



Welcome to FAST FORWARD. If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some simple instructions, as well as the continuation of the questions, on page 2, and this week's Group Practice Suggestion on page 3.

March 27, 2021

Repent, Celebrate, Don't Get Left Out
Luke 19:28-44/Luke 15:11-32

WEEK 6

Questions to use with your group:

- ▶ What has God been teaching you this week, whether through your prayer and fasting, or in other ways?
- ▶ This weekend we celebrated Palm Sunday, recalling the events described in Luke 19:28-44 and parallels. The heading for this section in many Bibles reads "Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem," or "Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King." Invite someone from the group to read this passage aloud.
 - ▶ What word or short phrase would you use to describe the scene in vv. 37-40, as seen
 - ▶ from the perspective of the disciples?
 - ▶ from the perspective of the crowd?
 - ▶ from the perspective of the Pharisees?
 - ▶ from Jesus's perspective?
 - ▶ How do you understand Jesus's weeping in v. 41? What moves him to tears?
- ▶ In his message, Pastor Tim connected the account of Palm Sunday to the Parable of the Prodigal Son through the lens of repentance.
 - ▶ How would you define repentance? What is the purpose of repentance? What does repentance look like?

How to Use These Study Guides:

- Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
- If your group is new this Lent, take some time during each meeting to get to know one another.
- Begin each meeting with a short time of checking in with one another, and be sure to set aside time for prayer.
- Don't feel like you need to discuss every question. Pick two or three that you think will be fruitful for your group, and invite people to reflect on those.
- Use the weekly Group Practice Suggestions (found on page 3) if they are helpful for your group.
- You may need to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
- Try to be sensitive to attention spans over Zoom—keep the meetings shorter than they would be in person.

Questions, cont.

- ▶ As Pastor Tim noted, many of us have heard this story many times before. He shared that there are parts of the story that have troubled him in the past.
 - ▶ At this particular point in your faith journey, what in this story challenges you? What in this story encourages you?
- ▶ Tim spoke of the father's joy upon seeing his repentant son, observing that "In the way of Jesus, repentance leads to celebration!... That's what the repentance and the forgiveness of God does—it restores us. That's why we love this story—because it's about redemption—and who among us does not need redemption?"
 - ▶ At what point or in what circumstances in your life have you been most aware of your need for restoration?
 - ▶ How has God worked through repentance to bring about restoration and redemption in your own life or in the lives of those you love?
- ▶ The older brother in the story could not bring himself to celebrate, because he was blind to his own need for repentance. Tim challenged us to consider not only our individual need for repentance, but also our need to repent collectively as a church.
 - ▶ What are some of the ways that we as a church might sometimes be blind to our collective need for repentance and forgiveness?

This Week's Group Practice Suggestion:

Pray Psalm 51 together as a group, dividing up the stanzas among the members.

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

6 Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you.

14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God my Savior, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

15 Open my lips, Lord, and my mouth will declare your praise.

16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.

18 May it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous, in burnt offerings offered whole; then bulls will be offered on your altar.