

C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS

S2022-WEEK 6

3/6/22

Listen to, Learn about, and Love on one another

- Please share with your group a time when you heard someone make a statement that was partially true. How did you handle that situation?

Getting Started with a Warm-Up:

- Please share with your group a time when you listened to a sermon by a pastor or evangelist and doubted whether their interpretation of scripture was appropriate. How did you handle that situation?

Getting Down to Business:

The following questions are following this format: Scripture/Observation, Application, and Prayer (SOAP).

1) Scripture/Observation:

A) Read Matthew 24:11-12 (see passage and commentary below). How does Jesus describe the time leading up to His return? What does it mean that “the love of many will grow cold?”

11 And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people. 12 Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold. (Matthew 24:11–12 NLT)

Jesus' prediction regarding the destruction of the temple (24:1-2) leads to two questions from the disciples in 24:3. The disciples wish to know (1) When will the temple be destroyed? and (2) What will be the sign that the Son of Man is about to return? In his response Jesus does not dwell on these questions but rather focuses on a related and more practical

C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS

S2022-WEEK 6

3/6/22

concern: In light of the second coming of Christ, how ought persons to live?

Mt 24:4-44 provides four answers to this question. First, disciples must take every precaution that they not be deceived by false Christs who will appear (vv.4, 5, 11, 24). Jesus predicts that persecutions and catastrophes will occur throughout the remainder of history (vv.5-14) and will be especially oppressive at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem (vv.15-28; Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in a.d. 70). Such events will spawn false prophets (v.11) who will declare themselves to be the returning Christ. Jesus warns his disciples beforehand that such persons are mere pretenders, for when Jesus returns it will be with unmistakable glory and majesty (vv.27-31). (Asbury Bible Commentary, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+24%3A11-12&version=NLT>, accessed 2/25/22)

B) Read 2 Timothy 4:3-4 (see passage and commentary below). How would you describe the people Paul is prophesying about in this passage? Are there people that you know of that fit this description?

3 For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will reject the truth and chase after myths. (2 Timothy 4:3-4 NLT)

V 1-5: PREACHING PRIORITY Bearing in mind that Jesus will come as judge, Timothy is told to 'Preach the word!' This he must do all the time with different approaches but always 'with all long-suffering and teaching'. Men will prefer made up fables and things they want to hear rather than the sound doctrine of God's Word. Timothy must be watchful, persevering, working as an evangelist, and fulfilling his ministry. (The Bible Panorama commentary, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Timothy+4%3A3-4&version=NLT>, accessed 2/25/22)

C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS

S2022-WEEK 6

3/6/22

C) 1 Peter 3:15-16 (see passage and commentary below). What two things does Peter encourage Christians to do as they face a world hostile to what they believe? [Hint: a) Be ready to speak the truth; b) Live a right life]

15 Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. 16 But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. (1 Peter 3:15-16 NLT)

Christians may, however, still suffer for righteousness. But that fact does not cancel out God's promise of blessing (3:14). Rather, when they suffer for doing good they must respond as agents of God's blessing (recall 3:9). Peter outlines three such responses (3:14b-16). First, they must not be intimidated by the threats of their adversaries. Second, they must recognize that Christ is the Master of the situation. Third, they must be prepared to share the reason for their hope (for their Christian lives) to anyone who asks. Peter assures them that by explaining their hope appropriately they will vindicate themselves in the face of their accusers (3:16). Each of these responses finds its roots in a principle that was illustrated and vindicated by Jesus Christ. The principle is this: If it comes to a choice between suffering for doing good or not suffering by doing evil it is always better (and pleasing to God) to suffer (3:17). [Asbury Bible Commentary, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Peter+3%3A15-16&version=NLT>, accessed 2/25/22.]

D) Read 1 Timothy 6:20-21. What important challenge did Paul give Timothy? What warning did Paul give Timothy?

20 Timothy, guard what God has entrusted to you. Avoid godless, foolish discussions with those who oppose you with their so-called knowledge. 21 Some

C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS

S2022-WEEK 6

3/6/22

people have wandered from the faith by following such foolishness. (1 Timothy 6:20-21 NLT)

Paul closes by commanding Timothy to be vigilant for the truth. Knowledge suggests that an early form of gnosticism may have existed in Ephesus (see Introduction: Purpose). However, Paul may be ridiculing a system that exalts the human mind and claims special knowledge but that is antithetical to the clear teachings of Christ. Staying true to Christ's teachings requires grace; thus Paul's benediction. You is plural, including more than Timothy. Only with God's grace can we conduct ourselves as God's household. (Asbury Bible Commentary, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Timothy+6%3A20-21&version=NLT>, accessed 2/25/22)

2) Application:

A) What do you need to do to be ready to explain your faith when challenged?

B) Spend time watching "The One Minute Apologist" (<https://www.youtube.com/user/oneminuteapologist>) on YouTube to learn more about defending your Christian faith.

3) Prayer: During your time in prayer, thank God that He has given many evidences for the truth of who He is and the validity of His Word. Ask that you would have the boldness and confidence to proclaim what you believe.