

Small Group Discussion Guide

December 17, 2017



Sermon Title:

“Christmas Questions:
Do You Really Want God to Come?”

Sermon Text: *Matthew 1:18-23, 2:13-18*

Scripture Reading: *Luke 9:57-62*

Leader: *Please allow a moment for introductions/visiting. Have someone offer a brief prayer inviting God to speak and lead using the group’s discussion.*

Getting Started: Do you have a family or friends who just make your holiday celebration special? Do you have a family member or friend who you would prefer not to have at your gatherings? Why?

Discussion:

When God enters and begins to act in our life it can be:

- 1. Awkward (1:18)** There was nothing normal about Joseph’s and Mary’s experience. Can you imagine how Joseph felt when Mary was “found” to be pregnant? Can you imagine what Mary must have thought after the angel told her what was going to happen (Lk 1)? Can you imagine what it must have been like for either of them to explain to family and friends what God was doing in their lives? When have you found living your faith to be awkward?
- 2. Frightening (1:20, Luke 1:30)** Joseph was afraid. Mary was afraid. What was it about the angels or hearing God’s calling that made them so afraid? Have you ever been frightened by something you felt God was leading you to do? How were you able to get past your fear?
- 3. Inconvenient (1:24-25)** Everything would have been much easier if God would have waited just a little while longer, until after the marriage. Then there would have been no awkward questions, no misplaced accusations, and no suspect explanations. If God had waited just a little longer Mary could have given birth at home (Lk 2:6-7). Why did things have to happen for Joseph, Mary, and Jesus when they did? Have you ever asked God, why now?
- 4. Complicated (2:13-14)** After some joyful events and celebration, the new family finds they have to move immediately – inconvenient? No, complicated. New spouse, government required travel, crowded city, new baby, away from home and then news comes requiring a major relocation. Was God trying to make it difficult for Joseph and Mary? Why did he not give them a bit a break? Has allowing God to work in your life always been easy? How has it been complicated? What did you learn as you worked through God’s process?

5. **Life-Threatening** (2:13, 16) Jesus' life was threatened. Many young lives were lost. Read also Exodus 11-12. Ultimately, Jesus did give his life for us. Many have died for claiming the name of Jesus. Still today, some die because of their Christian faith. How deep does your faith go? Do you wonder how you would respond if faced with this great challenge? Thankfully, most of us will never have to truly answer the question. Instead, what challenge are we given? (See Rom. 12:1-2)

Closing: Close by *sharing prayer requests*.

Pray for each another and for the needs that were shared.

GO SHARE JESUS!