

Home Group Study Material for w/c 23rd January 2012
Hope in dark times – Matthew 24:1-51

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

This is not an easy passage – much theological blood has been metaphorically spilt arguing over certain aspects such as dates and times! I suggest therefore that you focus instead, as I did in my sermon, on the idea that even in the darkest of times Christians can face the future with hope and confidence.

1. *'Intro' question:* What are you most looking forward to happening in 2012?

Please read Matthew 24:1-14, 36-44

2. Why has God allowed complicated and difficult parts to be included in the Bible? Doesn't this make faith more difficult? Is it reasonable to be expected to trust what the Bible says about something, when we don't understand exactly what it means? What are the parts of the Bible that people find difficult?
3. ⁴ *Jesus answered: "Watch out that no-one deceives you.*
⁵ *For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.*

Why do people claim to be Christ? What are the dangers of these people?

4. What are the other types of false saviours that people might be tempted to go after in their search for answers to their problems? How can we make sure that we are not deceived by them?
5. Why is the fact that Jesus will return good news for Christians?
6. Will Jesus' return be good news for everyone? Who won't it be good news for?
7. What difference should Jesus' Second Coming make to our lives? When was the last time you said to yourself "Could Jesus return today?" Jesus says that we're to "Keep watch" and "Be ready" (verse 42, 44). How do we best do that?
8. Finish the meeting with a time of prayer that includes giving thanks for the promise of Jesus' return and asking for courage to do any actions identified in question 7

Issued by Jeremy Bamber
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