

Message Discussion Guide

HE CAME TO DESTROY THE DEVIL

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt

December 6, 2009

1 John 2:28-3:10

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Encourage learners to share one event that they always looked forward to as a child. Then, invite them to describe an activity or event that they look forward to as an adult.

Explain that anticipation can be a frustrating and fun part of life but that the longer we wait, the harder it can be to wait expectantly. Explain that today we will look at how we should be awaiting Christ's return.

Option 2

Invite learners to share a time when their parents or other authority figure instructed them not to make their family look bad. Ask: *Have you ever embarrassed your family? How did it make you feel?*

Explain that today we will look at how we reflect being a child of God.

Review the Message . . .

Christmas Destruction...

- The reality of sin...
 - Sin's scope: universal.
 - Sin's nature: lawlessness.
 - Sin's origin: the devil.
- The reason Christ came...
 - His essence: without sin.
 - His mission: destroy sin.
- The result for Christians...
 - Our belief in Christ makes persistent sin inconceivable.
 - Our new birth in Christ makes persistent sin impossible.

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Discussion . . .

- Enlist a learner to read 1 John 2:28-3:10.
- Focusing on 1 John 3:4-8a. How did John describe sin in these verses? Specifically note the use of words like “everyone,” “lawlessness,” and “from the beginning.”
- How does the description of sin as lawlessness give a picture of violating God’s standards?
- John states that sin originated from the devil but that righteousness is from Christ. What do these statements indicate about the natures of Satan and of Christ?
- Read 1 John 3:8. What was the purpose of Jesus’ coming to earth? Why was Jesus the only one who was able to destroy the work of the devil?
- Looking at 1 John 3:6 & 9 how are Christ-followers supposed to react to sin?
- Knowing that John earlier referred to the surety that believers would sin (1 John 1:9), what kind of sin does he focus on in these verses?
- How does conscious, persistent sin contradict with a truly repentant heart?

Application . . .

- How does our understanding that sin is a violation of God’s law inform our view of sin? How does our culture view sin?
- How do we often discount sin as being of the devil when we justify it as “human nature” or “cultural advances”?
- In what ways do we defraud people into thinking that once they become believers, change is not necessary in their lives?
- Why would we think that a transformed life is not a part of following Christ?
- What kind of a faith would we have if it didn’t impact every area of our lives? Why would we even want that kind of a faith?

Christmas Anticipation...

- Jesus is not finished coming!
- When He comes back...
 - We will see Him.
 - We will be like Him.
- While we wait...
 - We fix our eyes on Him.
 - We purify our lives before Him.

Discussion . . .

- Enlist a learner to read 1 John 2:28 and 3:2. What word repeats in these verses?
- Describe what John says will happen when Jesus returns.
- What does it mean that we will “see” Jesus? According to Verse 2, how is becoming like Christ related to seeing Christ in His glory?
- Verses 2 and 3 explain how Christ’s followers are to wait for Him to return. What are they to be doing while they wait?

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- How do believers become like Christ now and see Christ now—before His return?

Application . . .

- How do we live as if Christ is returning one day?
- How can we become more expectant of Christ's return in our everyday lives?
- What are our eyes fixed on more than Christ?
- How can we intentionally make Christ a priority in our lives?

Christmas Option...

- We are either children of _____ the devil _____ ...
 - _____ Slaves _____ to sin.
 - _____ Deserving _____ death.
- Or we are children of _____ God _____.
 - _____ Free _____ from sin.
 - _____ Defeating _____ death.

Discussion . . .

- Focusing on 1 John 3:10, how are children of God and children of the devil to be identified?
- How should the two types of “children” differ from one another?
- How is the life of a believer changed when he seriously considers the purpose of Jesus' coming to earth?

Application . . .

- To which family do we most often reflect our belonging—the devil or Jesus?
- If we are not truly reflecting Christ in our lives, we are not living within His victory over the devil. How can we live victoriously?
- What is the danger in thinking and proclaiming that we are a part of God's family but not living a life that reflects that change?
- How would a person's life change if he / she began to truly believe that he / she were God's child?