

**Waging Peace (1 of 7)**  
Small Group Discussion Questions

Join our congregation for worship in-person or online at 10:30 am each Sunday via our [Grantham Church YouTube Channel](#). If you ever miss a message, the sermons are always posted to the [recent sermons page](#) at our website and at the [Grantham Church Podcast](#) the following day, along with the sermon slides and small group discussion questions under Worship Resources. Thank you for staying connected with us!

**Sunday, February 18th, 2024**



**Series Focus:** At the beginning of Holy Week, Jesus looked out over Jerusalem and cried aloud, “If only you knew the things that make for peace.” And then Jesus spends each day confronting injustice, calling out oppressors, and contending for peace. But what if—despite our familiarity with the events of Holy Week—we have not fully understood or embraced how Jesus makes peace and calls us to do the same? Join us for Lent as we journey with Jesus through Holy Week and discover anew why he is called the Prince of Peace, and what it looks like when we are waging peace like him.

**Sermon Title:** A Hammer or a Lamb?

**Scripture Reading:** Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19

**Sermon Focus:** The first day of Holy Week is known as Palm Sunday. It’s the day when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey while being lauded as Messiah. But while many people celebrated, Jesus wept. The crowds didn’t understand who Jesus was, and they rejected his way of peacemaking. In the first message of our series, Pastor David challenges us to see the triumphal entry as the key to understanding Holy Week, and then he invites us to open our hearts to the way of the sacrificial Lamb.

Thank you for going deeper in conversation with your small group. Use the following questions to help *guide* your small group discussion:

1. Begin your time together by reading the gospel accounts of Palm Sunday. See the Scripture references above. Have different members of your group read each of the accounts. What are the similarities? What are the differences?
2. At the start of Holy Week, Jesus cried out, "If only you knew the things that make for peace" (Luke 19:42). In the book, *Fight Like Jesus*, Jason Porterfield invites us to see this lament of Jesus as the interpretive key for Holy Week. Jesus is showing us what peace looks like when embodied, starting with Palm Sunday. As you think about Jesus' words and actions on Palm Sunday, what is something new that you learned from the message that was challenging or helpful to you?
3. The peace that Jesus has in mind is the Hebrew concept of *shalom*. Pastor David said, "Shalom is more than the absence of conflict and violence. Shalom is about the presence of goodness and blessing; it looks like health, harmony, and wholeness in every facet of life. Shalom is about us flourishing in our relationship with God, with others, and all of creation." How does this kind of peace differ from the world's peace? Where do you see the church working for shalom?
4. Our commitment to the shalom of God (in the way of Jesus) means that we need to be *willing* to lay our lives down for this peace—to suffer and die—rather than use the power of the sword (i.e., force, threats, violence, etc.). Could this be why we resist the way of Jesus, and why we want to resort to violence?
5. Pastor David contrasted the way of the hammer with the way of the Lamb. Why does the way of the hammer have such a hold on us? Asked another way, why is it easy to believe that violence can bring peace, but the way of Jesus is foolish?
6. If we're honest, there are signs that violence (the hammer) only multiplies our problems. For example, while war may eventually stop an aggressor, war leaves a lasting effect on the soldiers (PTSD), innocent bystanders (men, women, and children), the land, animal life, the economy, and an entire generation. What ways have you seen violence and war do more harm than good?
7. Jesus went to Jerusalem, faced the conflict that awaited him there, and willingly laid his life down in pursuit of God's peace (*shalom*). Do you tend to move toward conflict or away from it? Is there a conflict you've been avoiding? How is God inviting you to be a peacemaker where his *shalom* is absent? Finally, close in prayer for each other as you seek to be peacemakers in the way of the Lamb.