

DIGGING DEEPER



Palm Sunday: When God's Plan Looks Like Disappointment

Mar 29, 2026

This exploration of Palm Sunday invites us to experience the triumphal entry with fresh eyes, seeing it as those who lived it did—without knowing the ending. We discover that the crowds welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem carried heavy historical baggage: memories of the Maccabean revolt that had freed them from oppression just generations earlier, and the story of King Jehu whose coronation involved cloaks laid on the ground before swift and violent conquest. Against this backdrop, Jesus' choice to enter on a humble donkey rather than a war chariot becomes profoundly significant. The disciples and crowds expected political liberation, military victory, and immediate restoration of God's kingdom. Instead, within days, they faced devastating disappointment as Jesus was arrested and crucified. This message challenges us to wrestle with a crucial question: How do we handle disappointment when God's plan looks nothing like what we expected? We learn that God never promised to reconcile everything here on earth—that's reserved for eternity. More importantly, we're reminded that God often has a bigger, different, and better plan than we can imagine. When our prayers go unanswered the way we hoped, when doors close that seemed perfectly aligned with God's will, we haven't slipped off God's radar. Sometimes what feels like being lost or forgotten is actually God positioning us exactly where we need to be for purposes we can't yet see.

How does knowing the outcome of Jesus's story affect the way we read and

1. experience the triumphal entry, and what might we miss by always viewing it through the lens of the resurrection?

The Jewish people had experienced freedom through violent uprising with the Maccabees.

2. How might this historical context have shaped their expectations of Jesus as he entered Jerusalem?

Jesus told his disciples exactly what would happen in Jerusalem, yet they completely missed it. What prevents us from hearing or accepting God's plans when they don't align with our expectations?

- 3.

The sermon suggests that God doesn't reconcile everything here on earth, but in eternity. How does this perspective change the way we process disappointment, suffering, and unanswered prayers?

- 4.

When have you experienced a time where what felt like God's clear direction led to disappointment, and how did you reconcile that with your faith?

- 5.

The disciples expected conquest and restoration but received crucifixion instead. How do we distinguish between our own desires and God's actual plan for our lives?

- 6.

Pastor Daniel describes feeling forgotten by God while working in Fort McMurray, only to later see God's purpose. How can we maintain faith during seasons when God's plan is unclear or seemingly absent?

- 7.

Jesus chose to enter Jerusalem on a humble donkey rather than a war chariot. What does this choice reveal about the nature of God's kingdom versus human expectations of power and victory?

- 8.

The sermon mentions that God called Pastor Daniel to minister to people who are hardened and obstinate. How might God be calling you to serve in places or with people that seem resistant or difficult?

- 9.

If the stones would cry out in worship if the disciples stayed silent, what does this say about the inevitability of God's plan and our role in participating in it?

- 10.

Remember...

“When I look at the story of Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey, it points me to see a God with a plan that's bigger. A God with a plan that when we are disappointed and devastated and let down, we can remember that God is bigger.”