

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR READ THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY FOR 4/4/13**

- 1. "IT'S NOT WHAT YOU SAY, BUT HOW YOU SAY IT THAT'S IMPORTANT." WHAT DOES PROVERBS 25:11-18 SAY ABOUT THIS STATEMENT? WHAT DOES THE LORD WANT US TO BE VERY DILIGENT ABOUT SAYING (JONAH 1:1; DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9; MATTHEW 28:19-30; 1 TIMOTHY 4:9-13; 2 TIMOTHY 1:8-10; COLOSSIANS 4:2-6)?**
- 2. PROVERBS 26 AND 27 ARE NOT UPLIFTING CHAPTERS. SOLOMON SHOWS HIS STATEMENT OF PROVERBS 27:19 TO BE TRUE BY GIVING NEGATIVE EXAMPLES. LOOK AT PROVERBS 26 AND DESCRIBE THE TYPES OF PEOPLE DESCRIBED THERE. IDENTIFY WHAT SOLOMON SAYS IS SO BAD ABOUT EACH ONE. UNFORTUNATELY, WE ARE ALL LIKE THE PEOPLE DESCRIBED. ONLY GOD CAN REMOVE THE STAIN THAT WE ALL BEAR. COMMENT ON GOD'S WORD OF FORGIVENESS IN THESE PASSAGES: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-21; EPHESIANS 2:1-10. THEN PRAY FOR HIS FORGIVENESS AND NEW LIFE.**
- 3. TO REFLECT ON PROVERBS 28 AND 29, DO THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT YOU DID WITH PROVERBS 26 AND 27: LIST SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RIGHTEOUS PERSON AND SOME OF THE THINGS A RIGHTEOUS PERSON DOES. REMEMBER THAT THE TRULY RIGHTEOUS PERSON IS MADE SO THROUGH THE FORGIVENESS WE HAVE IN CHRIST AND IS EMPOWERED TO LIVE THE RIGHTEOUS LIFE BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. READ COLOSSIANS 1:1--14 TOGETHER. WHAT ARE SOME ASPECTS OF LIVING A LIFE "WORTHY OF THE LORD" THAT HE DESCRIBES? HOW HAS THE FATHER QUALIFIED YOU TO SHARE IN THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS? THEN JOIN YOUR FELLOW BELIEVERS IN PRAISING GOD FOR GIVING YOU THIS GIFT THROUGH HIS SON BY LOOKING AT THE VERSES OF THE ADVENT CAROL "LET THE EARTH NOW PRAISE THE LORD" (LSB352).**
- 4. THE LAST TWO CHAPTERS OF PROVERBS ARE PROVERBS OF TWO OTHER WRITERS, AGUR AND LEMUEL. THEY ALSO COULD SERVE AS A FINAL WORD TO THE READER. WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF EACH? WHAT WOULD BE THE CONTENT OF YOUR OWN PRAYER AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLETED READING PROVERBS?**
- 5. READING ECCLESIASTES 1 AND 2 IS LIKE READING THE FIRST PORTION OF A LETTER THAT BEGINS ON A NEGATIVE NOTE. WHAT THINGS HAD THE TEACHER TRIED THAT HE FOUND MEANINGLESS? WHAT MAKES THESE THINGS MEANINGLESS? EVEN THOUGH THE TEACHER FOUND THEM MEANINGLESS, DOES THAT MEAN THESE THINGS ARE WITHOUT VALUE? EXPLAIN YOUR THOUGHTS. READ 1 JOHN 2:1-2, 15-17. JOHN COMES TO THE SAME CONCLUSION AS THE TEACHER. AFTER YOUR DISCUSSIONS THIS MORNING, ASK THE LORD TO STRENGTHEN YOUR TRUST IN HIS MEANINGFUL TREASURE.**

**6. SEVERAL HINTS TO THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF MEANINGLESSNESS APPEAR IN ECCLESIASTES 3 AND 4. IDENTIFY THE ASPECTS OF THE SOLUTION MENTIONED IN THESE VERSES: ECCLESIASTES 3:1-8; 3:12-14; 3:17; 3:18; 4:9-12. WHAT DID THE ANGEL ANNOUNCE AS THE GREAT SOLUTION TO THESE PROBLEMS (LUKE 2:10-11)? WHAT IS PETER'S CONFESSION ABOUT WHAT IS MEANINGFUL (JOHN 6:68)?**

**7. DID THE SHEPHERDS SAY ANYTHING AT THE MANGER? CHECK OUT LUKE 2:8-20. WHAT DID THE SHEPHERDS SAY AT THE MANGER? WHAT DID THEY SAY AFTER THEY HAD VISITED THE MANGER? THEY SEEM TO HAVE FOLLOWED THE INSTRUCTION OF THE TEACHER IN ECCLESIASTES 5:1-3. WHY DOES THE TEACHER SAY WE SHOULD "NOT BE HASTY IN YOUR HEART TO UTTER ANYTHING BEFORE GOD?" ACCORDING TO THE TEACHER, WHO IS RUNNING THINGS ANYWAY? HOW MIGHT THIS INSIGHT HELP US CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH PEACE AND JOY?**

**8. "THE DAY OF DEATH (IS) BETTER THAN THE DAY OF BIRTH" (ECCLESIASTES 7:1). WHAT A STATEMENT TO THINK ABOUT AT CHRISTMAS TIME OR THE WEEK AFTER EASTER! WHY WOULD A CHRISTIAN SAY THIS? READ 2 CORINTHIANS 5:1-10 AND PHILIPPIANS 1:21-23. WHY DOES SOLOMON FEEL THIS WAY? WHO OFFERS MORE HOPE, SOLOMON OR PAUL?**