



CHRISTMAS

in
THE KINGDOM

Week Two | Choices > Feelings | 12.10-11.2022

Group Conversation Questions: Use these questions to help you process the message in your personal study time or with your group. Time suggestions are based on a 90-minute group gathering.

Message Recap: Christmas feels crowded. There is a better vision for Christmas in the Kingdom of Heaven. When we recast our picture of this season towards a picture of what God originally envisioned, the pressure is released, and the hope increases. Let's explore Christmas in the Kingdom, the hope, joy, peace, and love that Jesus died to provide. Before the resurrection was the incarnation; He came to earth so that we could experience Heaven this Christmas and every Christmas for eternity.

» Opening

(3 minutes)

- Introductions - Clarify expectations:
 - Remind your group that this is a confidential meeting.
 - **Remember, there may be many thoughts and views. Please remain kind and respectful during conversations.**
- Pray - Open your time together in prayer.

» Introduction

(12 minutes)

- Ice-Breaker: What things can you do during this Christmas season that might help you find joy?
- Digging Deeper: Describe some of the "joy killers" in your life right now (the places where God has not met your desired wants).

» Observation | Read Luke 1:26-38, 46-55; John 16:24

(12 minutes)

- What are your initial reactions to these passages? What do you find challenging? Are you encouraged by any of these verses? Why?

» Key Principle | Choices > Feelings

(12 minutes)

- Which is more true for you: Do your circumstances affect your feelings, or do your feelings affect your circumstances? Why?
- Does it feel empowering or exhausting to choose our emotions? Why do you think that is?

» Finding Joy | Reread Luke 1:26-37; John 16:24; Isaiah 61:1-11

(12 minutes)

- Would it have seemed impossible for Mary to birth an eternal king? Does true joy seem impossible to us? Why?
- Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would bring liberty, favor, comfort, gladness, and everlasting joy. Do you believe that is a reality?

» Choosing Joy | Reread Luke 1:38; Psalm 30:1-5; Isaiah 12:2-6

(12 minutes)

- What about Mary's response was a choice? Does obedience to God lead to joy?
- How does the choice to be joyful change our perception of our circumstances? Do we trust in the joy of God?

» Spreading Joy | Reread Luke 1:46-55; Philippians 2:1-11; 1 John 4:7-19

(12 minutes)

- How does shared joy differ from secret joy? How did Mary honor God and His promises with her joyful words?
- What do the passages in Philippians and 1 John instruct us to do to share our joy with others?

» Next Steps and Prayer |

(15 minutes)

- How might your feelings interfere with the desire to choose joy? What can you do to remind yourself that choices > feelings?
- Close by praying for one another to choose joy this Christmas season, even when circumstances are difficult.