



December 7, 2025

The Promise: Foretold & Fulfilled

Immanuel

Matthew 1:22-25



1. Opening Discussion:

- a. Apart from attending church services, what is your favorite Christmas season tradition or activity?
- b. Was there ever a time when your boss (or perhaps your spouse) asked you to do something that you really did not want to do – not because it was wrong, immoral, or illegal – just because you were afraid? Describe the situation and how you dealt with it.

2. Prayer:

- a. Consider this prayer as a model for opening your Advent devotional study:

Father, we thank you for Christmas and for the coming of Jesus Christ into this world.

Thank you that you have taught us to see and know you through looking to him; that he has shown us you are a God of love; and that your love is real, strong, and very demanding.

We thank you that Jesus has shown us that we need never be afraid of the past, the future, or the present.

He has given us the assurance that because he is Immanuel, he is always with us. No matter who we are, no matter what we face, he is Immanuel; God with us—always. Amen

- b. Least Reached People Group: **Gibe of Ethiopia** (from the IMB “Loving the Lost Through Prayer” guide.)

“The Gibe (GEE-beh) live in southwest Ethiopia. Although most of the people groups around them are Muslim, the Gibe are Ethiopian Orthodox. They know about Jesus and believe He is important, but they don’t believe He is enough to provide for their salvation. They don’t know about salvation by grace through faith in Jesus alone. Instead, their lives are dominated by observing many holy days and rituals of the church, fasting more than 200 days a year, and praying to Mary, saints, and angels. Pray for Ethiopian believers to go to the Gibe with the good news of salvation by faith in Jesus.”

3. Sermon Key Points:

- a. Jesus Came to Fulfill God’s Ancient Promise of Presence With His People
 - i. God made extraordinary promises in Isaiah 7-9
 - ii. The birth of Jesus fulfilled those promises
- b. God With Us Changes Everything!
 - i. Ancient Israel had been blessed to have God with them

- ii. At the Incarnation, God came to be with us in a different way
 - iii. Jesus could be our Savior because He is God with us
 - c. In Christ, God Is Still With Us!
4. **Bible Study: This week’s study is on Matthew 1:22-25. Read the short passage each day before continuing with the discussion question.**
- a. ***Sunday Afternoon*** – As soon as possible after the sermon, make time to consider:
 - i. What stood out to you the most in this sermon?
 - ii. What new truth did you learn, or what truth were you reminded of?
 - iii. Is there a particular Scripture passage you feel God is leading you to meditate on or commit to memory?
 - iv. What is one thing God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
 - v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?
 - b. ***Monday:***
 - i. Verse 22 starts by saying “All this took place”.
 - 1. What is included in the “all”?
 - 2. Why did it “all take place”?
 - 3. This verse is the first of many “fulfillment” examples Matthew provides. Read Matthew 2:5–6, 15, 17–18, 23; 4:14–16; 8:17; 11:10; 12:17–21; 13:14–15, 35; 21:4–5; 26:31, 56; and 27:9–10.
 - a. In what different ways does Matthew use “fulfill”? Which nine passages refer to fulfillments of specific Old Testament prophecies?
 - b. What point would you say Matthew is trying to make clear in his Gospel account?
 - c. Read Isaiah 55:10-11. How does God’s statement support and validate what Matthew is doing?
 - ii. Read Isaiah 7:1-17 to gain an understanding of the context for the prophecy of verse 14 that Matthew quotes.
 - 1. What kind of king was Ahaz (see 2 Chronicles 28:1-3)?
 - 2. Although Ahaz’s response in verse 12 seems to be a pious restatement of Deuteronomy 6:16, why is it actually the opposite (compare it to verses 10-11)?
 - c. ***Tuesday:***
 - i. There has been much debate about the prophecy Matthew quotes in verse 14 – much of it focused on whether or not the prophecy foretold a virgin birth.

1. When it was fulfilled in Ahaz's time, the mother could not have been a virgin (and the Hebrew word used can mean a sexually mature girl of marriage age), but that was not the point God was making to Ahaz through Isaiah. What was God's point (see Isaiah 7:16)? [Note: Damascus and Samaria were both conquered by Assyria within 12 years – the age of accountability.]
2. When Matthew quotes the passage, what is the main point he is making?
 - a. Is Matthew using the quote to give us new information about Mary or to confirm what we already know (see Matthew 1:20 and Luke 1:34)?
 - b. What new information does the quote provide? How does this parallel (reinforce) what Mary has been told by Gabriel in Luke 1:35b?
- ii. Why is Immanuel a fitting title for the Son of God? If the Child's common name, Jesus, specifies what He does (saves us), what does the titular name, Immanuel, specify? How does John capture that in his prologue, John 1:1-14?

d. Wednesday:

- i. Although examples of "God with us" are throughout the Old Testament, the name/title "Immanuel" only appears two times: Isaiah 7:14 and 8:8. Read Isaiah 8:3-10.
 1. How do these verses in Isaiah 8 reinforce the one we have already considered in chapter 7?
 2. What does the use of Immanuel in verse 8 seem to be saying?
 3. Where else in this passage could "Immanuel" have been used?
- ii. There is no record in the Gospels that Jesus' disciples ever used His title Immanuel, nor does Jesus ever use it, but can you think of specific events in the Gospels that show that at least some understood that "God is with us" (consider Matthew 14:33, John 11:27 & 20:28)?

e. Thursday:

- i. How do these verses show us that Immanuel, God with us, was not just a truth for Joseph and those who lived in Jesus' day but extends to us today:
 1. Matthew 18:20 and 28:20
 2. Luke 24:49, John 14:16, 15:26, and 16:7
 3. John 17:20-23

How do these verses show that "God with us" involves all three persons of the Trinity?
- ii. How did Paul's experience of Immanuel while in Corinth (see Acts 18:9) show that Jesus continues to be with believers after His ascension? How did Paul communicate how important and certain he considered God's presence in Romans 8:31 and 38-39?

- iii. What does the author of Hebrews reinforce the importance of God’s presence with us in Hebrews 13:5-6?
 - iv. Considering all we’ve read, how important should “Immanuel” be to us today? If we truly believe God is with us, what effect should it have on our lives?
- f. **Friday:**
- i. What was Joseph’s response to the message he received from the angel of the Lord?
 1. When you read verse 24, what sense do you get of how long Joseph waited before acting?
 2. If we know that “God is with us,” how long should we wait before following His direction in our lives?
 - ii. The custom at the time of Jesus was that after a year of betrothal, there would be a marriage celebration, lasting perhaps 7 days, during which the groom would take the bride to his home to consummate the marriage and show the proof of the bride’s virginity. By skipping these steps and taking Mary home immediately, what message would he be communicating?
 1. Since they lived in a shame culture, how was Joseph’s action likely to affect his life?
 2. How do you think Joseph’s obedience compares to our being told to “take up our cross” to follow Jesus?
- g. **Saturday:**
- i. Close the week by reading Matthew 1:18-25 one more time.
 - ii. This is an Advent passage; nonetheless, what applications do you see to how one should live as a Christian? What one personal takeaway do you see?

5. Application:

- a. God is with us. Jesus is called Immanuel to remind us that God came to us as a man – fully human and fully divine – and that He continues to be present with us. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all play a part in this presence, enabling and empowering. Therefore, we can say with Paul, “If God is for us, who can be against us?”.
- b. Obedience. God calls us, commands us, to obey Him. Sometimes, as with Joseph, the command will be uncomfortable or, as with Stephen (Acts 7:54-60), fatal. Whatever the outcome may be, when He commands, our response must be to obey.