

Small Group Discussion Guide — December 1, 2019

- Series: Humility
 - Sermon: Immanuel
 - Scripture: Matthew 1: 23 (NLT)
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FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK:

Did any element of the liturgical service stick with you throughout last week? How did it affect your worship and/or thoughts toward God?

CONNECT:

What made this Thanksgiving holiday special this year? What are some specific things for which you are thankful?

ENGAGE:

1. Read Matthew 1: 23 (NLT).
 - What are some signs of humility in this verse?
 - What is the significance in the Messiah coming to us as a child?
 - Discuss the idea of “God with us.” How do you think Mary and Joseph thought about this name, “Immanuel”? How would it be a surprising name and entrance for the Christ?
2. Read Isaiah 57: 15 (MSG).
 - How is this verse really the message of Christmas?
 - Who are the low-spirited and spirit-crushed? If you relate to this, what does this verse mean to you?

APPLY:

1. How does the idea of Christ as a baby, God with us, upend everything we’d ever expect about God? How does this idea sit with you?
2. How do you experience “God with you” in your life? Is there a specific situation in which you’ve experienced this, or do you feel this as a daily part of your life?
3. Do you know anyone who consistently exhibits a spirit of humility? How have you seen that in someone’s attitude or behavior?
4. What does it look like to continue in a daily walk of childlike humility? How will that help us see God with us?

PRAY:

Father, You came to us as a child. Although you are mighty, you showed us what it means to be humble. Help us to live out your example. You tell us that you see us. Remind us to see you, with hope and wonderment, as we go through this season. Give us the faith of Mary and Joseph, to trust in you and believe that you are Immanuel. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

GOING DEEPER

1. Describe a time when you were absolutely certain that God's presence was with you.
2. Read Exodus 33: 20-23 (NLT).
 - Contrast this passage with Isaiah 57: 15 and Matthew 1:23. How does this passage inform your understanding of the miracle of the Nativity?
 - What is the significance of this majestic, all-powerful God “moving into the neighborhood” as a poor and needy little baby?

Quotes for Reference

“Whether it happened the way Luke said it did, with the angels and the star, is almost beside the point because the one thing that believer and unbeliever alike can be equally sure happened is an event that changed the course of human history. And it was a profoundly human event - the birth of a human being by whose humanness we measure our own, of a human being with a face that, though none of us has ever seen it, we would all likely recognize because for twenty centuries it has been of all faces the one that our world has been most haunted by.”

Frederick Buechner ([click here](#) for his sermon, “Emmanuel”)