

## Small Group Guide

# THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN AND THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

September 16, 2012

Revelation 8—11

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 LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN AND THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM

Revelation 8-11

#### Let's not miss the point.

- The purpose of Revelation is not to promote speculation about the future.
  - What are these trumpets?
    - 1-4: Systematic physical judgments across creation
    - 5-6: Terrifying personal judgments for idolatry and immorality
  - Why do we have these trumpets?
    - God is giving the world warning.
    - God is calling the church to war.
- The purpose of Revelation is to compel action in the present.
  - Fervently pray for God's kingdom to come.
  - Fearlessly proclaim God's gospel to all.

**Let's fervently pray for God's kingdom to come.**

- Our battle is fierce.

## Small Group Guide

### THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN AND THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM

---

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

September 16, 2012

Revelation 8—11

- There are demons who want to destroy you.
- There are forces that are fighting you.
- Our prayers are effective.
  - Our cries go up.
  - His kingdom comes down.
- Our God is faithful.
  - He will demonstrate His power over the gods of this world.
  - He will vindicate His people amid opposition in this world.
  - He will extend His mercy to sinners around this world.
  - He will uphold His justice amid sin in this world.

**Let's fearlessly proclaim God's gospel to all.**

- Our lives are secure.
- Our suffering is expected.
- Our task is prophetic.
- Our message is clear.
- Our light is unquenchable.
- Our souls are untouchable.
- Our power is invincible.
- Our death will be temporary.
- Our resurrection will be sure.
- Our mission will be complete.
- Our God will be glorified.
  - We will behold His majesty.
    - His judgments will be final.
    - His servants will be rewarded.
    - His enemies will be destroyed.
  - We will be welcomed by His mercy.

#### Message Summary

*Continuing the series on Revelation, today's message looks at the importance of prayer and proclamation in believers' lives, particularly believers who are suffering or fearful. By examining the seven trumpets, which repeat the cyclical symbolism judgment found in Revelation, we see the purpose of Revelation repeated: to compel action in the present. God's judgment is terrifying and His wrath is painful, and only those sealed by the Holy Spirit will receive protection from it. He also protects His people against demonic opposition as they proclaim His Word.*

*Believers constantly live in the midst of a fierce battle because of spiritual forces and the effects of sin in a fallen world, and our response to that battle is two part. First, believers must be committed to prayer. Faithfully, God answers His people's prayers for His Kingdom to come, and He shows His power over the gods, opposition, and sin in this world. His purposes are set, His power is sure, and His Kingdom will come. Second, believers must be faithful in proclaiming the gospel to the unbelieving world. As prophets with the responsibility to declare God's Word, we take comfort in the security we have in Christ despite the suffering we will face. Christ alone is our hope. Sealed by His Holy Spirit, we have the responsibility to take truth to the nations. The ultimate, three-word summary of Revelation is simple: Our God wins. That truth gives us hope and courage.*

*In response to His unshakable coming Kingdom, we must go—taking the gospel of Jesus to every part of the world, and we must pray—that His Kingdom come and His will be done, all in response to and grounded in His revealed Word.*

## Small Group Guide

### THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN AND THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM

---

*The Church at Brook Hills*

*Dr. David Platt*

*September 16, 2012*

*Revelation 8—11*

#### *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 the purpose of Revelation *not* to promote speculation? What does speculation about times and interpretations achieve?
- When you think about God's judgment in the world right now, what images or events come to mind? What about when you think of His judgment throughout history?
- According to the sermon, to what two actions does Revelation compel you? How would you rate yourself regarding time spent in prayer and proclamation? What specific activities hinder your prayers and proclamation? What spurs you on toward these actions?
- How does knowing and understanding God's Word fuel prayer and proclamation? Can you pray and proclaim rightly when not grounded in the Word? Why not?
- Think about the physical judgments announced by the first four trumpets. What physical, created things are you tempted to worship instead of the Creator?
- Think about the personal judgments for idolatry and immorality announced by the fifth and sixth trumpet (see Revelation 9:20-21). Even though sin always destroys, why do people continually run back to it? How have you seen people go deeper into rebellion despite the terror and wrath they have faced?
- When is it easiest to have an "at war" mentality as a Christian? When is it most difficult? Does our mindset change the status of the war we are in?
- What does it mean to pray for God's Kingdom to come? How do we do that? How does that prayer change our values? Our actions?
- What is the role of a prophet? Do you see yourself as a prophet? Why should you value your role as a prophet?
- As you've spent time in prayer, where specifically has God led you to share the gospel? What opposition did you face as you obeyed Him, and how did He sustain you through it? How is God leading you to share His gospel in the future? What action steps are required to get you there?
- How do the three-words, "Our God wins," summarize the Book of Revelation?
- Read the word of the twenty-four elders in Revelation 11:17 and consider the missing words, "who is to come." How does knowing that His Kingdom will indeed come—fully and finally—fuel your mission?

#### ***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)**

- **Church:** *Pray for the church planting teams we have sent out from among us, that God would protect them and sustain them as they share the gospel. Pray that we would be faithful to proclaim the gospel loyally and patiently here in Birmingham. Pray that God would come quickly to bring justice to the earth.*
- **Local:** *Pray for Discovery Clubs, the after-school campus clubs for elementary age students in our public schools where children can hear the gospel and study the Bible together. We are also praying this week for Christ Church, Paul Lawler, Pastor.*
- **Global:** *Pray for the Short-Term opportunities God has created for our faith family next year. The Church at Brook Hills strategically sets Short-Term trips for the advancement of the gospel and the strengthening of the church where it exists. Pray for the different elements that go into creating these opportunities, and ask God to show you where He wants you to make disciples this next year around the globe.*