



Week 3 - Gospel of the Kingdom

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“Sunday, April 5, was Palm Sunday, when we commemorated Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem that kick-starts the series of events leading to his death and resurrection. Jesus’ unjust trial and execution seemed like a tragedy to his friends and family, yet for Jesus, his death was an expression of God’s love as he entered into our suffering so that he could overcome it. In the story of Jesus, we are invited to see that even the most unwelcome and tragic events cannot thwart God’s plan to restore our world.”

Luke 19:28-40

“The people expected Jesus to bring peace and rule as king in a way that they could understand. Jesus grieved over this because he knew they would suffer and he longed for them to see him as the true King through his suffering. Like Jesus, it’s okay to grieve over shattered expectations and suffering.”

After He had said these things, He was going on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When He approached Bethphage and Bethany, near the mount that is called Olivet, He sent two of the disciples, saying, “Go into the village ahead of you; there, as you enter, you will find a colt tied on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of it.’ ” So those who were sent went away and found it just as He had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They said, “The Lord has need of it.” They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their coats on the colt and put Jesus on it.

As He was going, they were spreading their coats on the road. As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, shouting: “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.” But Jesus answered, “I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!”

- In what ways have you experienced suffering and/or shattered expectations over the last 6 months? How have you grieved over that suffering and shattered expectations?
- **Question for Reflection** - Jesus is the King despite the way the world looks right now. What questions does that bring up for you? What truths can you rely on at this time?



Isaiah 52:7-53:12

“This passage proclaims that God himself is coming to rescue his people. This is good news, but it will happen in a surprising way. God’s appointed one, the Messiah, will enter into the suffering and death of our world. There’s a lot of suffering and pain going on in our world right now, but God enters into our suffering. He experiences it personally and is present with us and all those who suffer.”

- **Challenge** - Write down or speak out loud where you see suffering and pain in the world and your community right now.
- **Challenge** - Now pray or speak out loud these same instances again, taking in the truth that God is present in those situations and suffers with us.

John 12:20-33

“Jesus’ suffering was the way God’s power and love was shown to the world. The cross shows us that God’s ultimate response to human death and suffering was love, to die alongside us and for us, and to overcome death with his resurrection life. This is Jesus’ upside-down Kingdom.”

Now there were some Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast; these then came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and began to ask him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Philip came and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip came and told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him

“Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came out of heaven: “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, “An angel has spoken to Him.” Jesus answered and said, “This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes. Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.” But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.

- What is Jesus doing for others in this passage?
- **Question for Reflection** - Jesus calls his followers to do what he does. In what ways specifically can you suffer alongside others or serve and love others?