

EVERGREEN | RECLAIMED

DECEMBER 20 & 23-24, 2018

SERMON STUDY

Dive deeper into this week's message and passages from the Bible. Here are some questions to help guide your group discussion.

The substance of Christmas is that God would choose to send his son into the world in and through a very messy and imperfect group of people in order to satisfy three questions that reside in all of us: Why is this happening? What am I supposed to do? Am I enough?

Read Luke 2:8-20 and Matthew 1:18-25. Luke has all the style of the Christmas story. Matthew gets right to the substance. Matthew 1 shows us that every name has a story.

- The people in Jesus' family tree had substance. What comes to mind when you think of substance? If substance is the byproduct of adversity, does that give you hope for any adversity you might currently be dealing with? Why or why not?
- In what ways do you feel your life reflects style? In what ways does it reflect substance?
- Similar to how a passing glance of the Christmas story might cause us to think the people in Jesus' family had it all together, seeing other people's stories from a distance might cause us to think the same. Do you ever think other people have it all together? What makes you think that way?

Read Matthew 1:16. Jesus' family tree culminates with a teenage girl who lives in Nazareth. Mary is engaged, but not married; sweet, but untested; smart, but largely naïve. Yet, she was charged with raising the son of God.

- Similar to how Mary probably really felt, when have you asked yourself: Why is this happening? What am I supposed to do? Am I enough?

Read John 3:17. The way you interpret the nativity scene will influence the way you see God.

- Describe how you interpret the nativity scene: as outdated and out of touch; as nice, but irrelevant to you; as wholly relevant to you; or, you don't really understand its significance? Why do you interpret it this way?
- God is genuinely interested in your life. He has the best of intentions for you, and he provides the substance of life: hope, meaning, purpose and fulfillment. What does this mean to you and why?

REFLECT

What is God saying to you through his word? How and when will you respond?

DAILY BIBLE READING

Need a review of what we're reading in Daily Bible Reading? Here's a glance at how we're being challenged this week. (Subscribe at: tpcc.org/dailybiblereading)

Day One: Luke 2:8-20 | The style of the Christmas story.

Day Two: Matthew 1:18-25 | The substance of the Christmas story.

Day Three: Matthew 1:16 | Three questions.

Day Four: John 3:17 | God's intentions toward you.

Day Five: Matthew 1:18-25 | God is with us.