

Small Group Curriculum

Week of 11/18/12

1. Have volunteers read Mark 13:24-37.
2. In our culture, what are some ways that people work out their need to know what's going to happen in the future? What are some "secular" ways people attempt to predict the future? What about more "religious" or "mystic" ways?
3. In verses 28-30, Jesus directed the conversation back to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Jesus first delivered these words in 33 AD, thirty-seven years in advance of the fall of their capital. How hard would it have been for the Jesus' followers to have been mindful of prophecy over the years? What natural emotional responses would they have had to overcome?
4. Jesus said that his words would last longer than the current created order. What was he saying about himself? What implication does this have about how we respond to all of his teachings?
5. In verses 32-37, Jesus seems to be returning the conversation back to the End of Time. In verses 32-33, why do you think Jesus' made it clear that accurately guessing the date of his return was impossible? How would knowing the date of Jesus' return be a barrier for being ready for his return?
6. If the date of Jesus' return is hidden from us, why do so many religious people attempt to figure it out? What's driving this?
7. According to the text, what is Jesus directing our attention to?
8. Explain that in vs. 32-35, Jesus is telling a mini-parable about a doorkeeper who holds the keys to the house during the night. His job is to keep robbers out and only unlock the door for the rightful owner of the house. What does it mean to stay spiritually awake?
9. Matthew's gospel contains a parallel and more expanded version of Jesus' teaching. Matthew includes two parables that will help explain what it means to "Stay awake."
10. Have a volunteer read Matthew 25:10-12. What separated the wise women from the foolish ones? What specific decisions and actions do we need to do in order to be ready for Jesus' coming?
11. Have a volunteer read Matthew 25:14-30. How does this parable add to our understanding of what it means to stay spiritually awake?
12. What's the difference between living spiritually awake and spiritually anxious?