

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, December 7, 2008

Passage: Matthew 1:1-17

Memory Passage: James 4:13-15

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

Opening—Have you ever had a Christmas when something that you needed was missing? What was it? How did it affect your Christmas celebration?

(a) **Read Matthew 1:1-17.** Why were genealogies important to the Jewish people? Why was the genealogy of Jesus especially important? Is the genealogy of Jesus important for us today? Why or why not?

(b) What three divisions does Matthew make in the genealogy of Jesus (see verse 17)? What books of the bible are contained in each of these sections? What would be a good title for each of these periods in Israel's history?

(c) Who are the main persons or events that begin each section?

(d) *Think about:* There is a great benefit to knowing where you have come from and where you are going. What was it like for you growing up in your family? Are there things from your parents that you wish to pass on to your kids? What are they? What about things that you don't want to pass on to your kids? What are you doing to make sure that generational sin does not continue?

(e) *Family:* Read Matthew 1:1-17. Talk about your family history. Talk about what it was like for you to grow up. Was it a Christian home? What did you learn from your parents about God? What do you want to teach your kids about God? Take some time to express your prayers for them. Pray that God would allow you to be a good parent and that the Spirit would protect you from passing on generational sins.

DAY 2 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Matthew 1:1.** Matthew begins his gospel with two titles for Jesus. What are they?

(b) What is the significance of Jesus as the "son of David?" Consider the following verses: 2 Samuel 7:11-16; Psalm 89:3; Psalm 132:11.

(c) What is said about Jesus being the Son of David in the New Testament? Consider Matthew 15:22; 20:31; 21:15.

(d) What is the significance of Jesus being the "Son of Abraham?" Consider Genesis 12:1-3; 22:18; and Gal. 3:16.

(e) *Think about it.* Summarize what we learn about God's providence and faithfulness from these titles. Does God have a specific plan for this world? How detailed is God? How does God's providence comfort you?

(f) *Family:* Read Matthew 1:1. Talk about how it is significant that Jesus is the "son of David" and the "son of Abraham." What does this show about God's providence? God's providence can be a very restful thing. Pray that you might rest in God's providential control.

DAY 3 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Matthew 1:1-17.** What four women are included in this genealogy?

(b) Why is it significant that women were included? Why is it significant that these women are included? See Gen. 38:6-24; Joshua 2; Ruth 1:16; Ruth 4:21-22; 2 Samuel 11:2-5.

(c) How was God's providence at work in their lives to even place them in the genealogy of Christ?

(d) *Think about it:* Summarize what we can learn about God's providence from the lives of these women. What does this say about the importance of godly women in lives of others? Who are some godly women that have had an impact on your life? How so?

(e) *Family:* Read Matthew 1:1-17. Talk about those four women who are in this genealogy. Who are they? What did they do? How has God used godly women? Talk to the boys about the importance of dating and marrying godly women. Talk to the girls about what it means to be a godly woman in our society. Pray that the Lord would continue to

raise up godly women to bless your family and the church. Pray for Mom that the Lord would continue to make her into a godly woman like Jesus' ancestors.

DAY 4 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) How would you define "providence?" How many things does God direct in his providence (Ephesians 1:11)?

(b) Examine the following passages and make a list of the areas covered by God's providence: Job 37:6-13; Matt. 6:26 and 10:29; Prov. 16:33; Job 12:23 and Acts 17:26; Psalm 139:16; Genesis 45:5 and 50:20; Prov. 16:4.

(c) *Think about it:* Which one of these areas sticks out the most to you? Which one is most comforting? Why is it important to remember God's providence in the hard times? Why is it important in the good times?

(d) *Family:* Read some of the passages from (b) that stuck out to you. Talk about what God's providence means. Talk about that it means that God is provident over all the world. Pray that God would show you his providential care this week.

DAY 5 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) Everything that God plans and purposes will be accomplished. Christmas is one example of God's glorious providence. Consider what the Bible says about God's control over all events: 2 Chronicles 20:6; Job 23:13; Job 42:3; Psalm 115:3.

(b) How should this understanding of providence affect our lives? James 4:13-15; Proverbs 16:9; Psalm 31:15; Psalm 37:7; and Romans 11:36.

(c) *Think about it:* Christmas time is a time when there is a lot to do. Expectations run high. What does it mean that God is provident over your Christmas plans? Is there anything that you are trying to control and not giving over to God?

(d) *Family:* Read James 4:13-15. Talk about the proper attitude we are to have in light of God's providence. What does this mean about how we are to look at the holiday season? Does this mean that we are supposed to not plan? Why not? Pray that your family would hold loosely to its plans and expectations this holiday season.

DAY 6 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. Read Matthew 1:1-17. Summarize what you have learned about God's providence over all the details of life? Is there any area of your life where you have not trusted God for his providential care? Give that over to the Lord right now. The Lord wants us to live in the freedom that His Spirit gives to us.

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The Forgotten Providence of Christmas