

“Religious Wars”

Clash #4- Kingdoms in Conflict

INTRODUCTION

Religion is defined as an organized system of beliefs, ceremonies, and rules used to worship a god or a group of gods. Unfortunately when a religion attempts to replace the one true God and His redemptive plan with their own plans, we find a clash of epic proportion. This study considers why ‘religious attempts’ are futile to garner God’s attention, affection or to appease him through our efforts, and how Jesus has ‘defeated’ the enemy and through his blood enlists us for our originally created purpose, which is to partner with him to fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

Ice Breaker (Optional): What religion were you raised in, if any?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

The Reality of Our World

Q1. Read 1 Samuel 8:7-8, Psalm 2:1-3; Isaiah 59:1-3; Revelation 5:1-4

Because each of us has sinned, beginning with Adam in the garden, our rights to our eternal inheritance were forfeit. What do 1 Samuel 8:7-8 and Psalm 2:1-3 reveal about man’s attitude toward God’s sovereignty over them? What is one consequence of our sin, found in Isaiah 59:2? As a result of these truths, what happened when the angel in Revelation 5:2 asked the question “Who is worthy to open the scroll [the title-deed to our inheritance]?” Without God’s intervention, what would be the fate of all mankind?

God’s Solution

Q2. Read Revelation 5:5-8; Colossians 2:14-15

What we are unable to accomplish in our own religious efforts, Jesus accomplished at the cross. How does Revelation 5:5-8 identify the one who conquered? Who has direct access to the throne of God and is worthy to take the scroll? What are some of the “religious practices” through which people attempt to gain access to God, but can’t. What did Jesus do the triumph over rulers and authorities (Colossians 2:14-15)?

Creation’s Response

Q3. Read Revelation 5:9-10; 1 Peter 2:9-10

With his blood, Jesus purchased people from every tribe tongue and nation (Revelation 5:9-10). What does Revelation 5:10 tell us He

made them to be, and what they will do? What else does 1 Peter 2:9 tell us we are called to do? Where do you have an opportunity to proclaim the excellencies of God? Revelation 5:13 says “every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" How do you experience creation reflecting God’s glory?

Our Mandate

Q4. Read Psalm 96:1-5; Mark 16:15; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; 2 Corinthians 2:14-16

Psalm 96:5 gives us a concise statement about the gods worshiped by other religions. It does not however, direct us to be confrontational towards those of other religions. What is the role we have according to Mark 16:15 and 2 Corinthians 5:17-20? Even when we approach others in that role, we may not be well received. How does 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 explain why some will reject our message? Have you ever witnessed someone’s negative response to the gospel? If so, how did you respond?

WRAP-UP

There are many religions in this world seeking to reach God on their own terms and through their own efforts. God has provided the one and only way for us to reach Him, through the blood of Jesus that purchased us and grants us access to our inheritance of eternal life. In response to this great gift of grace, we join with all of creation in the glorious praise of God. And it is our mandate to proclaim this good news, as ambassadors of reconciliation, spreading the knowledge of God to everyone, even those who will refuse to accept it.

Memory Verse

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.
2 Corinthians 5:20 ESV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members’ needs: _____

Challenge: Be aware this week of the opportunities you have to be an ambassador of reconciliation to someone who needs to know God.

Q1

1 Samuel 8:7-8 ESV - 7 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but **they have rejected me from being king over them.** 8 According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you.

Psalms 2:1-3 ESV - 1 Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us."

Isaiah 59:1-3 NLT - 1 Listen! The LORD's arm is not too weak to save you, nor is his ear too deaf to hear your call. 2 It's your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, he has turned away and will not listen anymore. 3 Your hands are the hands of murderers, and your fingers are filthy with sin. Your lips are full of lies, and your mouth spews corruption.

Revelation 5:1-4 ESV - 1 Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, 4 and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.

Q2

Read Revelation 5:5-8 in your

Colossians 2:14-15 ESV - 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Q3

Revelation 5:9-10 ESV - 9 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, 10 and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

1 Peter 2:9-10 ESV - 9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Read Revelation 5:11-14 in your

Q4

Psalms 96:1-5 ESV - 1 Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth! 2 Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. 3 Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples! 4 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods. 5 For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

Mark 16:15 ESV - 15 And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.

2 Corinthians 5:17-20 ESV - 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 2:14-16 ESV - 14 But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. 15 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, 16 to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

Prayers Con't: _____
