

LifeGroup Study Sheet

Dec 3rd, 2023 – Believe – Christmas Series

This guide is designed to give helpful hints in preparing for your group discussion.

Quick Review

Look back from your sermon notes – Was there anything that particularly challenged you from this sermon? Anything you didn't understand, agree with or connect with?

Introduction

Think about what things come to your mind during Christmas season. What do we accept as true, genuine, or real during the Christmas season? Another way to ask it is, what do we "believe" when it comes to Christmas?

Digging In

Question 1: Read Matthew 1:18-20. This story is incredible in many ways, but also imagine the heartbreak both Joseph and Mary were going through. Their whole wedding plan seemingly starts to unravel. Mary's pregnancy forces Joseph to make a natural assumption about her behavior, and he starts to make a new plan. Then **verse 20** happens! God changes Joseph's plan! How can we learn from this story about God changing our plans in life? How do you listen for God's direction for making plans, not just in your day to day, but for your whole life?

Question 2: Read Matthew 1:20-21. God asks Joseph to do two difficult things: (1) He clears the way for Joseph to continue the marriage process with Mary, and that she was not unfaithful to him but still a virgin. (2) He commands Joseph to name the baby boy, "Jesus." This was the Jewish custom, for the father to name the child. This would authenticate the baby's miraculous origin to Joseph. How does Joseph's story encourage you to cooperate with God even when He wants you to do something seemingly impossible? Think about the shame at first Joseph had to be married to a woman already pregnant, before they were married! It didn't make logical sense, but Joseph still believed God and carried it out.

Question 3: Matthew 1:22-25. All these things took place to fulfill the prophecy of the OT (**Isaiah 7:14, 8:8, 10**). We see Joseph's obedience after he wakes up from sleep – complete and immediate obedience. God had chosen Joseph specifically to be used as an instrument in His plan to bring salvation to the world. How can you listen to God this week, through His word or in prayer, and be available to be used by God in His mission? How can you pray to ask God to give you opportunities this week in the same way? Do you believe that God can use you?

Praise / Prayer Requests

Pray for your group with these things in mind:

Adoration – How can I praise God for what this teaches me?

Confession – What sin can I confess because of what this teaches me?

Thanksgiving – How can I thank God for what Jesus has done?

Supplication – What do I need to ask of God in order to grow in light of this?