



That you may believe... **Leaders Guide for Week 14**

(Times are approximate) – start time: _____

Welcome

- As people come in ask them to think of something in their life this week which links to this lesson.
 (+6 min)

Opening prayer

- Always ask for the Holy Spirit's guidance in the discussion, timing, fellowship, and teaching.
 (+2 min)

Opening Comments

- Our celebration of Palm Sunday speaks to this particular time in Jesus' life.
- It was a very active time in Jerusalem, it was during the Passover.
- Dr. James Boice writes, "Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us that one year a census was taken of the number of lambs slain for Passover and that the figure was 256,500.
- In other words, with numbers that large, lambs must have been driven up to Jerusalem throughout the entire day.
- Consequently, whenever Jesus entered the city He must have done so surrounded by people and lambs, Himself, of course, being the greatest of lambs.
- Four days later, at the time the lambs were killed, Jesus Himself was killed, thereby becoming the ultimate Passover lamb on the basis of whose blood the angel of spiritual death passes over all who place their trust in Him.
- Is He your Passover lamb?
- Have you received Him as your Savior?
- Will you say with Isaiah (**Isa. 53:5** replacing "our" with "my/me/I"), "He was pierced for *my* transgression, He was crushed for *my* iniquities; the punishment that brought *me* peace was upon Him, and by His wounds *I* am healed."
- Truly, "we all like sheep have gone astray," but in accord with His grace "the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (**Isa. 53:6**)"¹
- In verses **12:12-19** Jesus fulfills two prophecies:
- The first prophecy, **Zech. 9:9**, "*Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*"
- He prepared for entering Jerusalem per the synoptic gospels descriptions.
- He couldn't speak to such large crowds so He did something everyone could see and identify with.
- Riding a young donkey/colt would seem lowly to us, maybe a sign of poverty.
- But in Jesus' day, it represented two things: 1) It was a prophetic demonstration that He was Messiah; 2) In the Old Testament a young donkey/colt represented nobility because they viewed it as a noble animal.
- A king advancing on a town meant he wanted war but one riding on a donkey symbolized peace.
- The second prophecy, **Ps. 118:25-26**, "*O LORD, save us; O LORD, grant us success. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. From the house of the LORD we bless you.*"

- When the people shouted “Hosanna” they were proclaiming Him King!
- Realize at this time, the disciples still didn’t fully understand what was going on with Jesus.
- Who was in the crowd?
- The majority were probably just curious – maybe had heard about Lazarus, or some other signs Jesus had performed.
- There were Jews of course but also Gentiles, plus frustrated and fearful Pharisees.
- So many curious people around Jesus but very few who really believed in Him and believed Him!
- The point is that curiosity for Jesus without total commitment means nothing!
- It’s interesting to note that in **verses 23-33** there are five references to time, some implied.
- 1) *“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified”* – **23**
- 2) Now was the *hour* for personal suffering – **27-30**
- 3) When He *is lifted up* (*“the hour the world will be judged - implied”*) – **31**
- 4) When He *is lifted up* (*“the hour” the prince of this world, Satan, will be driven out- implied*) – **31**
- 5) When He *is lifted up* (*“the hour” for Jesus to be crucified, resurrected, and exalted - implied*) – **32-33**
- **Verse 32** contains two promises: 1) Jesus will overcome death; 2) He will draw men to Him!
- An important point is that life is our hour and how we make use of it depends on us, time is precious!
(+11 min)

Discussion of the Study Lesson – (~34 min)

This week’s titles: Triumphal Entry - **John 12:12-36** and Christ Crucified, Dead and Buried - **John 19:17-42**
Highlighted verse: Jesus said, *“It is finished”*. *With that, He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.”* **John 19: 30b**

Day 1: Read John 12:12-36 and John 19:17-42

1. Read **John 12:12-36** and **John 19:17-42** at least once, jotting down initial observations.
 - Take some time on this question because of the importance of the passages and the fact this is Palm Sunday.
 - There should be some very good sharing.(+6 min)

Day 2: Read John 12:12-36

1. How do the shouts of the crowd (**verses 12-19**) clash with Jesus’ mission statements in **verses 23-28**?
 - The crowd was likely looking for a king who would bring triumph with political implications.
 - Jesus knew the cross was coming.
 - The cross would bring ultimate triumph, not triumph in the way the crowd was seeking.
 - Jesus was seeking to bring glory to the Father by accomplishing the Father’s plan of redemption for the people the Father gave Him.(+3 min)
2. According to **verses 12:23-32**, what will Jesus’ death accomplish?
 - The Son of Man (Jesus) will be glorified
 - Jesus’ death generates a plentiful harvest. Jesus will die so that others will live
 - The name of the Father will be glorified.

- The ultimate purpose is the glory of God
(+4 min)

Day 3: Read John 19:17-42

1. What is significant about Jesus' cry, "It is finished"? (See also **John 17:4**)
 - Through Jesus' life and death He accomplished the Father's plan of redemption.
 - He lived a perfect life, fulfilling the law and dying on the cross as a propitiation for our sins.
 - Think back to John the Baptist's words when he saw Jesus, "*Look, the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*" **John 1: 29**
(+3 min)
2. Keeping in mind **John 19:17-42**, read **Isaiah 53:4-6**.
 - a) How was Jesus' death a fulfillment of **Isaiah 53:4-6**?
 - Isaiah has multiple references to Jesus taking on the penalty that we deserve.
(+2 min)
 - b) What does it mean that, "the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all" (**Isaiah 53:6b**)?
 - Jesus takes the penalty for our sin. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
 - The penalty for sin is death. Someone will die for our sin.
 - For all who believe, Jesus takes the penalty we deserve and Jesus dies in our place.
 - There may be some question concerning the word "all" in **Isaiah 53:6**.
 - Scripture is always the best interpreter of Scripture.
 - A theme throughout John is that Jesus came to give life to all those the Father gave to Him (for example see **John 17:2**).
 - All those the Father has given the Son (all who believe) will receive eternal life and all others will perish.
 - *Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter VIII - V.* "The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience, and sacrifice of himself, which He, through the eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father; and purchased, not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto Him."
(+3 min)

Day 4: Read John 20:31

Consider how **John 12:12-36** and **John 19:17-42** relates to John's purpose in writing this Gospel. "*...that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name*" (**John 20:31**).

1. How does John's description of Jesus' crucifixion and death in **19:17-42** support his purpose, expressed in **John 20:31**?
 - The cross answers the question of how people who deserve death can experience life.
 - **Chapter 19** explains how those who believe can have life.
 - We can have life because Jesus died for all who believe.
(+3 min)

2. How does Jesus' death bring life to all who believe?

- This point may seem redundant throughout this lesson.
- However, understanding what was accomplished on the cross is central to understanding the message of the whole Bible.
- We all stand in judgment before a Holy God.
- We all deserve God's judgment.
- However, God so loved the world that He sent His Son so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.
- Jesus died the death we deserve.
- **This is the only way anyone can find life.**

(+3 min)

Day 5: Read John 12:12-36 and John 19:17-42

1. What aspect of Jesus' death has made the greatest impression on you and why?

- Personal but a good question for discussion if people are willing to share.

(+4 min)

2. Write a short prayer thanking Jesus for what He accomplished by His death?

- You are encouraged to have some of your group share what they have written.

(+3 min)

Closing Comments

- If you drive much you've come upon a sign "Construction ahead," a little further, "Reduce speed ahead," following about ½ mile "Speed limit 45," and just past that a sign, "Fines Doubled," then comes the "Right lane closed merge left," next the "blinking arrow!" and sure enough at that point someone flies past you, puts on their direction light (as though that means everyone is supposed to stop for them) and then cuts into your lane.
- Brake lights come on and people try to avoid an accident.
- How many signs does it take for people to believe what they read?
- To believe the truth of the situation?
- To believe the signs are for them too!
- There were so many signs pointing to Jesus as the Messiah they all were looking for but missed.
- The leaders adhered to the minutest details regarding their laws for observing the Passover.
- On this Passover occasion the following day was also a holy day, called a Sabbath (not necessarily the weekly Sabbath).
- Yet, these religious leaders violated every law on the books in order to try Jesus and have Him condemned to death.
- They avoided entering Pilate's gates so they wouldn't be defiled and miss the Passover observances – ironic isn't it!
- It has been said, "Religious scruples may live in a dead conscience."
- Some signs following Jesus' death were: the Temple veil was torn top to bottom (Mat. 27:51); the earthquake (Mat. 27:54); and, the resurrection of the Old Testament saints (Mat. 27:52-53).

- A last sign for this discussion is the comments made by the centurion in **Mark 15:39**, *“And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard His cry and saw how He died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!””*
- This pagan centurion recognized the Messiah while the Jewish religious leaders and others flew on down the road blind to all the signs around them!
- You are encouraged to find the 28 prophecies Jesus fulfilled on the day of His crucifixion.
- As a personal preparation for next week, you might search for the prophecies He fulfilled upon His resurrection.

(+7 min)

Closing Prayer

- Again, you might associate with something someone shared from Day 5, question 2, as encouragement.

(+1 min)

¹ Dr. James Montgomery Boice, “The Gospel of John Vol. 3,” Baker Publishing, 1999, ISBN 0-8010-1087-X