



DIGGING DEEPER

God. With. Us!!!!

PLEASE READ – Matthew 1:18-22

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

“Biblically the name of a person reflects who they are.”

Look up the following references (a tiny sample!) and discuss whether that statement is true. Would you modify it in any way?

Ex 3:13-1, Deut 12:3-5, Judges 13:17-18, Ps 9:10, plus any others which come to mind!

Take one minute to think of as many names given to Jesus as you can remember.

IMMANUEL

Optional Extra

Matthew makes a link between Isaiah 7 and the birth of Jesus. The historical context is Judah was under threat from a foreign power but Isaiah gave assurance the threat would be removed. Ahaz the King was invited to ask for the most amazing sign he could think of (v10-11)

Now read v12-16 and compare with Matt 1:22-23

There has been a lot of discussion over how this could be – the prophecy had immediate fulfilment in Isaiah's day, but the mother was not a virgin, yet the strength of Matthew's claim is that Mary was a virgin.

To cut through a lot of anxious debate: the original Hebrew word literally meant virgin but could imply young woman (a bit like the old-fashioned English word maiden?) Thus the prophecy had both an immediate fulfilment and a long term messianic fulfilment. (Just like most Old Testament prophecies!)

God. With. Us.

Discuss: In what sense was Jesus 'God with us'?

Was it as an historical event, a personal reality? How did that show itself in Jesus' life? Was it to usher in the promised reality of Old Testament promises of God being among his people? (eg Jer 31:33)

Discuss: Do you agree that the theme of the Bible is God being among his people and how that can happen? Why / why not?

JESUS

We all understand very well how Jesus is the sacrifice that pays the penalty for our sin. In what other ways is the picture of the Tabernacle fulfilled in Jesus? (Heb 7:23-25 Heb 9:11-14)

What do you think is the significance of the phrases

- 'his people'? Who are they?
- 'from sins'? Strong's concordance includes defining the word 'apo' (translated 'from') as *from, away from; hence, it variously signifies departure; distance of time or place; avoidance; riddance*

How is that different from simply (!) having our sins forgiven? What difference does it make to our enjoyment of God with us?

Acts 4:12 No other Name / Phil 2:9-11 every knee bow

SO...

God with us implies he is not some remote figure we can ignore when convenient. He is with his people 24/7

Reflect honestly: How does that make you feel? Are there areas of your life you're uncomfortable with the thought that God is there?

Our view of Who God is makes all the difference.

Our God is not remote. He reveals himself as Father, Son and Spirit, in eternal happy communion.

When we remember that God is with us, how does it help to think of him as Father? (The perfect Father, where the best earthly father is but a pale reflection)

How does / should it help in our anticipation of future glory / present living

During the week meditate on Jn 17:24

Notice the Father loved Son in eternity. The Son now wants his people included that eternal glory. Isn't that truly awesome?

'Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.'