

Easter | Palm Sunday

April 2nd, 2023

My Story Questions

These questions/activities help the group know one another and transition to deeper discussion. Choose one. OR.... You might start the meeting with one person sharing highlights of their story. Set up a rotation.

- 1) Let's laugh at ourselves and be transparent. Share about an embarrassing moment you endured. :)
- 2) Share an Easter memory or tradition you have in your family.

Study Questions

These are meant for personal preparation and group discussion. Use all or pick a few to discuss.

Read Matthew 21:1-17 This is the story of Palm Sunday, named for the placing of palms on the road as Jesus rode the donkey into Jerusalem. (Other accounts are: Mk.11:1-11; Lk. 19:28-44; Jn.12:12-19)

1) Discuss the setting with your group. Who was in Jerusalem and what were they doing? Why is it significant that Passover (Exodus 12:1-14) was being celebrated this week in Jerusalem? Why is Jesus called the lamb of God (Jn. 1:29)? How does that title impact your relationship with Jesus?

2) Why was it important for Jesus to ride a donkey? (See Zechariah 9:9) Why were some angry that Jesus was being treated as a King. At his crucifixion there was a sign that read "King of the Jews" What does the title of King mean to you?

3) On Palm Sunday and all through the passion week some praised Jesus and some rejected him. How do we see the same two types of responses to Jesus today?

4) "Hosanna" literally means "Save me". Explain in your own words how Jesus saved us at the cross. In what situations this week have you made that same heart cry for him to deliver you?

5) The crowd was breaking into song and quoting the lyrics of **Psalm 118**. It is thought that Psalm 118 was a regular song sung at Passover. What are some of the songs you associate with Easter? What lyrics are most meaningful to you? Why? (Use your smart phone to look up some lyrics and share them.)

6) **Read Psalm 118**. Notice that the psalm opens and closes with the same lyric. Read that lyric. Why is it sometimes hard to believe God is good? What is a story of God's goodness from your life that you could share? How have you experienced his enduring love?

7) The chiasmic structure of the song points to the center stanza as the climax. Look specifically at vs 13 to 18 How do these phrases point ultimately to Jesus and his work on the cross?

8) When have you experienced victory "by the Lord's right hand" when you were weak? (See 2 Cor 12:7-10)

9) How did the Father strengthen Jesus the night before he gave his life? (See 22:29-46) How does this surprise or challenge you?

10) What are some other themes from Psalm 118 that relate to the Easter story. What words from this song will you use to praise Jesus between Palm Sunday and Easter?

11) Are there any other promises in this psalm that are comforting to you?

Responding to Jesus

Offer these questions for personal reflection before your group prayer time. Practice listening for God's voice.

- 1) Lord, "Who would you want me to invite to Easter service to hear about your power to save?"
- 2) Lord, "In what situations do I need to call out for your strength and victory?"