

12.08.13 Small Group Questions, Dale Oquist teaching BC Christmas: The Story Behind the Story Part 2

Getting Started:

What is your genealogy? Where did you come from? What is the story of your heritage?

Looking Back

Matthew 1

3 stories you need to know to understand the bible, and Matthew gives us all 3 -
Story in Matthew 1 is broken down in three sections:

1. Abraham
2. David
3. Exile

The genealogy of Jesus is at the start of Matthew

- It was like whistling Andy Griffith theme, an instant memory jog for the Jewish people
 - They knew each story and the theology behind each story.
- 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet "alephbet"
 - #14 in Hebrew, using letters, as Hebrew does 4th, plus 6th, plus 4th
 - DVD, no vowels- David
- Matthew is using this symbolism to show that God is fulfilling all of his promises-
Jews would know the promise to Abraham thru David

Gen 12:1-3 is critical to understanding the Bible: covenant story of God. It is God wanting to be in relationship with His people. Man ruins His plan!

Do you have a story to tell of you spoiling a plan God had for you?

Blessed is key word in Gen 12. He does not respond in anger, but with kindness--through one person he will bring about salvation of the world. Through Abraham all nations will be blessed.

Ex 19:1

God always intended for us to be a kingdom of priests for the entire world!

- *How do you see yourself as a priest?* (1 Peter 2:9) Explain your answer

v5 obey and keep the covenant. Blessing is not contingent upon their obedience but God's unilateral promise.

- As they obey they are participants in the covenant, sadly they don't obey. They do not do well with the obedience thing!
- *What are your stories of obedience, or disobedience towards God?*

Continually we see a God who wants to draw people to him.

God reaching out begins in Genesis 12 and continues in chapter 15 where Abraham and Sarah are promised by God to be participants in His plan through their offspring.

- 12::7 "to your offspring I will give this land."
- They are older people: Abraham is 75, and she slightly younger.
- Abraham is angry: "No child!"

"Often words speak belief but actions show doubt." Abraham wants divine action.

When is a time you've taken matters in your own hand and in so doing you settled for something less than the best?

God gives Abraham a sign: the stars and so will your offspring be. What he has seen countless times before, he realizes God will do it. He believed!

Chapter 16:1 they take matters in their own hands--Ishmael. We take matters in our own hands when divine delay occurs. Abraham was willing to settle on his own rather than have faith in God.

- It was easier for Abraham to believe the work of his hands to be the answer to God's plan.
- It is easier to go half way and believe in ourselves rather than trust or have faith in God.

What does this say to you regarding your life?

Isaiah 7

Isaiah tells Ahaz to ask God for a sign and it will be so, but Ahaz says no because he has already aligned himself with the Assyrians to defeat those coming against him.

- Ahaz had a plan B! So Isaiah says there will be a sign: *Emmanuel*, because Gods purposes and plans will be served! Assyrians will come and destroy Ahaz!
- Emmanuel will bring blessing and the king of Assyria will bring disaster!
- We want our plans because it's easier than trusting God.

Matthew 1:23 quotes Isaiah: Answer is in a baby not an army!

The efforts we put forth without God is like sweeping the floor of a building that is designed for destruction!

1. *When was the last time you had to trust God because you had no other options? How did that work out?*
2. *When was the last time you trusted God in a decision that you had complete control over?*
3. *Which scenario do you struggle the most with? Explain.*

Moving Forward:

- *How can we pray for you this week?*