

December 11, 2016 – Leader Coaching

[This page is to help you sharpen your skills as a DiscipleGroup Leader. Each week we will include concepts, challenges, and resources designed to assist you as you lead and shepherd your group and grow as a disciple yourself. Also, we have added comments (enclosed in brackets []) on the Leader Guide for you.]

Abiding

[grow as a disciple yourself]

- As Christmas comes nearer, reflect on the meaning of Christ's birth in your own walk. His name was called Immanuel, God with us.
- Are living your life as God's child in your own world?
- Are you giving your life so that other's may know the Savior?

Leading

[learn to facilitate your group more effectively]

- Have the person who told Promise last week retell the story this week to set the stage for this week's story.
- When you read the Bible passages after the telling, take the time to read each passage. These should be very familiar to most of the group but encourage the group to see the immensity of the concept that God became flesh.

Shepherding

[know the sheep, feed the sheep, lead the sheep, protect the sheep]

- Christmas time is family time. Often, we see members of the family that are lost or unchurched. Encourage your group to look for ways to share these stories with their lost family members. The two stories, Promise and Birth, would be great stories to share at a family Christmas gathering.

Resources:

- You can listen to an MP3 of this week's story at -- <http://firstmoore.com/the-whole-story-resources>
- Have you got the free app, uDisciple? It contains all the stories that we are currently using in our DiscipleGroups as well as the mp3 files. Download the app so that you can access the stories at any time. (It is available in the Google Play Store and the iOS Appstore.)

December 11, 2016 – Birth

Open in Prayer

Welcome/Introductions

[if there are new people in your group, give brief introductions of people they don't know]

Remind group of DiscipleGroup Guidelines

Ask a “hook question” to get the group talking

- Share about the coolest Christmas you experienced as a child.

Share background for the story

[Provide context by sharing what comes before the story in the Bible.]

This story of Jesus birth follows the model that is often used in churches during the Christmas season, but also includes the information right after his birth. This information will reinforce the idea that the child is the promised Savior from last week's story, Promise.

Tell the story – This week's story is **Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 2:21-34, 39-40** (Use the attached condensed story as your guide.)

[Tell the story with your Bible open on your lap to the passage.]

Rebuild the story

[Group members tell the story together, one piece at a time, based on what they remember.]

Read the story out loud - Read **Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 2:21-34, 39-40** from the Bible

[The Scripture passage will, obviously have many more details. Were there any important details left out of the telling or retelling that you discover in the Scripture?]

Discuss these questions:

1. What do we learn about God and the Promised Savior from this story?
2. Which character from this story do you identify with? Why?
3. How does this story change your view of the Christmas season? How does it affect you personally?
4. When did God open your eyes to accept Him? Share your story.

Ask someone to retell the story

[As for one volunteer to tell the story from start to finish. Help as needed.]

Assign next week's passage -- Luke 3:1-3, 10-22; Matt. 3:7-9, 13-15 (“Jesus’ Baptism”) (condensed story attached to next week's leader guide) **NEXT MEETING DATE IS WEEK OF JANUARY 1, 2017.**

Close in Prayer

[Co-leader or apprentice say a closing prayer.]

Birth

Matthew 1:18

This is how Jesus was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of God's Spirit.

Matthew 1:19-21

Joseph, did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly. As he considered this, an angel from God appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, descendant of David," the angel said, "don't be afraid to go ahead with your marriage to Mary, the child inside of her was conceived by God's Spirit. She will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Matthew 1:24-25

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel commanded and he took Mary as his wife, but he did not have sex with her.

Transition

Months later, a son was born to Mary in Bethlehem.

Luke 2:21-22; 25, 28

Eight days after his birth he was named Jesus, just as the angel said. Several weeks after that Jesus' parents took him to Jerusalem, that special city where they worshiped, and they presented him to God in that place of worship. When they got there they met an old man who had been waiting for the Promised Savior to come and to save his people. When he saw Jesus, he took the child in his arms and praised God, saying,

Luke 2:30-34

"I have seen the Savior; you have given him to all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations." Joseph and Mary were amazed at what was being said about Jesus. Then the old man blessed them, and he said to Mary, "This child will be rejected by many and that will be their undoing. But he will be the greatest joy to many others."

Luke 2:39-40

Jesus' parents returned home. And there Jesus grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom and God's favor was on him.