

Angry Jesus – Soft Heartedness

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Matthew 12:22-32

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Small Group Discussion Questions

We want to understand what made Jesus angry so we can have clarity

To be freed from the vague sense God is always angry at us and learn what he cares enough about to raise his voice.

*How can this clarity help you in your understanding of anger?

Read and discuss

Matthew 12:22-30 (ESV)

²² Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw. ²³ And all the people were amazed, and said, "Can this be the Son of David?" ²⁴ But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons." ²⁵ Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. ²⁶ And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? ²⁷ And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. ²⁸ But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²⁹ Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house. ³⁰ Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

*Who or what was Jesus angry about in the passage? Who or what was he not angry at?

There can be no neutrality anymore with Jesus – you have to choose

The choice Jesus gives to the Pharisees is the choice you and I face again and again.

*What are the implications of Jesus' anger at the Pharisees for us?

God is full of a lot of grace for us and we can trust him and grace can sting

Embracing who Jesus is makes us admit some truths about ourselves that can hurt

*How has knowing he is trustworthy helped you choose him?

*What is it about grace that causes it to sting?

Read and discuss

Matthew 12:31-32 (ESV)

³¹ Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³² And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

*Why does speaking against the Holy Spirit seem to mean here?

*Why is this not something that can be done accidentally or passively?

Soft heartedness is really important to God

This is revealed by our ability to be redirected by God, to be open to information we don't already have.

*What are some ways you can gauge how soft hearted you are?

Every person hardens their heart in an attempt to protect something that hurts, something we don't want to lose, something we don't want to risk.

*If you are willing to share, is there something you are hardening your heart about?

*How would it sting to let Jesus past your defenses?

*What is a way you think you could begin to soften your heart to his deep, deep love for you?

*This week, lean in to the idea that Jesus wants to get past your defenses out of his love for you. Ask him to help you to stop fighting him and begin to soften.