

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

SUMMARY

In the first part of the "Christmas in the Gospels" series, Pastor Steve delves into Matthew's account of Jesus' birth. The sermon highlights three key themes: God keeps His promises, God's grace flows through a messy family tree, and the God who saves and stays. Matthew's genealogy of Jesus underscores God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises throughout history, despite human failures. The miraculous conception of Jesus emphasizes His role as the Savior who is both "God with us" and the one who saves us from our sins.

SHARE

As an icebreaker, share a surprising or interesting fact about your own family history or genealogy. How does knowing your family background impact your understanding of who you are?

READ

As a group, read **Matthew 1:1-25** out loud together.

DISCUSS

Feel free to pick/choose what is most helpful for you. Remember the goal is to have rich, relational, authentic, Jesus-centered discussions.

1. What most stood out to you about the sermon?

2. How does Matthew's genealogy of Jesus demonstrate that "God keeps His promises"? Consider the significance of the number seven in this context.

3. Pastor Steve mentioned that God's grace flows through a messy family tree. How does the inclusion of figures like Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba in Jesus' genealogy illustrate this point?

4. Reflect on Matthew 1:22-23. What is the theological significance of Jesus being called "Immanuel"? How does this name deepen our understanding of the incarnation?

5. How does the story of Joseph's response to Mary's pregnancy challenge or inspire you in your own faith journey?

6. Pastor Steve quoted Tim Keller, saying that Jesus comes for all people, regardless of their background. How does this truth impact your view of God's grace in your own life?

7. In what ways can we, as a group, embody the message of "God with us" in our community, especially during the Christmas season?

NEXT STEPS:
Reflect on how you can personally embrace the truth that God keeps His promises, even when life seems uncertain. Consider reaching out to someone who might feel like an outsider and share the message of God's inclusive grace with them.

PRAY:
Spend time in prayer as a group, thanking God for His faithfulness and grace. Pray for each other, asking for the courage to live out the truth of "God with us" in your daily lives.

CLOSING:
As you go about your week, remember that Jesus is both your Savior and Immanuel—God with you. Let this truth guide your actions and interactions with others.