, symbolizing victory, triumph, peace and eternal life. It was common practice in the ancient world to welcome home a king or war hero by laying out a path of branches for him. Romans honored champions of the games with palm branches. Palm branches also reminded the people of the feast of booths, a celebration of God's victory over the gods of Egypt during the Exodus. Simply put, the Palm branches meant, “Victory is assured.” Palm Sunday is “Victory Sunday!”

Jesus has assured you of victory. You are an overcomer. You are more than a conqueror. The battle may be fierce and dark, but you will overcome.

1 John 5:4-5- For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Q: What implications does 1 John 5:4-5 have for your private world? Relationships at home or work?



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PRAYERS OF DECLARATION

As you begin Holy Week pray that the Lord would keep you from a superficial faith like those that shouted "Hosanna" then quickly shouted "Crucify Him" a few days later. Pray that your Father would write stories of release and life change in and through you. Pray these powerful yet simple prayers of declaration to your Heavenly Father:

"God, I declare that you are peace. Thank you that I live in peace over _____ because of Jesus."

"God, I declare that you are freedom. Thank you that I live in freedom over _____ because of Jesus."

"God, I declare that you are salvation. Thank you that I have spiritual life and not spiritual death because of Jesus."

"God, I declare that you are victorious. Thank you that I have victory over _____ because of Jesus."

"God, I will live my life based upon what Jesus has done for me. In Jesus's name I pray, Amen."