

Small Group Guide THE KING'S AUTHORITY (PART 2)

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

February 12, 2012

Matthew 9

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to train your group into potential disciple-makers and lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects 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 an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word with His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.

Review—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. (The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time.) Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to review the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.

Prayer—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications for our lives. (As a training tool, leaders might want to have various members summarize the teachings in their own words each week sharing how they think the Scripture applied to the original hearers and how the principles apply to us today.)

Message Outline

THE KING'S AUTHORITY (PART 2) Matthew 9

The Basic Outline of Matthew 8-9...

- 3 Sections with 3 Miracle Stories (Matthew 8:1-17; 8:23-9:8; 9:18-34)
- 2 Sections with 2 Descriptions of Discipleship (Matthew 8:18-22; 9:9-17)

The Portrait of Jesus in Matthew 8...

- Jesus has authority over disease . . . over disciples . . . over disasters . . . and over demons.

The Portrait of Jesus in Matthew 9...

- Jesus has authority over sin.
 - Jesus' authority penetrates to the root of all suffering, which is sin...
 - Either in your life.
 - Or in the world.
 - Our ultimate need is never physical; it's always spiritual.
 - The good news of the kingdom...

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- Not that Jesus will heal you of all your sicknesses.
- But that Jesus will forgive you of all your sins.
- Forgiveness is God's greatest gift because it meets our greatest need.
- Jesus has authority to save.
 - The call of Matthew...
 - Jesus pursues sinners.
 - Jesus summons sinners.
 - Jesus satisfies sinners.
 - More than sick people need a doctor, sinful people need a redeemer.
 - The question about fasting...
 - Why disciples of Jesus didn't fast then...
 - After a thousand years of waiting, the king had finally come!
 - Why disciples of Jesus do fast now...
 - Those who celebrate the ascension of the king now crave the consummation of the kingdom.
- Jesus has authority over death.
 - He gives hope in the midst of despair.
 - He brings life in the midst of death.
- Jesus has authority over disability.
 - He is gently merciful.
 - He is the promised Messiah.
- Jesus has authority over the devil.
 - Jesus' ministry on earth: Satan has been defeated.
 - Jesus' promise for eternity: Satan will be destroyed.

The Bottom Line of Matthew 8-9...

- Jesus possesses absolute authority in the world.
 - He reigns over us supremely.
 - He loves us deeply.
- Jesus warrants absolute allegiance from the world.
 - The crowds revere him.
 - The proud reject him.
 - The faithful renounce everything to follow him.

The Personal Question from Matthew 8-9...

Message Summary

Today's message continues to look at King Jesus' authority as presented in Matthew 8—9. By looking at Jesus' miracles and His call of discipleship to Matthew, we see that Jesus holds all authority over sin, salvation, death, disability, and the devil—and an absolute authority over the world that warrants our absolute allegiance to Him, just like Matthew.

When Jesus healed the paralytic, He showed that freedom from sin, which is the root of all suffering, is always our ultimate need. Forgiveness of sin through Jesus is the good news of the Kingdom. When He called the tax collector, Matthew, He showed that He alone has the authority to save. As the Redeemer, He alone pursues and summons sinners to Himself and satisfies their every need. When He was questioned about fasting, His response shows that the King had come so His followers then did not need to fast then. Yet, we fast now as we await the final consummation of His Kingdom and pray for others to enjoy that Kingdom. When Jesus raised the dead girl, He showed that He has authority over death and that under His rule, death is temporary. When He healed the sick woman, He showed that we always have His attention and are never forgotten in our suffering. When He healed the blind men, He showed He is the gentle, merciful Messiah. And when He healed the demon-possessed paralytic, He showed His ultimate, final authority over the devil, who has been defeated at the cross and will one day be destroyed.

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The personal question we must ask ourselves in response to Matthew 8—9 is this: Will we gladly submit to Jesus' authority?

Group Discussion

Use the following questions to help review the application of God's Word to our Head (What does God want me to know?), to our Heart (What does God want me to desire/value?), and to our Hands (What does God want me to do?).

- Why is a correct understanding of Jesus' authority essential to strong confidence (faith) in Him?
- Related to Matthew 9:2, Pastor David said, "Our ultimate need is never physical; it's always spiritual." In what ways does understanding that fact change the way we view cancer, disabilities, other diseases, disasters, suffering, poverty, and hardships?
- Why is sin the root of all suffering?
- If some of the suffering in our lives is directly related to our own sin, how does discipline help us to run from sin? Why should we not rejoice in that kind of suffering? How do we know the difference?
- Why is the prosperity gospel not good news at all?
- How does realizing that our greatest need is never physical healing but spiritual healing change the way you value the gospel? The way you pray for sick friends? The way you share the gospel? The way you help others in need?
- When you consider the way Jesus related to the most obvious of sinners in His call of Matthew, what challenges you the most about Christ's relationship with sinners?
- Did Matthew do anything to cause Jesus to reach out to Him with His mercy and grace?
- Does the way you relate to "sinners" need to change in any way to align with the way Jesus related to sinners?
- Does your life show the people who live and work around you that Jesus satisfies sinners? How?
- Do you need to change anything about the way you live your life so those around you will truly know that Jesus does satisfy sinners?
- Why did Jesus' disciples not fast when He was with them? Why do we fast now? Is there a way you can fast and pray more intentionally?
- How has Christ's authority over death given you hope in a particular trying time?
- Are there any areas in your life in which you have been reluctant to reach out to Christ? If so, how does the tender way Jesus valued the sick woman offer you hope in the midst of despair?
- How does Jesus' absolute authority over everything in the world produce deeper faith in your heart? Why are both His supreme reign and deep love comforting and at the heart of the gospel?
- Will you gladly submit to Jesus' authority? If so, in what ways do you need to trust Him more deeply this week?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of today's study. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from this study?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from this study, what does God want you to desire/value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this study?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- What is going to be the most difficult aspect of this study to personally apply?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength to apply these truths, for personal needs, for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel, and for our weekly prayer focus as a church..

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Weekly Prayer Focus ... (from our worship guide)

- *Church: Pray that God would raise up and send out workers from our church to proclaim the good news of the kingdom, even from your own family. Pray that He would empower and equip the teams and workers we have already sent from among us. Pray that He would send workers from among us to join the teams we have sent into the harvest field that still need more workers. Pray that God would increase our compassion for the lost and hurting and increase our desire to see Him worshiped among all peoples.*
- *Local: This week we are praying for Lakeside Baptist, Breck T. Ladd, Pastor. We are also praying for our outreach to the middle school students and staff at Ossie Ware Mitchell Middle School located in East Lake. About one-third of their students are considered special needs and about 90% are on the federally subsidized lunch program.*
- *Global: This week we are praying for our Short-Term teams serving in North Africa and Atlanta. We are also praying for Brook Hills' partner, Urban Impact, serving unreached peoples in New York City who have immigrated to the U.S. Through English training centers and other outreach ministries, Urban Impact is making disciples among those who would never have the opportunity to hear the gospel in their own country.*