

## BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, December 14, 2008

Passage: Matthew 1:18-25

Memory Passage: Galatians 4:4-6

**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

- (a) The passage studied last week told us something about Jesus' natural birth. Re-read Mt. 1:1-17 and summarize what we learned about the birth of Jesus.
- (b) **Read Matthew 1:18-25.** Today's passage tells us about his supernatural birth. Read through the passage and note anything that is supernatural about this birth.
- (c) How is the virgin birth treated today? If Mary lied about the virgin birth, what would that mean about her? Why is it important to emphasize and understand the virgin birth?
- (d) *Think about it:* What would you have done in Mary's or Joseph's situation? When something in life doesn't go the way you planned, are you able to trust in God? What kind of faith must it have taken for Mary to accept what had happened? Do you have that kind of faith?
- (e) *Family:* Read Matthew 1:18-25. The virgin birth is a miraculous story. Talk about why this is an important fact about Jesus' conception and birth. Talk about how Jesus came down as a baby and lived like we did. Pray that this Christmas season would be one focused on Jesus and on His miraculous birth.

### DAY 2 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Matthew 1:18-19.** What does Joseph do that reveals his exemplary character? List the things he does that show his character.
- (b) What do these verses tell us about some aspects of Joseph's behavior—Deut. 24:1; Isaiah 28:16; Proverbs 3:6?
- (c) Read Matthew 2:13-23. What else do we learn here about Joseph? What godly characteristics does this passage reveal?
- (d) Read Luke 2:41 and 4:14-16. What do these tell us about Joseph?
- (e) *Think about it:* Joseph finds out that his betrothed is pregnant. The woman he loves and was going to be married to. Normally there is only one answer for what would have caused a pregnancy. Would you have reacted the same way as Joseph? What about when someone close to you sins against you? Do you respond like Joseph?
- (f) *Family:* Read Matthew 1:18-19. Talk about what Joseph did and the character that he showed. What did it mean for Mary to be pregnant in Joseph's eyes? What was his reaction? Do you have this kind of reaction when people sin against you? Pray that the Lord would give you compassion and mercy like Joseph.

### DAY 3 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Matthew 1:18-25.** Compare this passage with Luke 1:26-38. What are the similarities in the encounters? What are the differences?
- (b) What do we learn about Mary's character from Luke's passage?

(c) Read Luke 1:46-56. This is called “Mary’s Song.” Some often put Mary up on a pedestal. How does Mary describe herself? Are there indications that she recognizes that she is a sinner also?

(d) *Think about it:* Why would God have picked Mary? Mary sings a song in response to what Elizabeth says. What does this communicate about her love for God? Read Ephesians 5:18-19. Do you find yourself filled with a song of praise to God? This is a mark of being filled with the Spirit. What is keeping you from being filled with the Spirit?

(e) *Family:* Read Luke 1:46-56. Take some time today and talk about the importance of a heart that praises God. Spend some time today singing some songs to the Lord as a family.

#### **DAY 4 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT**

#### **READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Matthew 1:20-23.** What two names are given to Jesus in this passage? What does the angel say is significant about the name, “Jesus?” Also read John 3:17 and Acts 5:31.

(c) Read Psalm 130. About whom is the psalmist speaking? According to v.8, who will redeem Israel from their sins?

(d) What is significant about the name “Immanuel?” Also read Isaiah 7:14.

(e) What do these two names reveal about the nature of “the babe in the manger?” What do they tell us about his purpose or destiny?

(f) *Think about it:* One of Jesus’ names means “savior” and the other “God with us.” What does it mean to you that Jesus was not only our savior but “with us” as well? Does this mean that Jesus can empathize with us? How does this draw you closer to Jesus?

(g) *Family:* Read Matthew 1:20-23. Talk about the names of Jesus. What does it mean that he is our savior? What has he saved us from? What does it mean that he is with us? Why is Jesus’ ability to not only sympathize but to empathize as well important? Give thanks to God for sending us His Son who has saved us and lives with us.

#### **DAY 5 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT**

#### **READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Matthew 1:24-25.** How does the virgin birth completely (even to the smallest details) fulfill prophecy? Consider the following verses—Genesis 3:15 and Galatians 4:4-6.

(b) How does the virgin birth protect the sinlessness of Jesus? Compare—Luke 1:35 and Psalm 51:5.

(c) Why is the virgin birth important to the gospel and to the death of Jesus on the cross?

(d) *Think about it:* Jesus’ sinlessness is contributed to the fact that He was not born of man, but of the Spirit. Is the virgin birth of Jesus a negotiable doctrine? If the virgin birth were not true, how would the truthfulness of Scripture be affected?

(e) *Family:* Read Matthew 1:24-25. Spend some time talking about the true importance of Christmas. Why is it important to celebrate the virgin birth of Jesus? Thank God for providing us his Son as the perfect sacrifice for our sins.

#### **DAY 6 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT**

#### **READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE**

*Think back through what you have learned each day this week.* Summarize what you have learned about the miracle of Christmas that is often forgotten. What lessons does this passage teach us about Jesus and His birth?

