

Discussion Questions



The Parade - Palm Sunday

Key Takeaways

1. Jesus Chose the Donkey (Intentional Humility)

- Jesus deliberately rode a donkey, not a horse
- Horses represented war and conquest; donkeys represented peace
- This was a theological and political statement about the nature of His kingdom
- Every action of Jesus is saturated with meaning

2. The Misunderstood King (Wrong Expectations)

- The crowd wanted political liberation from Rome
- Jesus came to bring liberation from sin and death
- "Hosanna" means "save us now" - but save us from what?
- We often ask Jesus to be our earthly savior rather than our spiritual Savior

3. The King Worth Following (The Road Through the Cross)

- Philippians 2:5-11 describes Jesus' mindset of emptying Himself
- The road to the crown goes through the cross

- Following Jesus means embracing His humility and the kingdom of heaven
 - Jesus never promised to be what the crowd expected
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Discussion Questions

Understanding the Sermon

1. **The Donkey's Significance:** Why was Jesus' choice to ride a donkey so important? What statement was He making about His kingdom versus earthly kingdoms?
2. **Hosanna - Save Us Now:** When the crowd shouted "Hosanna," what were they really asking for? How does this differ from what Jesus came to do?
3. **The Christ Hymn:** Read Philippians 2:5-11 together. What are the four stages Paul describes (pre-incarnation, incarnation, humiliation, exaltation)? What does each stage teach us about Jesus?

Personal Reflection

4. **Our Expectations:** Pastor Ike asked, "When we cry Hosanna, what are we asking to be saved from?" Take a moment of silence, then share: What are you typically asking Jesus to save you from? How much of it is earthly versus spiritual?
5. **The Uncomfortable Question:** What would make you leave the parade? Consider these scenarios:
 - Unanswered prayers
 - Being asked to give up everything
 - Experiencing valleys instead of mountaintops
 - Making Jesus first instead of yourself
 - Being hurt by the church

Which of these scenarios would be hardest for you? Why?

6. **Wrong Expectations:** Have you ever had expectations of Jesus that weren't based on who Scripture says He is? What happened when those expectations weren't met?

Going Deeper

7. **The Crowd That Turned:** Why do you think the same crowd that shouted "Hosanna" on Sunday could shout "Crucify Him" by Friday? What does this teach us about the danger of misplaced expectations?
8. **The Cross Before the Crown:** The sermon stated, "The road to the crown goes through the cross." What does this mean practically in your life right now? What "crosses" might Jesus be asking you to carry?
9. **Deconstruction and Disappointment:** Pastor Ike mentioned people deconstructing their faith often started with wrong expectations of Jesus. How can we ensure our faith is built on who Jesus truly is rather than who we want Him to be?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

1. **Scripture Study:** Spend time this week reading one of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John) specifically looking for who Jesus says He is versus what people expected Him to be. Journal your findings.
2. **Expectation Inventory:** Write down your current prayers and expectations of Jesus. Honestly evaluate: Are these

aligned with the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of earth?
Bring this to God in prayer.

3. **Cross Carrying:** Identify one area where Jesus might be asking you to embrace a "cross" (humility, sacrifice, obedience in difficulty). Take one concrete step toward obedience this week.
4. **Conversation Starter:** If you know someone who is questioning their faith or has walked away, reach out to them this week. Listen to their story without judgment. Pray for them daily.

Group Accountability

- Share which application you're choosing with at least one other person in the group
- Exchange contact information to check in mid-week
- Commit to praying for one another regarding these specific applications

Reflection Exercise

Silent Reflection

Consider these questions individually:

- Am I at the parade right now, or have I left?
- What false expectations of Jesus do I need to release?
- What does it look like for me to embrace the Jesus of Scripture rather than the Jesus I've created?

Optional Sharing: Invite those who feel comfortable to share one insight from their reflection time.

Closing Prayer

Pray together using these themes:

- Thank Jesus for who He truly is - the humble, servant King
 - Confess areas where we've placed wrong expectations on Him
 - Ask for strength to embrace the cross as well as the crown
 - Pray for those in the group who are wrestling with disappointment or doubt
 - Request the Holy Spirit's help to see Jesus as Scripture reveals Him
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Additional Resources

- **Scripture Reading for the Week:**
 - Monday: Matthew 21:1-11 (Palm Sunday account)
 - Tuesday: Philippians 2:1-11 (The Christ Hymn)
 - Wednesday: Zechariah 9:9-10 (The prophecy fulfilled)
 - Thursday: John 12:12-19 (Another Palm Sunday account)
 - Friday: Isaiah 53:1-12 (The Suffering Servant)
 - Saturday: Luke 23:13-25 (The crowd chooses Barabbas)