**Learn in Community**

 Small Group Study

**Volume Overview**

**Who is Jesus?**

“For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” ([John 3:16](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn3.16))

*If you asked your friends and family to name one of the most influential people in history who also claimed to be God, one name would likely come up the most—Jesus. When you consider Jesus’ unquestionable impact on history* and *the radical claim He made about himself, it becomes crystal clear: Jesus is not a person you can just overlook. Every person must have an informed opinion of this Man.*

*So, who is Jesus? In the classic book* Mere Christianity*, C. S. Lewis reasoned that those who refuse to believe His claim to be God are left with the option of labeling Him as a lunatic or the devil. Jesus asked His closest followers who people thought He was (*[*Matthew 16:13*](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt16.13)*). The disciples responded with far-ranging opinions. But then, in verse* [*15*](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt16.15)*, Jesus turned the question on them: “Who do you say I am?” Two thousand years later, there may not be a more important question for any of us to answer. Who is Jesus?*

*Maybe you’ve wondered if Jesus really is who He said He is. Are the historical claims about Him true? Maybe you’ve wondered if Jesus really is Lord.*

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| *First time leading* Learn *for Adults? Check out the* [Facilitator Guide](https://0b769b0ed3569ef9d18b-f88d8272f61086866d50d048b43ef630.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/sites/biblengagementproject/Listen_Facilitator_Guide.pdf). |

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*To access session content and videos from a computer, visit:* [*BibleEngagementProject.com/downloads*](http://bibleengagementproject.com/downloads)

**Engage**

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| **QUESTION**When you were growing up, how did your family celebrate Easter? |

Easter is celebrated in many countries around the world. Christians have been commemorating Jesus’ resurrection through Easter celebrations since at least the second century. But many countries recognize Easter quite differently. Bermuda holds a kite festival. In Finland, children dress up like witches and go around in the streets asking for chocolate eggs. And Poland celebrates the Monday after Easter with water fights in the streets.

The Sunday before Easter has come to be known as Palm Sunday. It marks the beginning of Holy Week. Some churches celebrate by waving palm branches like worshippers of Jesus did over two thousand years ago. Palm Sunday commemorates Jesus’ triumphant ride into the city of Jerusalem at the end of His public ministry. This ride initiated all the events leading up to His trial, crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. Up to this point, He was recognized by many as a great teacher, healer, and prophet. But far fewer fully recognized Him as Lord.

**Watch**

As we watch this video, think about your answer to this question: How would you describe your relationship with Jesus to someone who isn’t a Christian?



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**Consider What the Bible Says**

In the Gospels, we see Jesus traveling through a large chunk of the land which was home to the nation of Israel. His ministry covered a one-hundred-mile region from north to south. Jesus and His disciples likely did most of this on foot. But for some reason, when Jesus stopped at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples ahead to bring Him a young donkey for the two-mile trek to Jerusalem. Let’s look closer at why He did that in [Mark 11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk11).

**Jesus Reveals He Is Lord**

Read [Mark 11:1–7](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk11.1-7).

In the ancient Near East, it was common for a king or leader to ride into a city on a horse or donkey. Riding a horse often signified war, while riding a donkey signified peace. Jesus’ ride on a donkey was more symbolic than practical. It was His way of announcing to the world that He had come as their Lord, but not how they had envisioned it. Many had assumed the Messiah would come as a warrior to overthrow the Roman government. But just as the prophet Zechariah had foretold hundreds of years before, Jesus came instead as a humble king ushering in a kingdom of peace ([Zechariah 9:9](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Zec9.9)).

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| **QUESTION**Does the world today see Christianity as a kingdom of peace? Why or why not? |

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| **QUESTION**In what ways can our actions help to spread the idea that Christians are peacemakers? |

**The Lordship of Jesus Demands Worship**

Read [Mark 11:8–10](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk11.8-10).

At this time, the palm branch was a well-known symbol of victory. Years before, it was also one of the symbols used by the Jewish Hasmonean dynasty. Their kingship was the last time the Jewish people had been politically independent. So by waving palm branches at the Triumphal Entry, the crowd was likely affirming Jesus as their desired king.

They not only worshipped Him with their actions, but also with their words. Though that crowd was confused about the kind of kingdom Jesus had come to create, we can take something from their example. Like the crowd on that day, we should also worship Jesus as our Lord in everything we say and do.

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| **QUESTION**How can we worship Jesus as Lord with our words? |

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| **QUESTION**How can we worship Jesus as Lord in what we do? |

**Did You Know?**

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| The Hasmonean dynasty (142 BC to 63 BC) established a period of Jewish sovereignty and kingship in Judea. It’s an important part of history in the time between the Old and New Testament records. Almost two hundred years after the release from exile by the Persians (cf. Ezra 1:1–3), the Jews eventually fell under the rule first of the Ptolemies, then the Seleucids. A revolt against Seleucid rulers led to the Hasmonean dynasty being established. During this time, the Jews once again minted coins. One significant Hasmonean coin bears the image of palm branches. The end of the Hasmoneans came with Roman rule and oppression that persisted into Jesus’ day, which left the people desperate for another Jewish king. |

**Everyone Can Experience Jesus’ Lordship**

Read [Mark 11:11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk11.11), [15–17](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk11.15-17).

The vendors and money changers were set up outside the temple in an area called the Court of the Gentiles. Gentiles included any non-Jewish worshippers. However, the Jews took over this space meant for non-Jewish worshippers and were using it for financial gain instead.

You see, God never intended for Israel to have exclusive rights to Him. He wanted them to be a light to draw all other nations to Him ([Genesis 22:18](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ge22.18)). Some of us have served the Lord so long we either don’t know or have forgotten what it’s like to be an “outsider” at church. However, Jesus came for all. It’s our responsibility to create space within our faith community for those He is drawing in.

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| **QUESTION**The Jews were the insiders when it came to temple worship. How can church “insiders” sometimes push out or disregard others who may be seeking God? |

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| **QUESTION**In what ways can people sometimes use their Christianity for financial gain? |

**Reflect**

**Jesus Is Lord**

Depending on where you’ve lived, you may find it difficult to wrap your mind around what it means to bow to the lordship of someone. We may respect our elected leaders, but we aren’t expected to worship them. Jesus, however, is not just another leader. He’s the King of all kings and Lord of all lords ([Revelation 19:16](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Re19.16)).

Once this truth becomes a reality in our heart, it leaves us with no choice but to give Him all our worship. Jesus’ lordship not only requires our worship, but also compels our complete obedience. You see, a servant serves at the will and pleasure of his or her lord. Most of us want Jesus to be our Savior, but it’s a much more difficult thing to serve Him as our Lord.

**Listen to God**

Let’s pause and listen to what God might want to say to us about what we have read and shared. Be silent for a few moments and reflect on the following questions. Respond to the one that most resonates with what God is saying to you now. Then complete the others during Day 1 of your devotion time this week.

**Personal Reflection Questions**

*Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.*

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| **QUESTION**Most of us want Jesus as Savior, but we find it more difficult to give up control and surrender to Him as Lord. What is Jesus currently asking you to surrender to Him? |

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| **QUESTION**Describe a time when you had difficulty surrendering something to Jesus, but later were glad you did. |

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| **QUESTION**How have you treated family members, neighbors, or coworkers in a way that reflects Jesus’ kingdom of peace? How haven’t you done so? |

**Activate**

If we claim Jesus as our Lord and King, then we must worship Him accordingly. In church, we usually have a time of corporate worship through singing. The Psalms encourage us to sing, clap, shout, dance, and lift our hands in the sanctuary ([Psalm 96:2](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps96.2); [Psalm 47:1](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps47.1); [Psalm 149:3](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps149.3); [Psalm 134:2](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps134.2)).

**Challenge**

Which of these expressions of worship do you engage in? Choose one of them to add as you worship Jesus this week.

**Prayer Requests**

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| Note any requests from the group and remember to pray for them during the week. |

Before next time, continue to learn from God’s Word with the personal devotions.

**What We Believe**

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| **Jesus Is Lord in the Kingdom of God**While the idea of the universal rule of God permeates the Old Testament, the kingdom of God takes on additional meaning and importance in the teaching and ministry of Jesus that begins with the proclamation, “The Kingdom of God is near!” ([Mark 1:15](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk1.15); also [Matthew 3:2](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt3.2); [4:17](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt4.17)). Although Jesus never specifically defined the Kingdom, He illustrated it through parables ([Matthew 13](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt13); [Mark 4](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk4)) and demonstrated its presence and power in His ministry. He instructed His disciples to proclaim the nearness of the Kingdom as He sent them out in missionary ministry ([Matthew 10:7](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt10.7); [Luke 9:2](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk9.2); [10:9](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk10.9), [11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk10.11)). Every description of Jesus Christ as Lord is a reminder that Christ is ruler of the kingdom of God. |
| **The Significance of This Doctrine**The kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world exist side by side at the present time. However, these kingdoms will not be one and the same until Christ returns and the kingdoms of this world become “the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ” ([Revelation 11:15](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Re11.15)). The kingdom of God may operate within, but is not to be identified with, any present political system. Believers take the gospel of the Kingdom into the world so that individuals may voluntarily choose the lordship of Jesus Christ. |

**Learn on Your Own**

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| *Before you begin each devotion, pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.* |

**Day 1: Jesus Is Lord**

Read [Mark 11:1–11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk11.1-11), [15–17](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk11.15-17).

Look back over Learn in Community and complete your responses to the Personal Reflection Questions. Plan how to complete the Activate component if you haven’t already done so. If time permits, reread the Scripture too.

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| **QUESTION**What is God saying to you about your need to recognize Jesus as the Lord of your life? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 2: Jesus Is Our Lord and Our Example**

Read [Philippians 2:5–11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Php2.5-11).

In [Matthew 23:11–12](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt23.11-12), Jesus taught that the one who tries to gain honor will be humbled, but the humble person will gain honor. In this Philippians passage, the apostle Paul shows us how Jesus lived out this principle as an example to us all. Jesus, the God of the universe, made himself like a slave and a criminal for our sake.

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| **QUESTION**Knowing what Jesus was willing to do for us, how does this challenge you to make Him not only Savior, but also Lord of your life? |

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| **QUESTION**Look at what [Philippians 2:10–11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Php2.10-11) tells us about how Jesus will be rewarded for humbling himself for our sake. What hope does this give you about your reward for obedience? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 3: Jesus Has Always Been Lord**

Read [Luke 2:8–12](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk2.8-12).

Notice in this passage that the messengers of Jesus’ birth were called angels of the Lord. Then we’re told the glory of the Lord surrounded them. It’s interesting to notice that the phrase “of the Lord” was used to refer to the one who initiated and accompanied the announcement of Jesus’ birth.

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| **QUESTION**What three titles does verse [11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk2.11) give to Jesus? |

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| **QUESTION**How would you define those three titles of Jesus? |

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| **QUESTION**How should Jesus being our Lord impact how we worship Him? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 4: Yielding to Jesus’ Lordship Takes Faith**

Read [Romans 10:9–13](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ro10.9-13).

The apostle Paul wrote this letter to those who had converted to Christianity in Rome. He is attempting to explain to them why following the rules of the Old Testament Law will not earn salvation for anyone. He pointed them toward putting their faith in Jesus as Lord instead.

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| **QUESTION**Why does it show more faith to make Jesus the Lord of your life than to follow a list of rules? |

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| **QUESTION**Why do you think it’s important to God that we show this kind of trust in Him? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 5: King of All Kings and Lord of All Lords**

Read [Revelation 19:11–16](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Re19.11-16).

The Book of Revelation is the apostle John’s recorded vision of the end times. In chapter [19](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Re19) Jesus makes His grand entrance as the Groom at the Wedding Supper ready to be united to His Bride, the Church. In contrast to the humble King we saw enter Jerusalem on a donkey, He now appears as the long-awaited King on a white horse.

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| **QUESTION**Does your idea of Jesus line up more with the humble King on a donkey or a mighty Warrior on a white horse? Why do you think that is? |

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| **QUESTION**Why do you think it’s important for believers that Jesus first came as a humble King, but will return as a mighty Warrior? |