

REVIEW

- Week 1: God Loves Us
- Week 2: God Values Us
- Week 3: God Sacrifices for Us

THIS WEEK: God Provides for Us

- Our experiences and the way we view our *earthly* father (whether positively, negatively, or neutrally) directly impacts our perspective of our *heavenly* Father.

THANKFULLY WE HAVE GOD'S WORD, WHICH CLEARLY TEACHES HOW GOD PROVIDES FOR US:

Matthew 7:9-11 ⁹Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

- It is nearly impossible to live in the provision of God unless we truly believe that God desires to provide for us!

WHAT MAKES THIS TRUTH SO PROFOUND IS THAT GOD DOESN'T HAVE TO...

Ephesians 2:4-5 ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved...

Romans 5:8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

WE SEE IN THE CHRISTMAS STORY THAT GOD PROVIDES, EVEN IN THE MIDST OF DIFFICULT AND UNCOMFORTABLE CIRCUMSTANCES.

Luke 1:26 -34 ²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.

³⁰And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

- God is setting the stage here to provide the most anticipated event in all of history!

GOD PROVIDED A BABY—not the way Mary and Joseph would have wanted.

- o Mary and Joseph were disowned by their families.
- o Mary could have legally been stoned according to Jewish Law.
- o Mary and Joseph's future of a normal life was no longer an option.

GOD PROVIDED A WAY—not the way Mary and Joseph would have wanted.

Luke 2:1-5 ¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

GOD'S PROVISION DOES NOT ALWAYS LOOK EXACTLY HOW WE THINK IT SHOULD.

Luke 2:6-7 ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

THREE WORDS THAT WE HEAR A LOT DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON: HOPE // JOY // PEACE

THE WORLD TELLS US:

- o HOPE is what I have if I just work harder to make my future brighter—to make more money, to land that new career, or to find the right relationship.
- o JOY is happiness. It's finding the things in life that make me happy and keep me entertained.
- o PEACE is figuring out how to not worry about anything.

GOD HAS A DIFFERENT DEFINITION:

Romans 15:13 May the God of **HOPE** fill you with all **JOY** and **PEACE** in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in **HOPE**.

- o Our HOPE is found in a person, and His name is Jesus. Our hope comes from the truth that Jesus conquered sin and death.
- o Our JOY is found in our relationship with God and with others.
- o Our PEACE comes when we recognize that we serve a good Father who knows us and provides our needs even when it doesn't feel like He does.

THE QUESTION IS: Will we live in the truth of God's provision?

QUESTIONS TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS:

Passages to consider: Genesis 22:6-14; Luke 2:8-20; Galatians 4:4-7

- Something from the sermon struck you—what was it?
 1. What comes to mind when you think of the word *provides*?
 2. Read Genesis 22:6-14, Luke 2:8-20, and Galatians 4:4-7. Choose one to read twice. A) What do these passages show you about God's heart? B) In what ways do you see provision happening?
 3. What helps you experience provision? Think spiritually, emotionally, and physically. A) Which one of those areas has more weight in your sensing being provided for? B) What can challenge your sense of being provided for?
 4. Take a look at Philippians 4:19-20. What truth or promise do you see from this passage, or from the other passages read in question 2, that is especially impactful to you? A) How will that impact you—your thoughts, your prayers?
 5. What helps you remember God's provision and His heart to care for you? A) How do you share that with your family or friends? B) How does that impact your attitude and presence at work?
 6. Who, in your world, might need to hear about God's provision or experience God's provision by receiving some physical help? Ask God to open your eyes, move in your heart, and use your hands.

Post Falls Campus has no services Thursday, December 26.

Passages to prepare for next week, Holiday Hangover: Galatians 2:20; Matthew 6:33; Psalm 90