



Discussion Guide — tempted+tried (week 6)

Date: March 29, 2026

Series: tempted+tried

Message: To be Obedient or Opportunistic

Scripture: Luke 19:28-44 (NRSVue)

Opening Prayer

God of peace, we come with loud lives and crowded hearts. Quiet what distracts us, soften what is hardened, and open our eyes to “the things that make for peace.” Lead us past performance and into obedience, past the parade and into your healing love. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Introduction & Context

Palm Sunday begins in celebration. Branches. “Hosanna.” A city full of longing and hope. But Luke tells the story with an emotional turn: Jesus weeps as he looks over Jerusalem. His tears reveal a truth we struggle to accept—how easily we miss who Jesus is and what he is offering.

The crowd’s prayer—“Save us!”—is sincere, but it often comes with expectations. We want God to save us quickly, clearly, and on our terms. Jesus enters as king in humility, refusing spectacle and force. He offers shalom: peace as wholeness, repair, and life put back together.

This is the Palm Sunday tension: obedience or opportunism. Both can look faithful on the surface. Both can sound convincing. The difference is the root—God’s will or our desire for control. Holy Week invites us to keep walking with Jesus past the parade, into truth-telling, confession, and healing.



Discussion Questions

1) Enter the Story

1. When you picture Palm Sunday, what comes most naturally to you—celebration, confusion, skepticism, hope, something else? Why?
2. The message described crowds as “amplifiers.” Where have you felt that lately—social media, news, family systems, work, church, friendships? What gets louder in you when the crowd forms?
3. Luke includes a surprising detail: Jesus *weeps*. What do you think moves Jesus to tears in this passage? What does that reveal about Jesus’ heart?

2) The Tension

4. In your own words, what’s the difference between obedience and opportunism? Where do they get confused in everyday life?
5. “Hosanna” means “Save us.” What are the “fine print” expectations you’re tempted to attach to that prayer? (Save me from... save me by... save me when...)
6. The sermon suggested we often prefer “victory” to “peace.” Where do you notice that preference showing up—in you, in your relationships, in public life, in church life?

3) The Way of Peace

7. Jesus says Jerusalem missed “the things that make for peace.” What do you think those “things” are, practically? (Humility, repentance, truth-telling, sacrifice, reconciliation, patience, etc.)
8. The sermon contrasts a war horse with a colt—conquest with humility. What kind of “king” do you most want Jesus to be when you’re stressed or afraid? How does Jesus challenge that?
9. The line, “Apprenticeship isn’t cheering the loudest. It’s choosing to live like Jesus,” is a strong diagnostic. What would “choosing to live like Jesus” look like this week—one concrete example?

4) Healing from Sin

10. The sermon framed confession as truth-telling for the sake of healing—not shame. What’s your history with confession (positive, negative, unfamiliar)? How might that shape your willingness to practice it?



11. Where are you currently “managing an image” instead of telling the truth? What would a gentle, faithful confession sound like in that area?
 12. As we enter Holy Week, where do you sense Jesus inviting you past the parade—past performance—into deeper obedience?
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Closing Prayer

Jesus, King of peace, we confess how easily our expectations get tangled up in our faith. We bring you our desire for control, our hunger for quick answers, and our temptation to follow the crowd instead of following you. Give us eyes to see the things that make for peace. Give us courage to tell the truth, and grace to receive your healing. Lead us through Holy Week with steady hearts and faithful steps. Amen.

Key Takeaway

Palm Sunday invites us to notice what we’re really asking of Jesus—and to keep walking with him past the parade into the healing way of peace.

Next Step — P.A.R.

Pray: A simple prayer of confession. Name how you have added your expectations to the shouts of the crowd and missed the way of Jesus.

Act: Continue with *Practicing the Way* — Week 6: Healing from Sin. At the very least, participate in Holy Week worship (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and even Holy Saturday’s silence if possible) to locate yourself in Jesus’ story.

Reflect: Where do you sense your expectations of Jesus shifting? When did you feel the pull of the crowd? Did you hear God’s promise of healing this week?

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