



SDG Discussion Guide

Matthew 1:18-25; 24:36-44

December 2, 2018

For starters:

What two positive qualities about your mom or dad or both come to mind as you recall your childhood?

As a child, what was your favorite time of day? Day of the week? Season of the year?

If Jesus returned at 7 PM this Friday, what would you be doing?

Guideline: The following questions are meant to provide points of further interaction with the respective sermon text and surrounding passage. Feel free to forward the questions to your small group members ahead of the respective Sunday. Group members may also find these questions in print on that Sunday.

As you can, read aloud the passage in your group; read it aloud a second time but from a different Bible translation (eg, read from the Message after first reading from the ESV). Before you begin your discussion, pray and ask God to speak to your group. Notice, what may God be highlighting for your discussion and learning?

Now that you have read the text together, what points and questions arose? Spend plenty of time in your group to address these. Explore and see how God may steer the discussion. The following are further questions for interaction.

1. Jesus' existence as both fully God and fully human can be difficult to conceptualize. Does its difficulty concern you? Why or why not?
2. How does Jesus' birth signify a new creation or a new reality for humankind?
3. Considering God's promises of the Messiah throughout the Old Testament, Jesus' birth fulfilled these prophecies. What does this truth tell us about God and his character?
4. What does the incarnation itself — God coming to us — tell us about God's desire and plan for redemption?
5. In what ways is the Flood like the second coming of Christ?
6. What does it mean, practically, to be ready for Jesus' return if we do not know when he will come?
7. In view of Christ's second coming, what does the story of the faithful and wise servant teach you about readiness? About stewardship? Judgment? Responsibility for serving and witnessing to others?
8. How does the knowledge that you will one day transcend this life and meet the Lord affect your behavior now? How would you explain such to someone seeking to understand why you believe what you believe?

Spend some time in prayer. Thank God, and ask him to continue to speak to you from his word in this passage. Ask him to awaken you evermore to his presence in your life. Ask him to bring you to a renewed awareness to his great purpose on earth as it is in heaven - of him bringing about a new heaven and earth of which you, your small group and church are an integral part. Go forth once again... with the conviction and assurance of the Lord God Almighty - who is, and who was, and who is to come.

*These questions were adapted from *The Serendipity Bible for Groups* (Zondervan, 1998).