

SCRIPTURES FOR 1/14/07 LIFEGROUP LESSON

Genesis 2:15

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Matthew 7:15-23

"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

Matthew 8:2

A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

2 Corinthians 1:8-10

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us,

Matthew 22:36-40

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Matthew 13:45-46

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

NOTE TO LEADER: There is a lot of material here. Familiarize yourself with it so you know which stuff you are most comfortable with and what you will cut if you get short on time. Try to keep the lesson/discussion 20-30 minutes in length. Good luck and let me know if you have any questions. - Ed

NOTE TO LEADERS: All items in *italics* are for your information and not designed to be read aloud.

OPENING:

ICEBREAKER or GET YA THINKIN' QUESTION: _____

OPENING PRAYER NOTES: _____

INTRODUCTION:

This week, Jeff began an explanation of the particulars of Lordship as it relates to stewardship of our resources.

Q: What do you think of when you hear the word “stewardship?” How about “lordship?”

DIG DEEPER:

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines “stewardship” this way: the conducting, supervising, or managing of something; *especially* : the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care <stewardship of our natural resources> (*Genesis 2:15*) In this passage, “care” comes from the Hebrew “shamar,” which means “to keep, or have charge of.”

Q: If God has given us charge over our resources, how should we decide how to manage them? (*consult scripture, prayer, learn to know God's will*)

APPLICATION:

Jeff suggested that the path to effective stewardship is recognizing God’s lordship in our lives. In the U.S., there is much interest in “spiritual issues,” but it doesn’t seem to have much impact on our culture or behavior. Chuck Colson sites a lack of submission to God’s lordship. (*Matthew 7:15-27*) You can’t just say some magic words, or sign up. Just saying, “Lord, Lord” does not constitute submission. Jeff sites five necessary steps for submitting to God’s lordship (two this week and three next week):

ACCEPT THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

Q: How far do you think you could take this? (*Cassie Bernall? Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego? Daniel? David?*)

Q: If we are to trust God’s sovereignty, why do we sometimes feel abandoned? (*2 Corinthians 1:8-10 – Paul & Silas’ danger was necessary to make them more reliant*).

PLACE GOD FIRST IN YOUR LIFE

Q: (*Matthew 22:36-40*) How do you see the first commandment playing out in your life?

Q: So how does loving God impact your neighbor? What does it mean “as yourself?”

Q: (*Matthew 13:45-46*) Who is the “merchant?” What is the “pearl?” Could you sell everything?

CONCLUSION

Jeff cited the oft-used phrase, “If God is not Lord OF all, then He’s not Lord AT all.”

Q: What does that mean? Do you agree?

Q: How do you respond to that?

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

GROUP NEEDS: _____ SHUT-IN MINISTRY: _____

WHO'S LEADING...

THIS WEEK: WORSHIP: _____ PRAYER: _____

NEXT WEEK: WORSHIP: _____ PRAYER: _____