

Palm Sunday Sermon Dialogue with Jim Norris
The Beginning of the End

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The Cambridge Dictionary Online defines the beginning of the end this way: *the point where something starts to get gradually worse, until it fails or ends completely.*

Jim, some argue that our text from Matthew marks the beginning of the end for Jesus. While the people welcomed him to Jerusalem with exaltation—*Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!*—by the end of the week, they were clamoring for his death. “Give us Barabbas,” they demanded. What happened? Why did the people turn against Jesus?

As the week unfolded, Jesus was single-mindedly focused on his mission. He didn’t fret. He didn’t try to back out. He was a non-anxious presence. Would you say something about non-anxious leadership, especially as it applies to what we are facing today with the pandemic?

Jim, you are a licensed pastoral counselor. You have spent decades helping people negotiate crises. What do you say to people today? What help can you give us during these anxious days?

One more thing, Jim. I’ve titled this dialogue “The Beginning of the End.” But was it really? Was the end really then end?