



Sermon Discussion Guide

God Comes Home - Tim Knipp

2/22/2026

Hook - Getting to know one another

- *How is everyone doing this week?*
- In the passage before our sermon text, Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem. If you could ride anything, parade-style, into your home town, what would it be? Ostrich? Ferrari? Rocket ship? Unicorn? 1985 Toyota Corolla?

Book – Scripture

- **Read Mark 11:12-21 out loud with your small group.**
- Let's try an exercise to help us step into this story. We're going to try to imagine *being* each of the characters. Remember, this is Jerusalem in the first century. But also remember, these are real people. They are not caricatures. That means that we can all identify with each particular character at certain times in our lives.
 - Not in a heretical way, but try to **step into the shoes of Jesus** in this story. You have come to a place you've been longing to come, where you have high expectations of what you will find, where you expect to find God well-represented. But what you find instead is a whole bunch of NOT God-like behaviors: greed, idolatry, selfishness, deception. Can you imagine that scenario for yourself? How would that feel?
 - Now **imagine that you are the disciples**. You are so excited for this newly-declared King you've been following (read Mark 11:1-10 where Jesus is hailed as a king on his entrance into Jerusalem) to make his grand entrance at the temple, the symbol of royal and religious authority. But then, Jesus does all this weird stuff (cursing a fig tree, getting angry, and flipping tables over). Can you imagine yourself being baffled by Jesus's bizarre behavior? How would that feel?



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- Now **imagine that you are the money changers and merchants.** You're just running a business... you're just doing things the way they've been done around here for a long time. And here comes this guy and tosses all your business resources around. Can you imagine yourself as one of those merchants just carrying on your business? How would that feel?
- Now **imagine that you are the chief priests and the teachers of the law.** You preside over this whole thing. You have approved of how this whole thing has been going... it's your terrain... your territory... your area of expertise. And in comes this guy calling you out and disrupting this whole enterprise. And not only that, he is quoting Scripture against you! That is also supposed to be your area of expertise! Can you imagine yourself in this role? How would that feel?

Look - Connections to our world today

- *Now, let's try something different. Let's imagine the same story, but it's 2026 in Bellingham. Jesus is coming! He's coming home! How might this scene play out today?*
- Where is Jesus showing up, looking to see God's peace, justice, mercy, and love at work in the world?
- In this place where Jesus shows up, how is business just being carried out as usual? Where are the values of business and money-making overshadowing the work of worship and peace-making?
- How have, or are, church leaders misrepresenting God's kingdom? As Tim mentioned in his sermon, this might bring up times for you when you have been hurt by the church, or profoundly disappointed by church leaders or other Christians. This is a safe place to share those experiences.



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- What are the disciples doing in this scenario in 21st century Bellingham? Are they still confused? Or have they figured out what God's kingdom is really about?
- Which character do you most identify with?

Took - Personal Application

- *This application focuses on **how God is calling us to respond**. This could be personally, as a family, small group, or church. It could be something to believe, to meditate on, to say or do this week.*
- In the sermon, Tim talked about the temple being a place of image and style, but lacking the substance of God's character. He likened this to having a messy and embarrassing basement that you don't want anyone to see. How are you like this temple? Maybe this ties in with the character you most identified with in the story? How are you keeping a basement hidden from God and others in your life? Your business life? Your faith life?
- What does it mean to invite God into your basement?
- How do you think God would react to your basement
- Do you believe that God can love you and your messy basement?

Time of Prayer