



LEADER'S GUIDE

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: Study Session #4
The Countdown

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE

FEB 11 - MAR 18

#cedargrovechurch

SHARING QUESTIONS

LEADERS: Have everyone pair up initially and then go around and have a few people give their response to the sharing question below. (5-7 minutes)

- Share something you learned from the Count for Zero devotions this past week. Either from the reading or about the Unreached People Group.

PAIR UP AND PRAY

- Ask the Lord to open your hearts to help you engage around His word.
- Pray about anything significant that happened to you in the past week.

THE COUNTDOWN

THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS

Simply put, the second coming of Jesus creates both a sense of **urgency** and **accountability**.

AN ADMONITION AND A WARNING

The Admonition: We don't have all the **time** in the world

The Warning: There is a job Jesus is expecting to find us **busy doing** when He returns!

THE DISCIPLES ASKED JESUS AN IMPORTANT QUESTION

3 As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

Matthew 24:3

What did He do? He answered their question and he answered it in some very specific and detailed ways:

- a. **He started out** by talking about the fact that deception would increase.

*4 Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. **Matthew 24:4-5***

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- The **spirit** of deception is growing all over the world.
- **Fake news** is a proven reality.

b. The Second sign Jesus told them to watch for was signs of war:

6 You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. 7 Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. Matthew 24:6-7

- Nations are threatening **nuclear** annihilation, and
- Openly **testing** weapons of mass destruction.

c. The Third sign to watch for are changes in the **environment**.

... And there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. Matthew 24:7

All these are the beginning of birth pains. Matthew 24:8

d. The Fourth signs to watch for...

9 "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. 10 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, 11 and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Matthew 24:9-11

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- There is a growing **hatred** towards Christians.
- **Wickedness** is clearly increasing.
- **Love** is clearly decreasing.

12 Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, Matthew 24:12

13 but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. Matthew 24:13

HOW WILL WE STAND IN THESE TIMES?

- You are going to stand by **Grace** and **Truth**. His truth fills your heart and is essential to us standing.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. Matthew 24:14

THE COUNTDOWN

COME BACK TO LOVE AND DO A HEART CHECK...

MATTHEW 24:15-35

15 “So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let no one on the housetop go down to take anything out of the house. 18 Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. 19 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! 20 Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again.

22 “If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. 23 At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. 24 For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you ahead of time.

26 “So if anyone tells you, ‘There he is, out in the wilderness,’ do not go out; or, ‘Here he is, in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it. 27 For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 28 Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather.

29 “Immediately after the distress of those days “the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’

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30 “Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth[c] will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. 31 And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

32 “Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. 33 Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. 34 Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. 35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

JAMES 4:7-9

7 Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. 8 You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord’s coming is near. 9 Don’t grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

TALK ABOUT THE TIMES

- Are you seeing evidence of the ‘spirit’ of deception growing today? If so where?
- As you have watched, heard, and listened to reports about North Korea and it’s bomb testing, what thoughts have you had?
- As you have watched, heard, and listened to President Trump responding to the Kim Jon-un, what thoughts have you had?
- Hatred, is a strong concept, what is the general attitude and atmosphere towards Christians in your world? (work, school, gym, neighborhood?)
- ‘Many will turn away,’ - As you read or hear this phrase think about what have you experienced in your lifetime? Have you ever felt tempted to turn away?
- In what ways are you seeing evidence of wickedness increasing and in what ways are you seeing love decreasing?

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STOP AND THINK

*36 “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 37 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; 39 and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. 40 Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. 41 Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. **Matthew 24:36-41***

- Brainstorm as many ways as you can think of as to how the Days you are living in compare with the times/days of Noah.
- Who will be taken and who will be left? (see 1 Thess. 4:16-18)

LOOKING INSIDE

Looking inside our own hearts is always the hardest thing for us to do. We are much more comfortable keeping the conversation on a cognitive or on an others level; but this is very dangerous for us to do. This is exactly the way the blinding power of hypocrisy grows covers over eyes. We simply lose touch with who we are and our own deep need of Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you confront the next three questions truthfully.

- What evidence do you see of your love growing cold (not caring)?
- Where has wickedness increased in you? Are there things you watch, read, listen to, go to, or do, that you use to not watch, read, listen to, go to, or do? (Compromise)
- How do you do with hatred? More specifically people not liking you or even being mean or rejecting you because of what you believe?

Talk together about a step or two that you can take to realign yourselves with God's will and way for your life.

PRAYING INTO THIS

LEADERS: This can be done either in pairs or as a whole group.

- End the evening interceding on behalf of each other specifically around the correction and redirection aspects you have just shared with each other.

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NOTES