

SESSION 2

GREATER LOVE

the amazing story of hope and redemption

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SESSION 2

READ

Take some time in advance to read and consider the Bible study questions and come up with personal examples to encourage discussion.

WATCH

Make sure everyone can see the screen and the audio is at a comfortable level.

DISCUSS

We hope those who participate in the study walk away knowing, feeling, and doing differently as a result of amazing discussion.



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OPEN

As you open up today, Why is the question of authority a significant question?

What jumped out at you from the message this week? What led you to really think or even better, to change your actions?

WATCH

What jumped out at you from the video?

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever heard the saying 'The road to hell is paved with good intentions?'

the conflict in this encounter between Jesus and the religious leaders was over the issue of authority, specifically Jesus' authority, which they

questioned and which they feared would threaten their own positions of authority. Regardless of their, or our intentions, when we fail to submit to Jesus' authority we set ourselves up for failure and 'pave the way' to ruin.

READ

READ Matthew 21:23-27

There was just one question the Jewish leaders had for Jesus: "By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?"

By these things, they probably meant everything Jesus had been teaching and doing, but they particularly had in mind His abrupt and, in their eyes, utterly devastating cleansing of the Temple the day before.

How did Jesus answer the Jewish leaders' question?

Jesus answers their question with another question which is in effect the same question but focused not on himself but on John the Baptist. Where did his authority come from?

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What sort of dilemma did this create for the chief priests and elders?

As they began reasoning among themselves, they saw they would be in trouble for whichever answer they gave. If they were to say, "From heaven," Jesus would then say to them, "Then why did you not believe him?" They realized that if they answered the opposite way they would also be in trouble. If they said John's ministry and message were from man they would lose what little credibility they had with the people and would even incite their hatred, because the crowd/multitude still considered John to be a prophet.

How would you describe righteousness? This is how Jesus describes John and the leaders missed it. Where do you see and experience righteousness today? Do we at times miss it too?

Answers may vary.

Like the chief priests, what do we in the church need to let go of to be more like the church that God has intended?

Answers may vary.

The chief priests did not want to recognize John the Baptist as a prophet. Where is God present today that we would rather not recognize?

Answers may vary.

Jesus did not wield coercive authority. He invited people to follow him. He came to serve not be served. He came to give life, life in its fullness. He came to lead people into the full development of all they could be and were meant to be. How do I respond to this invitation from Jesus?

Answers may vary.

Do we appreciate the authority that is delegated to us in proclaiming the truth of Jesus, are we comfortable with it?

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Answers will vary

Are you ever afraid to tell the truth?

Answers will vary

If we know the truth are we are obligated to tell it?

Answers will vary.

Do we let human respect dictate our words? Do we make decisions with a view to preserving our position and power?

How can we use this passage to equip us as followers of Jesus?

LET'S PRAY

Consider the following questions as you pray together as a LifeGroup.

- Are you blind to the light of Jesus?
- Have you found yourself in positions of mistrust or doubt of your faith in God?
- What steps do you take when you find yourself in this place?
- Do you turn to Him or do you turn to the wisdom of this word?



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BIG IDEA

As we get closer to the arrest, crucifixion and cross, the tension between Jesus and the current, established religious leaders is rising. Jesus has been challenging their authority since he began his ministry and rarely does someone in power enjoy being challenged. At the root of this exchange is the unorthodox approach that Jesus has taken in regards to healing the sick and forgiving sins. The religious leaders followed a strict regimen of rules and protocol, which they derived from the Old Testament, and Jesus threw nearly all of that out of the window.

BIBLE STUDY NOTES

READ Matthew 21:23-27

Lined area for Bible study notes.

GET PERSONAL

Who or what is your authority in this world?

Three horizontal lines for personal reflection.

What authority does Jesus have? If he turned up today, would we want to see his qualifications before allowing him to preach?

Three horizontal lines for personal reflection.

God is busy in our world, trying to get people to see clearly. Like the priests and elders, do I sometimes evade the truth of what God is trying to tell me?

Three horizontal lines for personal reflection.

