



Throughout the Journey during the Christmas/Advent season, add some variety to your Life Group experience.

For your Life Group time either:

- Discuss the sermon
 - Go over a passage and questions
- OR
- Choose a different activity for your group to experience and celebrate what God has done. There are suggestions on the other side.

Passages for Life Group Discussion

Week 1: God's heart and purposes displayed in Jesus—the Promised Messiah and King

Key Idea: All of history points to the coming of Jesus. God had an intentional plan He prepared from before the beginning of time. His plan includes a loving King who reigns with a people who love Him.

Passage: Isaiah 7:14 & 9:1-7

1. What does this passage promise?
2. Trace the promise of the Messiah King through the Bible. Suggested passages: Genesis 3:15 & 12:1-3; 2 Samuel 7:6-16; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 6:11-13 & 9:9; Luke 2:9-12; Colossians 1:15-20; Revelation 19:11-16. What did you discover?
3. How does, or how could, the promise of a Messiah King impact your view of Christmas, its festivities, and our world at this time?
4. What action or response will you take to what God has shown you about Himself? How can you use this Christmas season to respond to what God is doing?

Week 2: The Christmas story embodies a journey of *faith*.

Key Idea: God is faithful to fulfill all He has promised. The people of Israel were waiting for God to fulfill His promises, then God sent an angel to Nazareth.

Passage: Luke 1:26-38

1. Describe what you see in Mary's responses. What was being asked of her?
2. How would you feel if you were in Mary's shoes? A) How might Mary's understanding of God impact her response? (Luke 2:46-55 might give insight.)
3. In what ways does Jesus' birth speak of God's faithfulness to you, personally?
4. Where do you have a need to trust in God's faithfulness at this time in your life?

Week 3: *Hope*, which is assurance, confidence, eager expectation and anticipation—not wishful thinking—is a part of the journey.

Key Idea: Our hope is not in our circumstances, but in God's eternal promises. Jesus entering our story gives us hope beyond our present world. Jesus is the true King in the world, and we can have confidence in Him as Lord.

Passage: Luke 1:5-25

1. Zechariah was an ordinary man. How did his circumstances challenge what the angel was telling him?
2. What can cloud your confidence in God's promises or anticipation of Jesus' second coming?
3. Who or what helps you have hope? Does hope increase or decrease for you during the Christmas season?
4. How can you share the hope you have with others?

Week 4: God demonstrates His *love* by sending His son—first as a sacrifice, later to return as King.

Key Idea: Jesus' birth is the fulfillment of a promise made in the Garden. It demonstrates the depth and intensity of God's love.

Passage: Luke 2:1-20; John 3:16; Romans 5:8

1. What does Christmas mean to you?
2. Share a time when you experienced sacrifice because of love? (You may have seen an example, been on the receiving end, or demonstrated it.) What do you remember about the experience?
3. What are you learning about, and growing in understanding of, God's love for you and others?
4. Who in your life, family, or sphere of influence needs what Jesus offers in faith, hope, and love? Ask God what your part is in demonstrating God's love to them.

The Journey: Christmas/Advent Experience & Activity Ideas

During this Christmas season, encourage your Life Group and family to experience some different activities as a way of expressing the love God demonstrated to us through the gift of the Messiah King Jesus. Here are some ideas (actually most of these ideas you could do anytime).

Opportunities to use as families and Life Groups

- December 1st at 6:30 pm at RLM PF: Free *SEEDS* Concert. Great for families!!
- During this season – Ladies, take advantage of the tool *Bringing Christmas Home*. If you have questions, talk to a Women's Discipleship Leader or go to www.reallifeministries.com/real-life-women-bringing-christmas-home-2
- *Christmas Eve services*: Each of the three campuses has several services to choose from. You could bring your family; sit with your Life Group; invite friends, neighbors, and family to join you.

Use these suggestions as ideas to inspire your Life Group and families to do something different together.
Brainstorm your own ideas.

Week 1 – **Serve** one another and others.

- Do another family member's chores in secret.
- On trash day, take your neighbor's cans back to their house.
- Visit elderly or a nursing home. Take treats and sing carols.
- Clean the walks and driveways of a neighborhood.
- Deliver wood to those in need.
- Adopt a family for Christmas.
- Dads take the kids and give Mom some time away. Or provide childcare for single parent families.

Week 2 – **Celebrate** each other and together.

- Tell people in your Life Group/family one thing you love about them.
- Write thank you notes to teachers, postal delivers, police/firemen.
- Go bowling/sledding or do another activity together.
- Have a dinner/dessert/party as a Life Group & maybe play some games together.
- Make snow angels and build a snowman (providing there's snow ☺).

Week 3 – **Share** faith, hope and love. Share Jesus and your life.

- Pay for the car behind you at a drive-through.
- Invite a family out to dinner or over to your home.
- Pass out candy canes to people in unexpected places. Wish people a Merry Christmas.
- Invite someone to share Christmas with you.
- Invite people to Christmas Eve Services.
- Clean out your clothes closet or coat closet. Give to a place of need.
- Commit to support Compassion children as a family or a Life Group.

Week 4 – **Shine** light in the world you live in.

- Take food to your workplace or a place that serves the community, like the town hall.
- Invite a coworker to lunch.
- Bring goodies to your neighbors.
- Commit to volunteer at a food bank or a place that serves the community in January. (Places need help all year long.)

