

## **/// BELIEVE**

**Intro:** Imagine this: the streets are packed, palm branches waving, people shouting, “Hosanna! Save us now!” It feels like a victory parade. The long-awaited King has come to Jerusalem, and the crowd thinks they know exactly what He’s here to do—overthrow Rome, restore Israel’s power, and give them the life they’ve been waiting for. But here’s the problem: their expectations of Jesus didn’t match His mission. They wanted a throne; He came to carry a cross. They looked for political power; He came to bring eternal peace.

And the same tension exists today. We often come to Jesus with our own expectations—success, comfort, approval, security—but when He doesn’t deliver the way we imagined, our faith gets shaken.

This passage forces us to ask: **What kind of King do we really want—and will we trust the King that God has given us?**

**Life Group Helps:** Please take a few moments to read through the instructions below in preparation for the following group discussions and the use of the provided material.

***Before the group meeting:***

1. Spend time engaging the “Passages for Study/Discussion” with prayer.
2. Read through all the material.
  - + As you look through it, you will find helpful tips that will allow you to better facilitate the discussion.
  - + At times, sermon notes may be provided by CBC, and in the meantime, your sermon notes would be beneficial.
3. Think through ways you can help your group to apply what is being taught instead of “knowing” what’s been taught.

**At the Group Meeting:**

1. Summarize/Read the “Intro”
2. Assign readers for the passages outlined in the “Passages for study” section.
3. Walk your group through each question (or as many that time will allow). Use the leader guide to facilitate the discussion.
4. Summarize the “Review & Reflection” section. Reading this aloud may be helpful.
5. Share your thoughts on how you and your group can begin to apply what was learned in this lesson. Help them formulate ideas for reading, studying, and meditating on the scriptures.

**Bottom Line:** Jesus is not the King we always expect—He’s the King we desperately need.

**I. Main Passages for Study:** John 12:12-19

**Leader’s tip:** Reading the main passage is vital every week. Some folks in your Life Group (LG) may have missed Sunday, and they need a deeper context to understand where the discussion is going. We prefer that our LG’s get into the Bible for themselves, too. Finally, don’t think you need to get through all the questions. This is a guide, and the Holy Spirit and people’s needs may dictate more time on one question or another, and therefore, you cannot discuss all the questions... and that is perfectly fine! Enjoy!

**II. Discussion Questions**

1. **Icebreaker 1: Share a funny or lighthearted story where reality didn’t match their expectations (e.g., vacation gone wrong, recipe disaster, online shopping fail).**
2. **Icebreaker 2: “If you were suddenly made king/queen for a day, what’s the first thing you’d change?”**
3. **When has God failed to meet your expectations—and how did it test your faith?**

+ John 12:13; Psalm 118:25–26

- 4. The same crowd that shouted “Hosanna!” soon cried “Crucify Him!”**

**How can we guard against being swept up in cultural or emotional “mobs” instead of standing firm with Christ?**

+ John 12:19; Galatians 1:10

- 5. Palm branches were national symbols of triumph. America also has its national symbols (flag, bald eagle, Liberty Bell).**

**What symbols or “false victories” do people look to today instead of Christ?**

+ Exodus 20:3; Colossians 3:5

- 6. Jesus rode a donkey as a symbol of peace, not a warhorse of conquest.**

**Where are you tempted to look for peace outside of Jesus? Has it happened recently? What was the situation?**

+ Zechariah 9:9; Ephesians 2:14–16

- 7. Faith tied to outcomes can turn those outcomes into idols.**

**Have you ever tied an outcome to your faith—and what would it look like to trust God regardless?**

+ Hebrews 11:1; Romans 8:28

- 8. What are you committing to think differently, do differently, or believe differently because of this week’s discussion?**

- 9. How can others pray for you this week?**