

Week Beginning: 5th April 2020

Worship Series: #1 in series



lifegroups
live life abundantly

living sharing growing

Theme Verse

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

Matthew 21:10

Remember This Week

When Jesus enters your life, your life will be shaken. In his presence, anything that stops you from being fully alive, fully yourself and fully his will be left in ruins. For Jesus comes to build a new structure, a new life in you on the foundation of his love and grace. It's a foundation that will withstand all of life's turmoil.



Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

Worship the Lord with gladness;

come before him with joyful songs. Psalm 100:1-2

Heavenly Father, it was your extravagant and incomprehensible love that sent Jesus to shake up our lives and disrupt the foundations of our lives that were unstable and in danger of collapsing. Help us to embrace the turmoil of this week, to allow the power of your love to move us, save us and propel us forward with hope and confidence that can withstand the worst that this life can throw at us. Come and speak your Word again into our lives as we gather today, for your Word alone has the power to stir up and change not only our lives and hearts but that of the entire world. We ask this in the name of Jesus, who humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Amen.



1. *Where have you seen God's power at work in your life this last week?*
2. *Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?*
3. *Has there ever been a time in your life when God surprised you? Share.*
4. *Has anyone ever been surprised to find out you were a Christian? What happened?*
5. *In what ways does God's involvement in your life excite and/or disappoint you?*

There has been a seismic shift in the landscape of the world. The coronavirus has rocked, shaken and agitated the very foundation of our lives, exposing the cracks in societal structures and leaving lives in ruin, rubble and turmoil. There was a similar seismic shaking when Jesus entered Jerusalem that first Palm Sunday. The whole city was "stirred".

Jerusalem was "in turmoil, rocked, agitated, shaken" when Jesus entered this epicentre of religion. His presence rocked the identity of the nation. His arrival agitated the hearts of people whose foundations needed to be challenged and way of living confronted. It unnerved and unsettled those who were expecting something else. Today Jesus comes to stir your heart, disrupt your lives and unleash a POWER MOVE that will forever change who you are and the life you live.

Read Matthew 21:1-16



6. *What key words/thoughts/ideas/questions arise for you as you hear this text?*
7. *Jesus arrival in Jerusalem on a donkey or colt, was foretold in Zechariah 9:9-13. Have a read of it. Knowing this prophecy, what do you think your expectations of Jesus would have been?*
8. *It seems likely that those who cut palms and shouted Hosanna expected Jesus to meet their immediate physical needs. To release them from the oppressive occupation of the Romans. What do you think stopped them (even the disciples) from being able to understand what he was really about to do?*



When you analyse what is going on here, it begins to look like a modern television drama. The unexpected hero arrives in town to thunderous applause from the general population. Immediately, those who have held power and influence up until this point, begin plotting how they might get rid of this newcomer who threatens to shake up the established order of things. Notice verse 10, 'When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"'

9. *The excited response of honour and praise for the king coming on a donkey caused others to question who Jesus was. How does your life of praise cause others to ask who Jesus is?*
10. *Jesus presence in Jerusalem clearly shook things up. How does Jesus shake things up in our lives today?*
11. *If you were a faithful, practicing Jew at this time, how might you have responded to Jesus actions in the temple? How might your views have changed from palm waving to this?*

Part of the problem here is that humans like to play 'power games'. The world around us encourages us to collect power and influence in order to protect ourselves and to advance our own agendas. The people in the crowd, thinking Jesus would restore their own political autonomy, threw their lot in with him because they saw their own profit. The Pharisees and temple authorities began to plot against him because they perceived the threat he was to their own positions. But Jesus doesn't play power games. He doesn't need to. He has all power and authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18).

12. *How does the presence of Jesus shift the power balances in your life? Do you mostly see Jesus as an ally or a threat to your way of life? Explain.*
13. *What perceptions might people outside the church have about who Jesus is and what is involved in being a Christian? Are these perceptions correct/helpful/harmful?*
14. *In verses 15 and 16, Jesus commends the children. This is not the only time Jesus has commented on the faith and insight of children. What do you think it is about children that enables them to approach faith differently?*

Having faith like a child does not mean being naive or blindly believing everything we hear. However, children often have an easier time accepting things that are outside of their usual experiences. It is true that God is the same yesterday, today and forever but in Jesus, God did something he had never done before and these children recognised that. We can rely on the steadfastness of God's love for us and trust his promises, but God may love us or protect us or strengthen us in surprising ways. They may not be what we expect, even understand or ways we have experienced before. To trust God at times like this is to have faith like a child.



Life with Jesus is a stirred up life. When Jesus enters a place he does not leave it how he found it. He transforms things and changes things. He wants to see things grow into their fullness, he wants to see people restored and reconnected to their Heavenly Father. Most of us don't like having our comfortable lives shaken up though. We are often fooled into thinking that we are better off quietly minding our own business than letting Jesus excite us into action and being involved in the lives of others.

15. *How does the idea of letting Jesus change your life make you feel?*
16. *All of our lives have changed dramatically and unexpectedly over the last few weeks. While we have all experienced difficulties, what are three opportunities that God has brought your way since Coronavirus restrictions?*
17. *What does Jesus need to shake-up in your life this Holy Week? What changes that might Jesus be asking you to make in your life right now? Try to put some of these changes in place during the week.*



- * Praise God for his eternal perspective, eternal love, and faithfulness in keeping his promises. Thank Jesus for moving with the power of love to save us. Ask the Holy Spirit to transform your heart and move in your life with the life of Jesus.
- * Ask God to help you be open to new ways of experiencing his love and the love of his people. Ask him to bring his Word alive in your life in new ways during this time.
- * Pray for those who have health concerns that are not Coronavirus, that they might not be forgotten or overlooked and still receive the love and care that they need.

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross in the air as you say...

Name, the power of Jesus' love is at work in you. Amen.

