



DISCUSSION GUIDE

“Jesus Comes to an Unstable Home”

GETTING STARTED

What is the most unique “birth announcement” you have ever heard?

What experience have you had that involved uncomfortable travel?

QUICK REACTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?

What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

What are common reasons people love the Christmas season? Why are these good, but also misleading when we read the account of the birth of Jesus?

What significance is there to the reality that Christ was born into a time of division, under a military dictatorship, and into a world of poverty and hardship? In what way would His birth reveal what Christ came to accomplish?

Read Isaiah 9:6-7...

What does it mean for you that a child is born to us, a son is given?

That His name is wonderful counselor?

Mighty God?

Everlasting Father?

Prince of Peace?

In what way can you celebrate who Christ is this Christmas? New tradition? New focus?

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [Luke 2:1-7]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however, good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.) Work through this quickly, the answers are fairly obvious.

Who decreed that a census be taken of the entire Roman world? (2:1)

What did the Roman census require of everyone? (2:3)

What reason did Luke give for Joseph having to travel to Bethlehem for the census? (2:4)

What was Joseph and Mary’s marital status at the time of Jesus’ birth? (2:5)

Why was travel especially difficult for Mary? (2:5)

What details about the birth of Jesus do we know or can we infer from Luke’s description? (2:5-7)

What were the conditions in Bethlehem the night Jesus was born? (2:7)

QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

How well have Christmas carols, cards, pictures captured the significance of the birth Luke described?

What significance is there that Joseph and Mary could find nowhere to stay?

What can we learn about responding to unexpected difficulties from the examples of Mary and Joseph?

In what ways did God "manage" the events of history to get Joseph and Mary where He wanted them at the appropriate time?

In what way was Christ's birth a statement about how He will live, teach, die and rise again?

How do you celebrate Christ's birth?

APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in these passages?

What do you need to stop, start or do differently as a result of reading this passage?

How can we pray for each other?