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Strange Happenings

John 12:1-19; 16:16-33

Prayer

Begin your Bible study with a brief prayer. Ask God to open your hearts and to help you understand His Word.

Opening Thoughts

Usually at the end of a book or movie, the story begins to wrap itself up neatly. Confusing things become clear, and mysteries are solved. Everyone finally sees the big picture. That's not so in the case of Jesus. The last week of the earthly life of Jesus must have been extremely important to John because he devoted one-third of his Gospel to it.

Although Jesus' days on earth never came anywhere close to normalcy, the last week or so just seemed to grow increasingly strange. He's dining with a previously dead man, He's being anointed with expensive perfume, He's taking celebratory rides into town on a donkey, He's telling His disciples that He'll be leaving without them, and He's warning His followers that they will be hated. As He stooped to wash the disciples' feet (an act usually only done by a servant) or told some of them they would betray Him or deny Him, you have to wonder if the disciples were confused and worried about the days to come.

Discuss the Scripture

Read John 12:1-11

1. In John 11:17-45 Mary and Martha's brother, Lazarus, had died and then was brought back to life by Jesus. How does this put Mary's actions in John 12 in a different light?

2. At first glance, Judas's question in 12:5 seems like a good one. But Mary's act was an act of love and worship. How do differing views of what is good or right still trip Christians up today?

3. What does this short passage tell us about Judas?

4. Why would Jesus keep such close company to someone like Judas?

5. Mary and Martha were upset that Jesus had not come in time to save their brother, Lazarus, from dying. But He raised Lazarus from the dead. What would have changed if Jesus healed Lazarus from sickness instead of raising him from the dead? How is this resurrection different from/like the resurrection of Christ?

Read John 12:12-19

1. Jesus' is gaining more and more popularity. How is that demonstrated in this passage?

2. The Pharisees are becoming increasingly frustrated with Jesus' popularity. What is driving their anger toward Him?

3. Many of the people at this makeshift parade are there because they are curious. They've heard that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. What brings people to Christ today?

4. Does Jesus still perform miracles today? If so, name some.

5. What part do we play in the miracles of Christ?

Read John 16:16-33

1. In verse 20 Jesus tells His disciples, "You will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy." What is He referring to?

2. Jesus talks about complete joy that cannot be taken away (v. 22). What is the difference between joy and happiness?

3. What things get in the way of your promise of complete joy? How can you maintain joy in a world like this?

4. In the Old Testament, people talked to God through a priest. How has the relationship between God (the Father) and the believer changed because of Jesus (vv. 23-24)?

5. The final verse of this passage can offer much comfort to a Christian. What in verse 33 gives you the greatest joy?

Closing Thoughts

What have you learned in this study that seems the most significant or meaningful to you?

Closing Prayer

As a group, close in prayer, thanking God for what you have learned during this session. Ask Him to continue to speak to you; promise to listen.