

Home Group Study Material for w/c 29th November 2010
Matthew 12:38-45 Lessons from history

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 we have enough evidence in the Bible to trust God without the need for further signs and wonders. The biggest of these is the death and resurrection of Jesus – evidence that is available to us, but was not available to the Pharisees etc.! God wants us to have a relationship with him that is based on love and trust. We must be wary of demanding more ‘proof’ from him.

1. *‘Intro’ question:* Talk about an important relationship in your life. Why is it important? What part does trust play in that relationship?
2. Are you a generally trusting person? Or do you tend to be suspicious of other people and their motives? Does it make a difference how well you know a person and/or how long you have known them? Is evidence or proof important to you?

Please read Matthew 12:38-45

3. Why was the request of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law for a miraculous sign in verse 38 unreasonable? Give examples of people behaving in a similar way today, i.e. trying to strike bargains with God (“I’ll believe in you if you do this thing for me...). Have you ever been tempted to do something like that? What was the result?
4. Why did Jesus pick out the examples of Jonah and Nineveh, and the Queen of Sheba in verse 39 -42? What do we learn from them?
5. What stops people from trusting and responding to Jesus? What were the things that you personally found difficult to accept (or still do!)? Be as specific as you can be.
6. What do verses 43-45 teach us about the dangers of remaining neutral?
7. Everyone has doubts. That is entirely natural. But on what, or who, is the future hope in your life actually built? Is it on the ‘security’ of your job, your marriage, your abilities, your pension, or something similar? Is it based on some vague hope that “all will be well in the end”? Or does your hope come from trusting in a real and active relationship with the living God through his Holy Spirit? What might you do this week to ensure that your hope really is centred on your relationship with God?

Issued by Jeremy Bamber
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