

December 22, 2019 Discussion Notes

Everyone is encouraged to bring a Bible

(Phone apps are good for reading together in the same translation. Study Bibles give help with interpretation.)



Questions:

1. Describe your idea of a perfect Christmas. What do you envision yourself/your family doing?
2. Do you feel connected to Christ at Christmastime, or does your relationship with Him tend to get lost in the shuffle?
3. What do you remember about each of the main points of the sermon? (seen above). What in the sermon challenged you? Do you have any questions to bring up?
4. In the sermon, we looked at Mary's obedience. Now let's look at Joseph's. Read Matthew 1:18-25.
 - a) Think of a time when you felt deeply betrayed by someone. How do you think Joseph felt about his fiancée being found to be pregnant? (Note: being "betrothed" or "pledged to be married" meant more in Mary and Joseph's culture than it does in ours. Although the couple didn't live together or have sexual union yet, to separate required a divorce).
 - b) It says that Joseph was a righteous man. In what ways did his righteousness show in this passage?
 - c) What is the significance of the angel calling Joseph, "son of David"? (see 2 Samuel 7:8-13)
 - d) But if Joseph was not Jesus' biological father, how is Joseph's lineage relevant?
 - e) Why does Matthew make it clear that Mary was a virgin until after Jesus was born? (see John 1:1, John 1:14, Romans 5:12, 1 John 3:5, and Galatians 4:4-5)
 - f) It says that Joseph obeyed God's command through the angel. What fears do you think he might have been dealing with?
 - g) What fears do you have in obeying God? How can they be overcome?
5. Read Exodus 13:18-20 and 1 Timothy 6:15-16
 - a) What do these passages tell us about our ability to approach God?
 - b) How is this a problem for us?
 - c) How, then, could humanity ever have a chance of knowing God? (see Hebrews 1:1-3, John 1:16-18, and Isaiah 9:6)
 - d) Read John 14:8-10. In what ways has Jesus revealed God to us?
6. How would you define "intercession"? Have someone in the group look up the definition on their phone.
 - a) Read Ezekiel 22:29-31. Why was judgment coming upon the people of Judah? What potential remedy had failed to materialize?
 - b) Read Romans 3:9-12. Do you agree with this passage?
 - c) If God judges sin, and none of us is righteous enough to save ourselves, what hope is there? (see Isaiah 59:16, 20)
 - d) Read Job 9:32-35. What need was Job longing to have filled?
 - e) How did God answer this need for mankind? (see 1 Timothy 2:3-6).
 - f) In what sense has Jesus been an intercessor for us?
 - g) Why was the virgin birth essential for Jesus to be able to fulfill this role?
 - h) How can you better show your gratitude to Christ for all that He has done?
7. Share prayer requests and pray together.