

According to Matthew, Jesus was the fulfillment of “God with us”. When Jesus comes on the scene, He invites people to do things way outside of their comfort zone, reputations, positions/titles, etc. But He promises He will be with them...working through them.

Matthew 1:22-23 NLT - 22 All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet: 23 "Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.'"

Do you feel God might be nudging you to step out in an area you feel unqualified? Share with your group what that might be. Maybe it is something you've never imagined you could do but wanted to. To those who recognize their weakness and accept God's power, anything is possible. Then dare to take the next step to follow that call.

WRAP-UP

When Isaiah announced the coming Messiah, he said this would be the Mighty God with us. And even though we'd like to handle things on our own, sometimes we fall short and need to cry out for help. At that point we have a choice, to acknowledge our weakness and call on God, or look to what the world offers to solve our problems. But the more we seek the world's solutions, the more we dismantle our own faith, pushing God aside and minimizing how powerful He really is. It is when we recognize our weakness that His power can take over and work through us. Let's not make Moses's mistake and offer God excuses, rather let's admit that we need God and allow Him to work through us in ways we might never have thought possible.

Memory Verse

But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.
- Isaiah 40:31 NLT

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members' needs: (see back for more space)

Challenge- Ask God to show you where He might be calling you to step out. Possibly kids' ministry, student ministry, launching a group, share your faith, or starting a business?

“Mighty God”

Watching and Waiting - Week #2

INTRODUCTION

Isaiah prophesied about the coming Messiah more than 700 years before Jesus' birth. Perhaps the most astounding part of his prophecy is that a child would be born whose titles included “Mighty God”. About the time Isaiah was writing, Ahaz, the king of Judah, chose not to trust God and instead trusted the Assyrian army to rescue him. But Isaiah's description held the promise of one who is truly mighty enough to save those who trust him. And so, for hundreds of years the faithful watched and waited for the child promised to them. What does it mean for us to watch and wait for the Mighty God to deliver us? Could it be more than deliverance from eternal judgement? Might it include deliverance for us in other ways? Let's consider what it means for us to watch and wait for the Mighty God to come into our lives.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

Have you ever had a “close call” from which you were saved?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

1. Dismantling of Our Faith

2 Kings 16:7-8, 10, 14-15 NLT - 7 King Ahaz sent messengers to King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria with this message: "I am your servant and your vassal. Come up and rescue me from the attacking armies of Aram and Israel." 8 Then Ahaz took the silver and gold from the Temple of the LORD and the palace treasury and sent it as a payment to the Assyrian king. ... 10 King Ahaz then went to Damascus to meet with King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria. While he was there, he took special note of the altar. Then he sent a model of the altar to Uriah the priest, along with its design in full detail. ... 14 Then King Ahaz removed the old bronze altar from its place in front of the LORD's Temple, between the entrance and the new altar, and placed it on the north side of the new altar. 15 He told Uriah the priest, "Use the new altar for the morning sacrifices of burnt offering, the evening grain offering, the king's burnt offering and grain offering, and the burnt offerings of all the people, as well as their grain offerings and liquid offerings. Sprinkle the blood from all the burnt offerings and sacrifices on the new altar. The bronze altar will be for my personal use only."

King Ahaz was threatened and unable to save himself. That is when he failed the testing of his faith. Where did Ahaz turn to be rescued?

It probably felt more secure to call on a man who was powerful to come to his defense than to wait for God. Look at the steps Ahaz took as he “dismantled” his faith. After crying out for Assyria to help what did Ahaz offer him (v. 8)? What are some things we might invest our resources in to feel secure, rather than offering them to God?

King Ahaz saw the Assyrian altar and made a replica for himself. This replica displaced God’s altar. If we were to identify an “altar” of our culture, it might be wealth, social media, fame, “the American Dream”, or sports to name a few. What happens to God’s place in our lives when we allow anything else to be the focus of our “worship”?

2. Mighty to Change your Life

2 Kings 17:7 NLT - 7 This disaster came upon the people of Israel because they worshiped other gods. They sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them safely out of Egypt and had rescued them from the power of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.

When the people of Israel relied on the gods of Assyria to save them it resulted in disaster.

What did they fail to recognize about God when they turned to other gods according to verse 7 above?

Isaiah referred to the Messiah as the Mighty God. Certainly, God demonstrated His power was greater than Pharaoh when He delivered Israel out of slavery in Egypt. Somehow Israel forgot that and believed the lies of the enemy that God couldn’t save them and instead they turned elsewhere for help.

Some of us have struggled to believe that God is powerful enough to conquer our enemies, even though He has rescued us in the past.

What would you list among the things that we struggle to believe that God can overpower in our lives?

3. Mighty to Work for You

Sometimes we, like the people of Israel, can be slow to recognize who God really is. Read through this very powerful description of God in Isaiah 40:28-31.

Isaiah 40:28-31 NLT - 28 Have you never heard? Have you never understood? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth. He never grows weak or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding. 29 He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. 30 Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. 31 But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.

Did you notice who it says He gives power to? If we come with our cup full, God can’t pour anything in it. But when we recognize that we are weak and powerless, then we receive “new strength”.

Can you share a time when you came to the end of your own resources, but God infused you with power you never thought you had?

4. Mighty to Work through You

When we embrace the fact that God wants to give us power, we begin to glimpse the potential for us to be used by God. God was with those He used. However, not all of the heroes of faith accepted their calling easily. The bible explicitly tells us God was with Abraham, Gideon, David, Joshua and Moses among others. Moses in fact had one of the most audacious arguments ever recorded.

What were some of the excuses Moses used attempting to escape the call of God in his life? God answered every protest, but still Moses insisted in verse 13 that God send someone else, and God respected his request.

Exodus 3:11, 13; 4:1, 10, 13, 16 NLT - 11 But Moses protested to God, "Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?" ... 13 But Moses protested, "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?" ... 4:1 But Moses protested again, "What if they won't believe me or listen to me? What if they say, 'The LORD never appeared to you?'" ... 10 But Moses pleaded with the LORD, "O Lord, I'm not very good with words. I never have been, and I'm not now, even though you have spoken to me. I get tongue-tied, and my words get tangled." ... 13 But Moses again pleaded, "Lord, please! Send anyone else." ... 16 Aaron will be your spokesman to the people. He will be your mouthpiece, and you will stand in the place of God for him, telling him what to say.