KINGDOM of HEAVEN

A SERIES IN THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

Community Group Material

Matthew 21:23-32

Week of Sunday 7th July

True Faithfulness

Leader Preparation

Read Chapter 21:23-46, and pages 22-24 of the leader notes.

A large part of this week's theme is true faithfulness – actually following the instructions of God and not just paying them lip service. Pray for your group members, that they would be able to be honest with themselves firstly and with the rest of the group regarding their lives. This is an opportunity for renewal of our commitment to Jesus the Messiah.

Group Time:

We are in the deep cold of winter at the moment. Share in your group about something you love to do to feel warm and cosy when it's cold outside.
Many people in Johannesburg struggle through the cold outside. As individuals, how do you try to help people who have less that you, especially at this time of year?

Exploring the Passage

READ Matthew 21:23-32

Jesus' authority questioned (vv23-27)

What is the REAL question that the religious leaders want Jesus to answer?

[are you the MESSIAH?!]

Have a look at Matthew 14:5 and Matthew 27:17. In each of these situations, we see a leader unable to take a decision, depending on popular opinion to guide them.

- Do you feel confident about who Jesus is and where His authority comes from?
- When you find yourself in a public arena, how willing are you to declare your beliefs about Jesus?
- What should Jesus' followers be doing today that would challenge the powers of the present world with the news that he is indeed its rightful Lord?
- What should we be doing that would make people ask, 'By what right are you doing that?'

The two sons (vv28-32)

Which son are you more in danger of imitating?

- Are there ways that you are outwardly rebelling against God and choosing not to publicly follow him?
- What area of life are you not carefully following God in? How can you bring that area under his authority again, recognizing him as the true master?
- If people look at your life, would they think that you follow Jesus?
- Is this a true reflection of your heart?

Prayer

Divide into slightly smaller groups than usual – perhaps men and women, perhaps groups of 3 or 4.

Start by worshiping God in prayer together and giving thanks for anything you are grateful for.

Then share your prayer needs and pray for these.

Lastly, pray for each other individually, asking God to strengthen each person as they try to follow Jesus wholeheartedly (or to get to know him better if they are not there yet)

Encourage your group members to follow up with one another during the week.