

## Small Group Guide

# THE REJECTION OF THE KING AND HIS AUTHORITY

*The Church at Brook Hills,*

*Deric Thomas*

*May 27, 2012*

*Matthew 21:23-22:46*

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 Rejection of the King and His Authority Matthew 21:23-22:46**

#### **1. Some question Jesus' authority. (21:23-27)**

- A. Is it from God or from man?
  - a. These questions often come from unbelief.
  - b. These questions often come from misplaced fear.

#### **2. Some reject God the Father and his authority. (21:28-22:14)**

- A. We see the rejection of one of his son's. (21:28-32)
  - a. This is a story of dead faith without works.
  - b. This is a story of confession without repentance and submission.
- B. We see the rejection of some of his servants. (21:33-46)
  - a. This is a story of selfish anger and greed.
- C. We see the rejection of some of his invited guests. (22:1-14)
  - a. This is a story of ingratitude, rebellion, obstinence, complacency and anger.
  - b. This is a story of nominal Christianity.
  - c. This is a story of eternal rejection.

#### **3. Jesus' rejecters often have underlying motives. (22:15-40)**

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- A. Some are power hungry and prideful. (22:15-22)
- B. Some are worldly and wannabes. (22:16-22)
- C. Some are secularist and materialist. (22:23-33)
- D. Some are deceived “experts” and cold-hearted “scholars”. (22:34-40)

#### 4. Jesus questions the questioners and rejecters. (22:41-46)

- A. Am I the Christ?
- B. Am I the Son of God?
- B. Am I the King of your heart?

#### 5. Some reject God the Holy Spirit and his authority. (22:43-44)

- A. His words through the prophets are rejected by some.
- B. His words in the Bible are rejected by some.

#### 6. God the Son’s final authority will always be rejected by some. (27:1-2, 24-26)

- A. By leaders and by followers.

#### 7. King Jesus’ deity and authority was and will be finally proven. (27:45-28:10)

- A. Through divine rejection. (27:45-50)
- B. Through divine resurrection. (28:1-10)
- C. Through glorious restoration. (28:20, Rev. 21:5)

**How will you respond to King Jesus today, his work and his authority?**

### *Message Summary*

Matthew intentionally wrote his gospel, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in a way that would clearly identify Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah to his Jewish audience. As the Messiah, Jesus possessed the authority of God in all things. He was the Authoritative King over nature, disease, people, sin, and salvation. His identity as the Messiah and King was revealed through His life and prophetic Scripture. Still, many people, including the religious leaders of the day, rejected His identity as the Messiah and His authority as the Son of God. When it seems they would have been the most spiritually mature, the religious leaders proved themselves to be hollow.

### *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?).

- In Mt. 22:23-27, the religious leaders questioned whether Jesus’ authority was from God or man. How did their discussion about how to answer Jesus’ own question reveal that they weren’t really interested in finding the truth? Why do you think they did not really want to know if Jesus was the Messiah?
- When we question the authority of Christ, particularly based on our requirements, how are we placing ourselves in the place of a higher authority?
- How does the story of the two sons in Mt. 21:28-32 give a picture of repentance? How does it give a picture of ‘lip service’ without action? Which of the two sons can you relate to the most?
- What is the difference between confession and Biblical repentance? What does our admission of guilt without accompanying actions of repentance reveal about our hearts?
- In what areas do you think most people struggle with the knowledge of sin without true repentance?
- What are some practical ways that we can repent with our actions that will help guard us against continual sin in the future?
- In the parable of the wedding feast, the first group of invited guests were not impressed by the invitation from the king. Although the farmer and businessman were not as violent as the murderers, why was their eternity still affected in the same way?

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- Do we sometimes differentiate between those who are hostile to the gospel and those who are complacent to it in our desire to share the gospel with them? Should we?
- How does pride and nominal Christianity influence others who think they are “good enough” to spend eternity with Christ, yet who have no relationship with Him?
- What are some of the evidences of a life directed by God versus a life directed by the approval of a sinful men or women?
- What does it mean to love God with our entire being? How is that life counter to our culture, which tries to instill that one’s faith must be relegated to a “religious” compartment that doesn’t interfere with any other areas of life?
- In Mt. 22:23-40, the Sadducees and Pharisees attempted to trick Jesus and destroy His authority by asking questions that were fairly irrelevant to His identity and to their eternity. How can we help others who have questions about Christianity to focus on important eternal matters instead of distracting, fairly insignificant questions?
- What do modern-day Pharisees and Sadducees look like in our culture? Can they also influence a local church? How?
- Knowing that some people will simply choose to reject Jesus, how can we respectfully and lovingly keep communication lines open with them so that God can be reflected through our lives?
- How is the authority of Christ evident in your life to those around you who are not Christ-followers? To those who know you best? Are there areas of your life that you are still trying to control or manipulate rather than surrender to His authority that you need your small group to pray about?
- How can we encourage one another to 1) submit to Christ’s authority and 2) to not grow weary in the face of others’ rejection of Him?

### **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..

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

- *For Our Lives: In light of everything we are studying this week, pray we would always readily respond to the call of the gospel. Ask God to prepare the hearts of the lost around us to hear and receive the truth of Jesus Christ. Pray we would generously and gladly render unto God all that is his. Ultimately, pray we would never tire of loving God with our hearts, souls and minds and loving our neighbors as ourselves. Praise god that our love for him and others flows directly from his love for us demonstrated by the gift of his Son.*
- *For Our City: This week we are praying for Liberty Park Baptist, Scott Muffin, Pastor. WE are also praying for the summer program for children at Marks Village. The Church at Brook Hills will assist*

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*our partner, Mission Birmingham, in providing gospel-centered learning activities for the children in Marks Village two days a week.*

- *For Our World: This week we are praying for our Short-Term team serving in Macedonia. We are also praying for Brook Hills Long-Term Missionaries, Gary and Elizabeth Wilkins serving in Sub-Saharan Africa. Gary and Elizabeth run By Provision, an organization drilling clean water wells in areas where access to clean water is difficult. They also run a discipleship center for teenagers in their area.*