

## **CONNECTION Leader Notes**

Matthew 14:1-21, James 3:13-18, Psalms 113, Psalms 16

August 7, 2011

### **Key Verses**

#### **Feeding the 5000 – Matthew 14:13-21**

13 Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. 14 When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. 15 Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." 16 But Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." 17 They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." 18 And he said, "Bring them here to me." 19 Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. 20 And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. 21 And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

#### **Wisdom Makes Peace - James 3:13-18**

Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

#### **The Goodness and Greatness of God - Psalms 113**

1 Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD, Praise the name of the LORD. 2 Blessed be the name of the LORD From this time forth and forever. 3 From the rising of the sun to its setting The name of the LORD is to be praised. 4 The LORD is high above all nations; His glory is above the heavens. 5 Who is like the LORD our God, Who is enthroned on high, 6 Who humbles Himself to behold The things that are in heaven and in the earth? 7 He raises the poor from the dust And lifts the needy from the ash heap, 8 To make them sit with princes, With the princes of His people. 9 He makes the barren woman abide in the house As a joyful mother of children. Praise the LORD!

#### **Psalms 16**

1 Preserve me, O God, for I take refuge in You. 2 I said to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good besides You." 3 As for the saints who are in the earth, They are the majestic ones in whom is all my delight. 4 The sorrows of those who have bartered for another god will be multiplied; I shall not pour out their drink offerings of blood, Nor will I take their names upon my lips. 5 The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You support my lot. 6 The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me. 7 I will bless the LORD who has counseled me; Indeed, my mind instructs me in the night. 8 I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 9 Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely. 10 For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. 11 You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

## Discussion Questions

1. Why did Jesus, as the Son of God, withdraw to a “desolate place” after hearing the news of John the Baptist’s death? (Matt.14:13) What should we learn from Christ’s example? (Luke 9:10,18,36, John 6:15, Matt.14:23)
2. Describe the characteristics of the wisdom of man as delineated in James 3:13-16.
3. What does God’s wisdom look like as described in James 3:17? (Rom.11:33-36, I Cor.1:18-31, I Cor.2:6-8, Eph.1:16-18, Rev.7:11-12)
4. What should the result be if we actively seek out and exercise God’s wisdom here on earth? (James 3:18)
5. Why do we struggle with daily living like we truly understand the goodness and greatness of god? (Psalms 113)
6. What steps can we take to “take refuge” in God as referenced in Psalms 16:1? (II Sam.22:1-4, Ps.5:11-12, Ps.62:5-8, Ps.91, Ps.118:8-9, Prov.14:26, Hebr.6:17-20 )
7. How can we actively practice “setting the Lord continually before me” as David states in Psalms 16:8? And experience true “fullness of joy” (Psalms 16:11)?

## Supporting Scripture References:

### GOD’S WISDOM

**Romans 11:33-36** Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! 34 "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" 35 "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" 36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

**1 Corinthians 1:18-31** For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." 20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. 30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

**1 Corinthians 2:6-8** Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. 7 But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. 8 None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

**Ephesians 1:16-18** I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

**Rev 7:11-12** And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

## REFUGE IN GOD

**2 Samuel 22:1-4** (also Ps.18:1-2) And David spoke to the LORD the words of this song on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. 2 He said, "The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, 3 my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; you save me from violence. 4 I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.

**Psams 5:11-12** But let all who take refuge in You be glad, Let them ever sing for joy; And may You shelter them, That those who love Your name may exult in You. 12 For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O LORD, You surround him with favor as with a shield.

**Psalms 62:5-8** My soul, wait in silence for God only, For my hope is from Him. 6 He only is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I shall not be shaken. 7 On God my salvation and my glory rest; The rock of my strength, my refuge is in God. 8 Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah.

**Psalms 91:1-16** He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust!" 3 For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper And from the deadly pestilence. 4 He will cover you with His pinions, And under His wings you may seek refuge; His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark. 5 You will not be afraid of the terror by night, Or of the arrow that flies by day; 6 Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, Or of the destruction that lays waste at noon. 7 A thousand may fall at your side And ten thousand at your right hand, But it shall not approach you. 8 You will only look on with your eyes And see the recompense of the wicked. 9 For you have made the LORD, my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place. 10 No evil will befall you, Nor will any plague come near your tent. 11 For He will give His angels charge concerning you, To guard you in all your ways. 12 They will bear you up in their hands, That you do not strike your foot against a stone. 13 You will tread upon the lion and cobra, The young lion and the serpent you will trample down. 14 "Because he has loved Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him securely on high, because he has known My name. 15 "He will call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. 16 "With a long life I will satisfy him And let him see My salvation."

**Psalms 118:8-9** It is better to take refuge in the LORD Than to trust in man. 9 It is better to take refuge in the LORD Than to trust in princes.

**Proverbs 14:26** In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, And his children will have refuge.

**Hebrews 6:17-20** In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, 18 so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. 19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, 20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

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