

Connect timeless truths with today's news.

### **A REGIME DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF**

Late last month saw one of the most bizarre episodes of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Putin employs a mercenary army called the Wagner Group, commanded by Yevgeny Prigozhin, who has an ongoing power struggle with Moscow's military brass. In late June, Prigozhin accused his rivals of firing rockets at Wagner Group troops. He took his tanks and troops off the war front and turned toward Russia itself, rolling rapidly toward Moscow. Then, through negotiations behind the scenes, Prigozhin abruptly halted his tank columns and diverted to Belarus. Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky triumphantly declared, "Everyone who chooses the path of evil destroys himself.... Russia's weakness is obvious.... And the longer Russia keeps its troops and mercenaries on our land, the more chaos, pain, and problems it will have for itself later."

### **A KINGDOM DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF**

When Jesus delivered a demon-possessed man who had not been able to speak or see, the people were astonished—and the Pharisees felt jealous and threatened. They claimed that Jesus was only able to command demons because he used Satan's power to do so. Jesus responded that the devil would never divide his forces and weaken his kingdom by letting Satan fight against Satan.

1. What are your feelings about the war in Ukraine and the divisions within Russian top leadership?
2. When people are feeling jealous or threatened, what are they likely to say or do?
3. In this passage, Jesus talks about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit—what do you think that means?

### **Additional Resources**

*These videos and materials are for your personal use. If you show videos in class, be sure to have the necessary rights to do so.*

Music Video, Traditional: ["I Come to the Garden Alone"](#)  
Music Video, Multicultural: ["Intentional" by Travis Greene](#)  
Music Video, Contemporary: ["A Thousand Shores" by Citizens](#)  
[Bible.org Commentary on Matthew 12:22-37](#)  
[Guzik's Commentary on Matthew 12](#)  
[IVP New Testament Commentary on Matthew 12](#)