



## Northland Christian Church Group Discussion Guide For the Week of April 10, 2022

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*Use the questions below as a springboard for discussion. You do not have to answer every question. Pick the ones you think will be helpful. Remember, Ultimately we want God's answers, not man's opinions. Always land where God lands. (ex: Where do we see that in the Bible?) Give grace. Give time for growth. Don't force it. Growth takes time, love, good questions, & support.*

### Connect

- Who is the most avid sports fan you know? (or movie fan, music fan, etc.)
- What's the difference between a loyal fan and a "fair-weather fan"?

### Context

#### Palm Sunday

The Jewish people during this time wanted nothing more than to be liberated from Roman rule. If there was ever a time of hope for liberation it was now. As Jesus enters Jerusalem, people are taking off their cloaks and putting them on the road as well as waving palm branches for this mighty prophet to ride in on which symbolically conveyed the notion of victory over one's enemy. This was it; their savior had arrived, and they greeted Jesus with the loud chants of, "Hosanna!" (Please save us) which would not have been an exclamation of praise, but a plea for salvation. The crowd was correct in that Jesus was the long-awaited savior, but he was not the military leader they mistakenly hoped for. Jesus, our Savior, would save us from an adversary far greater than any political power—He would save us, once and for all, from sin and death. Jesus was becoming and is the King of kings and Lord of lords of an eternal Kingdom. He didn't meet their expectations and they moved to being merely fans, not loyal followers. They decided to not give up their desires, definitions, and plans. They ended up rejecting Jesus'. Within five days of the loud celebration in this passage, they switch from shouting "Hosanna" to screaming "Crucify Him!".

How about us? What happens when things don't go the way we expect them to? The way we want them to? Do we adjust and look for Jesus in the details? Or do we scream, rant, and turn to our own plans? Are we fans of Jesus or followers of Jesus? Are we apprentices of Jesus or those who just want a get out of trouble-free type of 'believer'? Have we decided to place Jesus at the center of our lives? At the center of our hearts? Decisions, goals, plans, finances, expectations, family, and future? Are we loyal followers or just fairweather-fans?

### Engage the Bible

Read the passage and share Surprises, Takeaways, and Observations from:

**John 12:12-19** NIV

"The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the king of Israel!" Jesus found a young donkey and

sat on it, as it is written: “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.” At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him. Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

## Discuss

1. What are some ways that Jesus has worked in your life that were surprising or unexpected?
2. Israel was expecting a military conqueror, yet the Lord gave us all something far greater. In what ways have you misunderstood what God was doing in the moment only to receive an outcome far greater than you could have hoped for? Or even thought was needed?
3. Hosanna means “please save us.” (or save us now) What does it bring to your heart and mind to know that Christ has saved us from our greatest adversary?
4. Share some specific struggles you could trust the Lord to save you from now.
5. How have you had to adjust your expectations of God in the past? Are there any areas where you need to do this now?
6. What would it look like to make Jesus the center of your life? How is this different from just liking Jesus or wanting to be blessed by Him?
7. What areas of life is it more difficult for us to make Jesus the center? Why? What action steps, activities, or experiences might help improve this?
8. Are there any areas that you are not putting Jesus at the center of?
9. Where have you experienced life-change and growth by putting Jesus at the center of your life?
10. What helps cultivate an attitude of praise in your heart for Jesus? What is a step you can take this week to cultivate a deeper heart of gratitude and praise for Jesus? (not just what He does for you)

## End Your Group Time in Prayer