

COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE**COVID Exposures**

SCHEMES OF THE DEVIL & FEAR

OVERVIEW

This COVID-era, along with all the other tensions pressing in on us, has exposed various issues we constantly face. To be sure, COVID didn't cause these issues any more than a truck driving over a bridge causes a crack to finally give way. As followers of Jesus, we need to be attentive to the world around us and the temptations inside of us that we might apply the truth of the gospel to all parts of our lives as we seek to find complete joy in Jesus.

APPLY // SCHEMES OF THE DEVIL

Main Idea: We have to be attentive to the ways the Devil intends to deceive us, pull us away from sound doctrine and life. The real danger comes from within, not without.

1. Read John 8:39-47. (See also 2 Corinthians 11:12-15).
2. Jesus, and the rest of Scripture, knows the devil is real. What's the danger in believing the devil isn't real and powerful? What's the danger in focusing too much on the devil?
3. Discuss the various terms Jesus uses to describe the devil.
4. Knowing Satan's aim is to "murder by lies," disguising himself as an "angel of light" in order to keep us from beholding the glory of Christ, what might be some common lies he would have us believe? How would these lies keep us from seeing the glory of Christ?
5. Personally speaking, what are some lies he might use to deceive you? Why is it important that we identify the lies we're tempted to believe?
6. Discuss what it looks like to put off irreverent babble (cf. 2 Tim. 3) and put on the whole armor of God (cf. Eph. 6:10-20). How does the church community help us in this sanctifying process?
7. What role does corporate worship, community groups, and every-member discipling relationships play into fighting the schemes of devil?

OBSERVE & INTERPRET // FEARS

Main Idea: Living in a broken, sinful world presents us with many things to be fearful about, but we have greater reasons not to fear – the Lord's character, care, and promises.

1. Read Psalm 56.
2. Who wrote this Psalm? What are some facts we know about the author?
3. Describe the situation of the Psalmist finds himself in? Specifically look at verses 1-2 and 5-7.
4. Notice verse 3 says "When I am afraid" not "If I am afraid." Why is that distinction important?
5. The Psalmist repeatedly uses the word "afraid." What does that mean? What is fear, anxiety, worry? Where does fear, worry, anxiety come from? How is fear, anxiety, worry related to sin?
6. Notice the similar refrain in verses 4 & 10-11.

- a. What does the Psalmist do when he is afraid?
 - b. Where does he put his trust?
 - c. Where does he not put his trust?
7. Both refrains end with “What can man/flesh do to me?” What does this mean? What does this tell us about the psalmist’s frame of soul.
 - a. Compare this question with Jesus words in Luke 12:4-7. How are they similar?
8. Look at verses 8-9. Discuss what it means for the Lord to “have kept count of my tossings; put my tears in your bottle.” What does these verses, and the Psalm as a whole, tell us about the character of God?
9. Notice the Psalm ends with “I *must* perform my vows to you, O God.” What does it mean he *must* worship God?
10. How does this Psalm point us to Christ and his Cross?

ACCOUNTABILITY

Relationships developed and deepened during accountability provide regular encouragement, and when necessary admonition, to spur each other on to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Ask one another heart-probing, clarifying questions, and help each other apply the gospel to your lives.

QUESTION: How are you doing fighting the schemes of the devil?