Palm Sunday Discussion Guide
Main Passage: John 6:1-15 ESV
Opening

- Begin with a brief welcome and prayer to set the tone for the group time.
- **Introduce the theme:** Palm Sunday begins Holy Week with celebration, praise, and expectation—but the kind of King Jesus came to be was not what people expected. This week, we reflect on the truth that Jesus is worthy of our praise, not because He always removes our pain, but because He willingly came near, went to the cross, and made a way for us to be with Him forever.

Discussion Questions
CONNECT

- When you were younger, what kind of person did you imagine Jesus to be? Has that changed over time?
- When life gets hard, what are you most tempted to expect from God? Comfort? Answers? Rescue? Immediate change? Something else?

DISCOVER
Read Together: Matthew 21:1-11
Initial Observations:

- What stands out to you most in this passage?
- Why do you think the crowds were so excited when Jesus entered Jerusalem? What type of reception do you think Jesus would receive today?

Context for the leader to share: Palm Sunday happened during Passover week, when God's people were remembering His past rescue and hoping for future salvation. The crowds saw Jesus riding into Jerusalem and believed the long-awaited King had finally come. But while they were expecting political rescue, Jesus came to deal with something even deeper: sin, shame, fear, and the brokenness of the human heart.

- What is the significance of Jesus riding in on a donkey instead of a warhorse?
- The crowd's praise was tied to their expectation. How can our worship also become dependent on what we think Jesus should do or has done for us?

DIG DEEPER
Read John 10:11, 17-18 and Hebrews 12:1-2

- What does it matter that Jesus went to the cross on purpose and not as a helpless victim?

- Hebrews 12 says Jesus endured the cross "for the joy set before Him." What does this teach us about the heart of God?
- How does it change your view of Jesus to know that He finds joy in being with you?

APPLY
Jesus came to be with us
- Which version of Jesus are you most tempted to want? And why?:
    - The Jesus who removes every problem immediately
    - OR the Jesus who stays with you through every problem?
- Have you ever gone through something painful, confusing, or disappointing, and later realized Jesus met you in a deeper way?
- Where in your life do you need to remember that Jesus is with you?

RESPOND
These can be discussed together or used as a quiet reflection moment.
- Is there a disappointment, grief, fear, or burden you have been carrying that you need to bring honestly to Jesus?
- Is there a place where your expectations of God have made it harder to trust His heart?
- What would it look like this week to praise Jesus not just for what He can do for you, but for who He is and how near He is?

GROUP PRAYER
Start with a time of personal reflection:
- **ASK:**
    - *"God, where am I overlooking needs around me?"*
    - *"What have You already placed in my hands that I can use?"*

Pray Together as a Group
Spend time praying honestly and vulnerably for one another.
Pray:
- **for those carrying** disappointment, grief, anxiety, or confusion
- **for faith** to trust Jesus as He truly is, not just as we expect Him to be
- **for deeper joy** in the nearness of Christ
- **for hearts ready to walk with Jesus** through Holy Week and celebrate Him fully on Easter

If appropriate for your group, invite people to share an area where they've felt alone and let the group pray specifically over them.

CLOSING
- Remind everyone about the Good Friday service that will be live on **Friday, April 3 @ 7PM. If possible, consider making plans to watch it together.**

- As we move into the Easter season, encourage everyone to engage in all three Easter programs: Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. Encourage them to invite their "neighbors" to join them.