

5-Day Devotional: Following the Unexpected King

Day 1: The King We Don't Expect

Reading: Matthew 21:1-11; Zechariah 9:9

Devotional: Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey—not the war horse of conquest, but the humble mount of peace. The crowds expected a political deliverer, but God sent a servant king. How often do we do the same? We want Jesus to bless our plans rather than surrender to His. We celebrate Him while misunderstanding Him. This week, ask yourself: Am I following Jesus for who He is, or for who I want Him to be? The king who arrives on a donkey is exactly the Savior we need—one who comes in humility to give His life for ours. Let go of your expectations and embrace the Jesus of Scripture, even when He doesn't match your version of victory.

Day 2: Humility Over Power

Reading: Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 10:42-45

Devotional: Jesus, though equal with God, emptied Himself and took the form of a servant. He came not to be served but to serve and give His life as a ransom. This is the heart of our King—humility that leads to sacrifice. The world teaches us to grasp for power, control, and recognition, but Jesus shows us a different way. True greatness is found in surrender, not dominance. Where in your life are you grasping for control instead of trusting God's way? Following Jesus means embracing His humble path, even when it costs us our pride, our plans, or our comfort. The way down is actually the way up in God's kingdom.

Day 3: When Reality Doesn't Match Expectations

Reading: John 6:14-15, 60-69; Luke 24:13-27

Devotional: The crowds wanted to make Jesus king by force, but He withdrew. Even His disciples struggled when His teaching became difficult. Many walked away because Jesus wasn't who they expected. The Emmaus road disciples were confused because their Messiah had died instead of conquering. Yet Jesus patiently revealed how all Scripture pointed to His suffering and glory. When God doesn't move how you expected, do you adjust your expectations or walk away? Faith isn't demanding God follow your GPS; it's trusting His route even when it requires recalculating everything you thought you knew. Jesus asks: "Will you also go away?" May our answer be Peter's: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

Day 4: Surrendering Control for Security

Reading: Proverbs 3:5-8; Romans 12:1-2

Devotional: We chase control thinking it will bring security, but control is an illusion that never delivers peace. True security comes from surrendering to the One who holds all things. Paul urges

us to present our bodies as living sacrifices—not dead sacrifices, but daily, active surrender. This means releasing our version of how life should go and trusting Jesus, even when His way is slower, harder, or costlier than expected. What are you holding onto that God is asking you to release? Perhaps it's a relationship, a plan, a dream, or simply the need to understand everything. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. His security surpasses any control we could manufacture.

Day 5: The Road to the Cross

Reading: Matthew 27:15-26; Isaiah 53:1-12

Devotional: The same crowd that shouted "Hosanna" would soon shout "Crucify Him." When Jesus didn't meet their expectations, they rejected Him. But Jesus didn't change course. He stayed on the road leading to the cross because He knew what we needed—not political victory, but victory over sin and death. The king they didn't expect was exactly the Savior we needed. This Holy Week, follow Jesus to the cross. It won't look like victory until Sunday morning, but that's where true life is found. Perhaps following this King means obedience you've been avoiding—a conversation, an apology, a step of faith. Jesus doesn't give us what we want; He gives us what we were made for: life with Him. Will you follow Him, even when He's not what you expected?