

## 1. CHRISTMAS IS ABOUT A GOD WHO \_\_\_\_\_ US.

**Isaiah 9:1-2** <sup>1</sup>Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—<sup>2</sup>The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

- o Christmas is about light coming into a dark world.

**John 1:1-5** <sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

- o Jesus is the light, and He has come for us.

- Jesus came to give us life—the life we lost in the garden.
- He came to give us light—the word/truth. (John 1:1)
- He came to give us relationship as adopted children of God.

---



---



---

## 2. GOD PURSUES BECAUSE HE LOVES US AND WANTS \_\_\_\_\_.

**Isaiah 7:14** Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

- o His name Immanuel, God with us—this implies relationship.

**John 1:14** The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

- o He came to live among us to pursue relationship with us.

---



---



---

## 3. GOD PURSUES THE \_\_\_\_\_.

**John 6:44** No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.

- o God is at work drawing us to Himself through His Holy Spirit

**Luke 15:1-7** <sup>1</sup>Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. <sup>2</sup>But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” Then Jesus told them this parable: <sup>4</sup>“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? <sup>5</sup>And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders <sup>6</sup>and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ <sup>7</sup>I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

- o Jesus goes after and seeks those who have strayed and are lost.
- o Those who drift away are as important as those who remain in relationship with God.
- o He doesn’t stop looking until they are found—God is relentless in His pursuit of us.
- o He joyfully brings the strays and lost home and restores them into His family.

---



---



---

#### 4. AS GOD PURSUES AND SEARCHES FOR US, HE GIVES US A \_\_\_\_\_.

- To choose, we must first recognize our sin problem.

**Luke 5:30-32** <sup>30</sup>But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" <sup>31</sup>Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. <sup>32</sup>I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

- o Jesus came to intentionally pursue and rescue all of us from our sin problem.
- o Our choice is to repent from our sinful ways and put our faith in Him.
- o Our greatest life decision is to receive the gift of life and walk in the light.

**1 John 1:7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

#### 5. WE ARE TO PURSUE \_\_\_\_\_.

This time of year brings up all kinds of pain and emotion for many. Some will feel:

- o Lonely, without relationship
- o Hopeless and depressed
- o Stuck in the darkness of addiction and pain

**In the spheres of your life, how can you graciously pursue others with the same love and humility the Lord pursued us?**

**2 Corinthians 5:17-20** <sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! <sup>18</sup>All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: <sup>19</sup>that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup>We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

---

---

---

#### QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

- What is the message of reconciliation you need to bring to others?
- As an ambassador, whose Kingdom do you represent? What characteristics define the Kingdom of God?
- This Christmas, how will you pursue those in your life who are lost and hurting?

#### QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR LIFE GROUP OR FAMILY AND FRIENDS:

**Passages to consider:** Luke 1:26-36 and John 3:16-21

1. What from the sermon was insightful to you? A) How will it affect how you approach this Christmas season?
2. When you think of Christmas, what comes to mind? Try to quickly name 7-10 things. A) When you think of love, what comes to mind?
3. Read Luke 1:26-36 (see also Isaiah 7:13,14). What do you see happening in these passages? A) What does this tell you about who God is and His Father's heart toward us, His people?
4. Take a look at John 3:16-21 (see also Jeremiah 31:3). What does this tell you about God and about people? A) How does this passage relate to Christmas for you?
5. Who has modeled to you the way the heart of the Father, God, loves? A) How have you experienced how love pursues and shines light?
6. As the Christmas season is here, how will what you understand about the Father's heart impact how you interact with Jesus? Celebrate Christmas in your home? With your church family? And with those with whom you work, live, and play? Think of one or two small but significant ways to engage. *Idea: When you notice Christmas lights, think about how God loves you and the world and chose to send Jesus, the light of the world. Thank Him and tell someone.*

**Christmas Focus Idea:** If you read one chapter of Luke every day starting December 1st, you will read through the story of Jesus by Christmas!

**Passages to prepare for next week:** Luke 2; Psalms 139; Ephesians 2:1-10