

A SIGN FOR ALL TIME

Episode 3 Study Guide

“Raised in Church... Still Lost?” · Matthew 12:41–42

The big idea: Closeness was never the problem — a person can spend a whole lifetime near the things of God and never go in. Religion is not relationship.

I. The city that barely got a warning — Matthew 12:41

- Nineveh had no Bible, no Sabbath, no temple — all they got was one _____ from a reluctant prophet.
- And they _____ — sackcloth and ashes, the whole city, top to bottom.
- “...and, behold, a _____ than Jonas is here.”

Ask yourself: *If one reluctant sermon was enough to turn Nineveh around, what is my excuse for a lifetime of them?*

II. The queen who traveled for it — Matthew 12:42

- She came from the _____ parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon.
- We didn’t have to travel one mile — wisdom greater than Solomon’s is sitting on the _____.

Ask yourself: *What actually keeps me from opening the Book that came to me?*

III. Close enough to touch Him — Matthew 12:38

- The scribes and Pharisees were not casual worshippers — they had plenty of _____.
- What they didn’t have was a _____.

Ask yourself: *Is my religion the Pharisee’s religion — hands busy, heart a stranger to Him?*

IV. The verdict on the near and the far — Matthew 7:22–23

- “And then will I profess unto them, I never _____ you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”
- Religious activity is no proof that a relationship ever existed behind it.

Ask yourself: *If Jesus said “I never knew you” to people who did wonderful works, what is He looking for instead? (See verse 21.)*

Scripture list: Matthew 12:38, 41–42 · Jonah 3:4–10 · 1 Kings 10:1–9 · Matthew 23:23 · Matthew 7:21–23 · 2 Corinthians 13:5

Talk it over

1. “Raised in church” describes a lot of us. Where can nearness quietly take the place of actually knowing Him?
2. Nineveh responded to far less light than we have been given. What does that say about privilege and responsibility?
3. The queen paid a great price for wisdom; ours costs a reach across the nightstand. Why do we treasure what costs us something — and how do we recover reverence for what came free?
4. Read Matthew 7:21–23 aloud. What separates the ones He receives from the ones He never knew?
5. What would rebuilding a quiet relationship with God look like for you — starting this week, not “someday”?

Two kinds of people

If you have already obeyed the Gospel: examine your heart like Paul says (2 Corinthians 13:5). Is it religion you’ve got these days, or a relationship? If it has gone quiet — go rebuild it, starting today.

If you have not yet obeyed the Gospel: hear it (Romans 10:17), believe it (Mark 16:16), repent of your sin (Acts 17:30), confess His name (Romans 10:9–10), and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

Memory verse (KJV)

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.” — 2 Corinthians 13:5

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And may the Good God of Heaven bless you — and bless you real well.