

Small Group Guide: Palm Sunday

Based on "The Word" Series - Palm Sunday

Opening Prayer & Ice Breaker (10 minutes)

Ice Breaker Question: What comes to mind when you hear the word "glory"? How would you explain God's glory to someone who has never heard that term before?

Sermon Summary (5 minutes)

This Palm Sunday sermon explored three interconnected themes in John's Gospel:

1. **The Glory of God** - What Moses longed to see but couldn't
2. **Christ's Hour** - The long-anticipated moment of Jesus' glorification through suffering
3. **The Spirit Sent** - How the Spirit enabled the disciples to remember and understand

The key insight: Jesus' glorification came *through* his suffering, not despite it. Palm Sunday begins Holy Week—the chain reaction that leads from Jesus' death and resurrection to the Spirit being sent, to the disciples remembering and understanding, to them writing it down, to us reading it today.

Discussion Questions

Part 1: The Glory of God

Moses vs. The Religious Leaders

- Moses desperately wanted to see God's glory (Exodus 33). What does it reveal about Moses' heart that he made this request?
- The religious leaders in Jesus' day claimed to follow Moses but "loved the glory of men rather than the glory of God" (John 12:43). What are some modern-day examples of seeking glory from people rather than from God?

Part 2: Christ's Hour

1. **The Sign of Lazarus**

- Why did raising Lazarus from the dead trigger the plot to kill Jesus rather than mass belief?
- The sermon stated, "The sign itself is not the glory, but it's the thing that's going to lead to Christ's glorification." How does this help us understand the purpose of miracles in Jesus' ministry?

4. **Glorification Through Suffering**

- Jesus said, "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24). How does this principle apply to our lives as followers of Jesus?
- Why is it so difficult for us to accept that glorification comes through suffering? How does our culture resist this idea?

Part 3: The Spirit Sent

The Chain Reaction

- The sermon outlined this chain: Jesus glorified → Spirit sent → Disciples remember → They write and preach → Elders receive → Churches teach → We read today. Where do you fit in this chain?

6. **Belief and Application**

- John wrote "so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31). What's the difference between believing Jesus *existed* versus believing He is the Christ, the Son of God?
- How does believing in Jesus' glorification through suffering change how we approach our own difficulties?

Key Takeaways

Write these down or share which one resonates most with you:

1. **Moses longed to see God's glory; the disciples beheld it in Jesus** - We have access to that same testimony through Scripture and the Spirit.
2. **Seeking glory from people blinds us to God's glory** - Our orientation determines what we'll recognize.
3. **Jesus' glorification came through suffering, not despite it** - The cross wasn't an obstacle to glory; it was the path to it.

4. **The Spirit enables us to understand and remember** - Without the Spirit's work, the disciples wouldn't have comprehended what they witnessed.
5. **We are part of the chain** - The testimony has been faithfully passed down so that we might believe and have life.

Closing Reflection (10 minutes)

Question for Each Person: The sermon ended with this question: "Do you seek the glory of God or do you seek the glory of man?"

Go around the circle and complete this sentence: "*One way I want to seek God's glory more than man's glory this week is...*"

Closing Prayer

Pray together, thanking God for:

- Revealing His glory in Jesus Christ
- The suffering and glorification of Jesus that lead to our salvation
- The Holy Spirit, who helps us understand and remember
- The faithful witnesses who passed down the testimony to us
- The opportunity to rejoice together during Holy Week

Ask God to:

- Help each person seek His glory above all else
- Give an understanding of how glorification comes through suffering
- Empower the group to be faithful witnesses in the chain
- Prepare hearts to fully celebrate the resurrection on Easter