

WEEK 6: GOD AMONG HIS PEOPLE

Route for this week:

1. Two Births Foretold (Luke 1:5-56)
2. The Birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1-52)
3. The Baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13-17)
4. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-26)
5. Jesus Feeds Five Thousand (John 6:1-15)
6. Jesus Heals a Blind Man (John 9:1-41)
7. Jesus, the Way to the Father (John 14:1-31)
8. The Death of Jesus (Mark 15:1-47)
9. The Resurrection (Luke 24:1-12)

SUMMARY

The deep darkness of exile and the tumultuous struggle to be faithful to God after returning to the land left the people of God waiting expectantly for God's promised Messiah to arise. But even in their hopes, God's people don't imagine what God has planned: Rather than sending a political leader to give them security in their land, God himself comes to live among them. Jesus Christ, God's Son, offers them a direct relationship with God. Jesus is born as a humble baby and grows up in obscurity in a small town in Israel. But his public ministry is spectacular: modeling God's love to everyone he meets, healing disease, commanding the wind and waves, raising the dead, and teaching his followers what God requires of them. Love God. Love your neighbor. Believe in Jesus, and follow him wherever he leads. His message threatens the religious and political establishment, even among God's own people. As a result Jesus is crucified at their hands. But the grave cannot hold him! Jesus rises from the dead and invites his followers to share in the power of his resurrection.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. While Jesus was a surprise to many Jews who were awaiting a different kind of Messiah, some recognized him immediately. Read Luke 2:21-40. What do you learn about Simeon and Anna? How can we live expectantly as we await Jesus' second coming?
2. Regularly during his ministry, Jesus announced that the Kingdom of God (or Kingdom of Heaven) had arrived. Read Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25 and Matthew 11:1-15. What does the Kingdom of Heaven look like, according to Jesus? What do you think this means for your life today, if anything?
3. Jesus often taught his disciples using parables—stories about everyday things that communicate spiritual realities. He explained to his disciples why he did this, and the answer is somewhat surprising (Matthew 13:10-17). What do you think about this answer? Why do you think Jesus would choose to teach in this way?
4. Read Mark 14:12-42. Consider the entire history of God's interaction with his people, from Adam right up to the time of Jesus. Do you see any common themes in the way the disciples are acting here compared to God's people throughout history? What about the way Jesus responds compared to God's stance towards his people?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. When the disciples asked Jesus why the blind man was blind, they were looking for the source of his suffering. But Jesus pointed them instead to the purpose of the man's blindness. Whatever struggles you're facing today, instead of looking for their cause, how can you begin to look for their purpose?
2. Jesus' resurrection was a decisive blow against sin and death, and because we are united with Christ through our faith in him, we are no longer bound to sin. How can you learn to rely more on this power through the indwelling Holy Spirit? What specific things can you do to remind yourself that you are united with Christ in this way?

Old Testament

EXODUS 12:46
NUMBERS 9:12
DEUTERONOMY 24:8
18:15, 18-19

2 SAMUEL 7:11-12

PSALMS 8:2

16:10

22:7-8

22:15

22:16

22:18

31:5

34:20

41:9

45:7

69:8

69:9

69:21

72:10

110:1

118:22

118:22-23

119:139

132:11

ISAIAH 6:9-10

7:14

9:1-2

9:6-7

11:2

16:5

40:3-5

42:1-3, 6-7

50:6

53:1, 3

53:3

53:4

53:5-6, 8, 10-12

53:7

53:9

53:12

60:1-3

60:3-6

61:2

JEREMIAH 23:5

31:15

DANIEL 2:44

7:14, 27

HOSEA 11:1

MICAH 5:2

ZECHARIAH 9:9

11:12-13

12:10

13:7

MALACHI 3:1

PROPHECIES OF THE MESSIAH

The Gospels record many of the prophecies that Jesus fulfilled. These prophecies had first been written in the Jewish Scriptures, which Christians call the Old Testament. In fulfilling these prophecies, the Gospel writers believed there was no doubt: Jesus was the Savior of the world.

See page 1459 for a complete listing of prophecies.



New Testament

1:22-23 MATTHEW

2:9-6

2:11

2:15

2:17-18

3:1-3

4:13-16

8:16-17

12:17-21

13:10-15

21:16

21:42

21:4-5

26:3-4

26:14-16, 47-50

26:31, 56

26:37-38

26:67

27:9-10

27:12-14

27:26, 30

27:34, 48

27:35

27:36

27:38

27:39-44

27:57-60

28:2-7

14:65 MARK

15:3-4

16:25

15:27-28

15:29-32

16:19

1:31-32 LUKE

1:31-34

1:33

1:76-78

2:4-6

3:3-6

4:18-19

23:8-10

22:19-23

22:37

23:11, 35

23:34

23:46

1:11 JOHN

1:29

2:13-17

7:5

7:40

11:49-52

12:12-16

12:37-43

19:23-24

19:28

19:28-30

19:33-36

19:34, 37

20:25-27

2:22-32 ACTS

4:1-12

10:43

13:38-39

13:47

Dots indicate number of relevant prophetic passages.