



FIRST LIGHT CHURCH

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Date:12/8/2024

Series: The Scarlet Thread of Christmas

Text:Genesis 3:15; Matthew 1:21- 22

BIG IDEA: God's Promise To Us Is Thread Throughout "His-Story" In Jesus.

ICEBREAKER: As a child, what is the ONE thing that you can remember that you wanted for Christmas more than anything else? Did you actually get it? How did you feel after receiving it? How did you feel if you did not receive it? (*Are you still a little bitter about it?*)

CONTEXT: The Genesis passage is God speaking to the serpent (satan) immediately after the "fall." God explains that there will be animosity and antagonism between him (the devil) and humanity as a result of his deceiving Eve in the Garden. God also vaguely alludes to the "offspring" of the woman (Jesus) as being the one who will bruise the devil's head, yet the devil will bruise His heel. This is a foreshadowing of the crucifixion and the victory of the resurrection. The Matthew passage briefly discusses Jesus' birth and His purpose, therefore fulfilling the prophecy made by Isaiah in chapter 7:14, which ties directly to the "offspring" of the woman mentioned in Genesis. The Genesis passage is the first prophecy of the Messiah or what is called the "protoevangelium" or the first Gospel.

PASSAGE: Have volunteers read Genesis 3:15; Matthew 1:21-22.

DISCUSSION:

1. Why do you think God has this poignant discussion with the serpent?
2. Who is/are the devil's offspring?
3. Do you think that this situation is a result of the curse of sin, or was this God's plan all along?
4. As you read this passage contextually (by reading all of chapter 3), how does this passage help you to better understand the seriousness of sin?
5. Why do you think it took roughly 4,000 years for Jesus, the Messiah, to come the first time? What is the reason that God waited for so long?
6. Since we have the promise of the Messiah coming a second time, do you find it difficult to understand why He is prolonging His next arrival? Why do you suppose He has not yet returned?
7. What image does the *nativity* elicit in your mind? Is the image that you have in your mind, when you think of the birth of Jesus, one that truly glorifies His deity? Why or why not?
8. Revelation 21:3 states that God's dwelling place is with man. How does this promise of Christ's return and dwelling among people parallel His first arrival? Compare and contrast these two events. (reference Revelation 21).

COMMUNITY CONNECTION:

Our amazing God has declared “the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done” (Is. 46:10). God will accomplish His purpose on this Earth and in our lives. This should give us peace and hope in these times of uncertainty, especially on the world stage. Jesus’ birth, death and resurrection marks the culmination of God’s redemptive plan for humanity. Celebrating the birth of Christ should remind us of His triumphant return that will someday happen. Ensuring that we are ready to meet Him and that all of those around us are also ready to meet Him should be our greatest priority. Having Gospel conversations and living like Jesus, with those around us, must be at the forefront of everything we do.

CARE AND PRAY:

- Ask God to create opportunities for you to share your faith and for you to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s voice.
- Pray that during this Christmas season, you will be keenly aware of God’s plan to save people and what your part in that looks like in a practical way (charity, serving, and encouragement).
- Pray for the upcoming outreach events in the life of our church– Family Christmas Movie Night, Christmas Eve Services, Upward Sports.
- Pray that God will bring people who are willing to serve in the different ministries of our church.