

Announcing Christmas – Small Group Discussion Guide

Let's Start With John

Text: Luke 1:5–25

Warm-Up

1. Growing up, what was one tradition your family did to “get ready for Christmas”?
 2. Today, what helps you prepare spiritually—not just seasonally—for the coming of Jesus?
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Observation – What Does the Text Say?

3. How does Luke describe Zechariah and Elizabeth in verses 5–7? Why is this important?
 4. What happens to Zechariah inside the temple? What are the people doing outside (vv. 8–12)?
 5. What does Gabriel announce about John’s birth and his mission (vv. 13–17)?
 6. How does Zechariah respond to the angel, and what consequence does he receive (vv. 18–20)?
 7. How do the people react when Zechariah finally comes out of the temple (vv. 21–22)?
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Interpretation – What Does It Mean?

A Life of Prayer

8. Gabriel says, “Your prayer has been heard.”
What prayer(s) might this refer to—Zechariah’s personal prayer for a child or Israel’s long prayer for restoration?
9. Why is it significant that God answers *both* a personal longing and a national longing through one event?

A Life of Marvel

10. The Bible often highlights miraculous births (Isaac, Samuel, John).
How do these point forward to the miraculous conception of Jesus?
11. What stands out to you about John's calling and identity—even before he is born (vv. 15–17)?
12. After 400 years of silence, why does it matter that John picks up the storyline of Malachi 4:5–6?

A Life of Reconciliation

13. John's mission was to “turn hearts” and “make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”
Why is relational and moral transformation essential to preparing for Jesus?
14. Luke 3 gives examples of practical repentance (sharing, honesty, integrity).
Why is repentance always tied to real-life change?

A Life of Faith

15. Zechariah is righteous, obedient, and inside the Holy Place—yet he still doubts.
What does his story teach us about how easy it is even for mature believers to lose sight of God's power?
16. Where do you see the “scarcity of faith” in your own life—especially in areas long marked by disappointment?

Application – How Do We Live It?

1. Live a Life of Prayer

17. What would it look like for you this Advent to pray with “restoration” in mind—not just personal requests but the coming of Jesus?
18. What long-standing prayer have you quietly stopped praying? What might it look like to pray again in faith?

2. Live a Life of Marvel

19. Where have you lost a sense of wonder in your walk with God?
20. Which part of this passage renews your awe—God's timing, God's power, or God's weaving of history together?

3. Live a Life of Reconciliation

21. Is there a relationship—family or otherwise—that needs healing this season?
What does it mean, practically, to “chance your arm” and take the risk of initiating peace?
22. How might preparing for Jesus’ coming involve pursuing reconciliation with someone this week?

4. Live a Life of Readiness

23. Advent traditionally prepares believers for Jesus’ *second* coming as much as His first.
What does it look like for you to “live this week as if Jesus were coming next weekend”?
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Prayer

Close by praying together:

- For renewed faith where hope has faded
- For hearts awakened to marvel at God’s work
- For courage to seek reconciliation
- For a deep desire to be a people prepared for the Lord