

December 8, 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:

There was not a normal sermon on December 8 due to the children's Christmas musical. The musical focused on various misconceptions that people tend to have about the Christmas story.

1. If you saw the Christmas play, what did you enjoy the most?
2. Have you ever used a word or idiom incorrectly, thinking it meant one thing when it meant another? What happened? Share with your group.
3. Does it unsettle you when you learn that you have been wrong about something you have always believed to be true?
4. What about when you learn that you have been wrong about something in the Bible? Does this shake your faith at all (because you wonder what else you might be wrong about)? Or are you happy to be set straight and learn something new?
5. Read 1 Timothy 1:1-7
 - a) Why did Paul instruct Timothy to stay in Ephesus?
 - b) What are "false doctrines"? (the Greek word here is hetero-didaskaleo, literally meaning "to teach other things").
 - c) According to Paul, what was the problem with "myths and endless genealogies"? Do you think this is still a problem today?
 - d) What was the goal of Paul's instruction? (v. 5). How did this differ from the false teachers he was warning about?
6. What were some of the common false doctrines that the early Christian church had to contend with? (see 2 Timothy 2:17-18, Galatians 1:6-8, Galatians 3:1-3, Galatians 4:9-11, Colossians 2:8-10, 2 John 1:7, Revelation 2:14, Revelation 2:20). Which of these do people still fall into today?
7. Read Matthew 7:15-20
 - a) What imagery does Jesus use to describe false prophets?
 - b) How can you recognize a false prophet?
 - c) How does this work practically? What characteristics should we be looking for? (see Galatians 5:22-23, 1 Timothy 6:9-11, 2 Timothy 2:22)
8. Read 2 Timothy 2:14-16.
 - a) Do you ever find yourself falling into "quarreling about words" and "godless chatter"?
 - b) How can we avoid this?
9. Our church teaches that in essentials (core doctrines) we must have unity, in nonessentials we have liberty, and in all things we must show charity (this was first articulated by a German Lutheran theologian named Rupertus Meldenus around 1627AD). What do you think about this approach?
10. Share prayer requests and pray together. Pray that we would all adhere to the truth, avoid pointless arguing, and walk in love.