



Small Group Discussion Guide

Welcoming & Rejecting Jesus

March 29, 2026

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Welcoming & Rejecting

Luke 19:37–40 (NIV®)

³⁷ When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, **the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:** ³⁸ “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” ³⁹ Some of **the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”** ⁴⁰ “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

Luke 19:47–48 (NIV®)

⁴⁷ Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. ⁴⁸ Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.

These verses describe the responses of the people of Jerusalem as Jesus made his triumphal entry into the city on Palm Sunday.

1. Why did a large crowd celebrate Jesus arrival in Jerusalem?
2. What response does Luke describe from “all the people” to Jesus’ teaching in the temple?
3. Not everyone welcomed Jesus. Who does Luke identify as Jesus’ opponents?
4. Same Jesus, same miracles, same teaching . . . yet dramatically different responses —why do you imagine that happened?

John 12:1–8 (NIV®)

Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² **Here a dinner was given in Jesus’ honor.** Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. ³ Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus’ feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ **But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot,** who was later to betray him,

objected, ⁵“Why wasn’t this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year’s wages.” ⁶He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. ⁷“Leave her alone,” Jesus replied. “It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. ⁸You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.”

5. How did Mary, Martha, and Lazarus respond to Jesus arrival in their home?
6. How did Judas respond to Mary’s expression of gratitude to Jesus?
7. Why was Judas critical of Mary’s actions?
8. Same Jesus, same dinner, similar experiences with Jesus . . . yet dramatically different responses —why do you imagine that happened?

Application:

How can we guard our hearts to receive what Jesus has for us and not find ourselves rejecting God’s invitations?

Prayer

Adapted from Ephesians 3:16–21 (NIV®)

I pray that out of his glorious riches God may strengthen us with power through his Spirit in our inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. ²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.