

APRIL 8 & 9

HIDING MY UNBELIEF

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INTRODUCTION

This week finishes our series *Hiding* with Pastor Jesse Tink exploring what it looks like to hide our unbelief. This week is Palm Sunday, the celebration of the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem, which is short-lived. Jesus is arrested, and the same crowds that cheered his arrival screamed for his crucifixion. What happened? This crowd, like us at times, hid their unbelief by wanting Jesus to rule *for* them but not *over* them; they wanted Jesus to take care of their problems without touching their hearts. Other people hide their unbelief behind a judgmental and self-righteous attitude, which tends to look like hypocrisy to the people around them. Yet we know *real* belief in Jesus *can't* be hidden; it comes from knowing and admitting we need Jesus - our Savior and our Lord - to rule over us and set us free from our judgmental and self-righteous attitudes.

DISCUSSION

1. **Read Isaiah 29:13.** Empty worship is honoring with lips and rules but not with the heart, expecting results without obedience. Was there a time in your life when you leaned into God, for example, during a crisis, but then turned away from Him when the crisis was over? Share that experience with your group.
2. **Read Mark 8:38-40.** Jesus warns against being like the "teachers of the law"- people who hide their unbelief behind their self-righteousness. In our churches, we call them "hypocrites," and they turn more people off from the Gospel than anyone else. Share an experience you have had with this kind of person and how it affected your faith life.
3. As a group, choose a section from one of the Gospels and read through a chapter or two of Jesus' last words to His disciples before His crucifixion. Take some time to silently pray or journal about what God puts on your heart.

THINK ABOUT IT

John 12:12-35 is a "Palm Sunday" story that does not focus on the jubilation of the crowd; instead, John writes about Jesus' response to the crowd and their confusion over who He is. They saw Lazarus who was raised from the dead, heard thunder from Heaven and listened to Jesus' teachings, yet they did not recognize Him for who He was: their Savior. They asked him who the "Son of Man" was; Jesus did not directly answer them but encouraged them to "put their trust in the light." Many of us see the results of true belief in Jesus around us - changed lives, miraculous healings, broken marriages reunited - yet fail to understand the outside appearance is only a reflection of an inward change. A heart change, which can't be faked, can't be hidden. If you have never experienced that heart change, if you say Jesus is Lord on your lips but not in your heart, today is the day. *"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am my servant also will be."*

DO SOMETHING

1. Take time to read through the last days of Jesus and meditate and journal on what God has revealed to you. Make room in your schedule for quiet time with God-even 10-15 minutes a day - to focus on Holy Week and prepare for Easter Sunday.
2. If you have not asked someone to attend the Easter service with you, you still have time! Pray about who to approach, and be prepared with answers and encouragement.

For more information, email discipleship@prairielakeschurch.org.