

MANGER THINGS

Text: 1 Peter 2:4-12, Matthew 1: 20-25

Plain Truth:

Heaven's _____ came to earth to make
us _____ of heaven.

1. He _____ himself to _____
with the Holy Spirit.
2. Holiness fills us with God's _____ and
_____ us from earthly things.
3. Our _____ brings _____ from
God.

One Year Bible Reading

Nov. 26: Daniel 2:24-3:30, 1 Peter 4:7-5:14, Psalm 119:81-96, Proverbs 28:15-16

Nov. 27: Daniel 4:1-37, 2 Peter 1:1-21, Psalm 119:97-112, Proverbs 28:17-18

Nov. 28: Daniel 5:1-31, 2 Peter 2:1-22, Psalm 119:113-128, Proverbs 28:19-20

Nov. 29: Daniel 6:1-28, 2 Peter 3:1-18, Psalm 119:129-152, Proverbs 28:21-22

Nov. 30: Daniel 7:1-28, 1 John 1:1-10, Psalm 119:153-176, Proverbs 28:23-24

December 1: Daniel 8:1-27, 1 John 2:1-17, Psalm 120:1-7, Proverbs 28:25-26

December 2: Daniel 9:1-11:1, 1 John 2:18-3:6, Psalm 121:1-8, Proverbs 28:27-28

November 25 & 26, 2017

Life Group Lesson

Week of November 26

We are surrounded by the supernatural all the time. But we don't see it because we are not looking for God. God is the author of all that is seen and unseen, and even now, He is holding all creation together—giving life. God speaks and things happen. God is and always has been near and personal to those who would seek Him and honor Him with their obedience and attention. When the time was right God came into this world. To the virgin girl, the angel said: “Don't be afraid Mary for you have found favor with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name Him Jesus” (Luke 1:30-31), and to her betrothed: “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:20b-21).

Our Plain Truth states: “Heaven's King came to earth to make us citizens of heaven.” In his later years Peter says that he has known personally the supernatural work of God and addresses the early church as ‘foreigners’ reminding them of their eternal status, citizens of heaven not this world. Peter says: “It is by His great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay” (see 1 Peter 1:1, 3b-4). Salvation is God's supernatural work in the life of any individual who says yes to the Lord Jesus Christ. *Manger Things* still happens today!

Read I Peter 2:4-12

1. The Lord emptied Himself to fill us with the Holy Spirit. If you have accepted Christ into your heart, how have you recognized the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in you?

Once you and I receive God's gift of salvation through His Christ, we belong to Him. “Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy” (1 Peter 2:10). Everything changes. And so, we are compelled to begin living as citizens of heaven, no longer living solely for the things of this

world. Peter says: “Dear friends, I warn you as ‘temporary residents and foreigners’ to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls” (v11).

2. Just as a strong nation does not take lightly war waged against it, citizens of heaven must guard against anything that threatens to steal allegiance away from Christ and our heavenly citizenship. In what ways does the enemy wage war against our souls?

How does obedience, a resolve to be faithful in the face of opposition, bring God's favor upon His people (future citizens of heaven)?

As citizens of heaven we are set apart for service to Christ. This is what it means to be holy. This ‘holiness’ fills us with God's love and separates us from earthly things.

3. Serving others with the love of Christ is what it means to be a citizen of heaven. Jesus said, “For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost” (Luke 19:10). Stop for a moment and take inventory. In what ways are you genuinely serving others in the name of Christ?

Think about your personal service to Christ and His church—for example, your prayers for the church and its leadership, your regular worship attendance, your participation in a Life Group, your tithing and giving. Are you currently living more like a citizen of heaven or a citizen of this earth?

Even as Christ-followers, we are still part of this world. Most people hold citizenship in the nation where they reside. And so the Lord wants us to be good earthly citizens and to pray for the peace and prosperity of our country, as well as our leaders and government officials (for example, see Jeremiah 29:7 and 1 Timothy 2:1-4). But we must also be aware of distractions that pull our minds away from Christ and the profundity of His love. Salvation is a miracle. Daily, we must step back and pay careful attention to the voice of God's Holy Spirit. There are miracles all around us. God is supernaturally intervening on our behalf all the time. If we stop and look closely enough we will see. Let's do that, especially as we approach *Manger Things*.

“But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for Him to return as our Savior. He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like His own, using the same power with which He will bring everything under His control” (Phil. 3:20-21).