KINGDOM of HEAVEN

A SERIES IN THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

Community Group Material

Matthew 12:22-37

Week of 22nd to 28th of October

The Battle of two Kingdoms

Leader Preparation

Read through the passage so that you are familiar with it. Read through the material on pages 32-34 of the CG leader manual. Look carefully through the notes and questions - it will not be possible to discuss all of the questions! Focus on those most relevant to your group in the discussion time.

We are focusing a bit on demonology and "the unforgivable sin" during the sermon and discussion – but try to make sure that you don't spend your whole group time going into this. We would like people to finish with the superiority of Jesus firmly cemented in their minds.

Spend some time praying for the members of your group, and asking God to guide you as you lead your time together.

Group time:

The Christmas trees are going up in shopping malls already! Ask your group members to share something about Christmas in their lives:

A special Christmas that I remember is when . . . .

A family Christmas tradition that I want to keep going. . .

My favourite character in the Christmas story. . .

A way I'd like to celebrate Christmas this year. . .

Exploring the Passage

READ Matthew 12:22-29

Today we are taking some time to look at the lies of Satan and the truths of Jesus in our lives.

Who is "the other team"?

Devil – slanderer, accuser	Matthew 4:1-11
Tempter	
Satan - adversary	
Beelzebul – leader of the demon host	Matthew 12

Have a look at the passages describing the demonology in Matthew. As a group, based on the stories, make a list of the statements, questions and accusations directed at Jesus by those who were against him.

For example: "if you are God". . .

What are some of the ways that we can be accused or condemned by Satan in our lives?

> *There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors.* CS Lewis, The Screwtape Letters

The revelation of Jesus through the eyes of Matthew gives us the true answer to so many of the stumbling blocks we can face. Just as in the wilderness, Jesus answered every accusation with "it is written", we can ground our trust solidly in him as we embed these truths in our lives.

What are the characteristics of Jesus that you see displayed in each of these aspects of his Christology? What questions / accusations of Satan do each of these characteristics give an answer to?

For example: Jesus being the true christ / messiah means that when we think that no-one would ever want to save or rescue us, we know that Jesus has already done so.

Who is Jesus?

Christ / Messiah	Matthew 1:1	
Son of David / King	Matthew 1:1, 2:2	
Saviour	Matthew 1:21	
Final judge	Matthew 3:11-12	
Son of God	Matthew 3:17	
Teacher	Matthew 7:28-29	
Lord	Matthew 8:2, 6	
Son of Man	Matthew 8:20	
Suffering servant	Matthew 12:18-21	

Read John 3:17. What is the difference in the reason that Satan makes us aware of our shortcomings, compared to God's purposes?

Satan condemns us accusingly, to make us feel guilty. God convicts us lovingly, to lead our hearts to repentance.

READ Matthew 12:30-37

What are the kinds of words that demonstrate that we are standing *with* Jesus?

What are the kinds of words that demonstrate that we are *against* Jesus?

How can we remain receptive to the words of Jesus that keep us on the road with him? What truth about his character do you need affirmed in your life at the moment?

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those who fear they have committed this sin, give a good sign that they have not. Matthew Henry

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Prayer

If Jesus were here on earth today, what do you think would distress him the most? Pray for these issues now – if you're running short of time, don't discuss before praying, just each pray for the issue that comes to mind in a time of open prayer so that you can all agree together.