

Home Group Study Material for w/c 1st November 2010

Matthew 12:15-21 “Jesus, God’s message to us”

Suggested questions for discussion – as usual please modify them as appropriate for your group

The aim of the study is to explore the truth that it’s vital to have a clear understanding of Jesus – who he is, and what he has done for us. Without this understanding we may deny the power of the gospel in our own lives and (just as seriously) mislead others.

1. ‘Intro’ question: Why are friends special? How do we develop ‘acquaintances’ into ‘friends’? What are the activities/steps that are needed before this happens?
2. How are Christians generally viewed by non Christians? How is Jesus generally viewed by non Christians? Discuss any differences between these views and why they exist. Are these differences valid? If not what is the ‘real’ situation?
3. Why is it such a common misconception, even among churchgoers, that grace (Jesus’ work on the cross) is not sufficient and that we need to do something more if we are to get to heaven? (You might find it helpful to read Romans 5:1-11)

Please read Matthew 12:15-21

4. Matthew 12:18-21 is a modified quotation of Isaiah 42:1-4. It’s one of the most beautiful descriptions of Jesus anywhere in the Bible. I spoke of five characteristics that these verses reveal about him: Jesus carried out God’s plan; was commended by the Father; was commissioned by the Holy Spirit; was confident in his calling; and will complete his victory over sin and Satan. Discuss why each of these characteristics is important for us to know about Jesus as well as share with others. Are there any other characteristics you can identify?
5. The task of the church has been described as disturbing the comfortable, and comforting the disturbed? (William Temple, a former Archbishop of the CofE) Which group are you in: the comfortable or the disturbed (c.f. v20 a battered reed / smouldering wick)? Assuming William Temple was right in his comment, how well is Southover doing its job?!
6. At the end of sermon, I gave some ‘homework’ for people to do: “work on getting to know Jesus better”. I suggested five ways: “Spend quality time with him; read the Bible; talk to him in prayer; talk to other people about him; and to enjoy him”. How have you got on with this? Are these things that you already did regularly? Which do you find easier and which harder? Are there any more ways of getting to know Jesus better? Should you be making any changes in these areas?

Issued by Jeremy Bamber
29/10/10