

Life Group
Visited By God
12-24-2023

Icebreaker

What is the farthest you have traveled to visit someone? —OR—

Have you ever visited a foreign country? What was it like not being a native? —OR—

Have you ever heard of someone being visited by/seeing a vision of God?

Step 1 - GET REAL

What are you thankful for from the past week?

What struggles did you face?

What can you share from your personal Bible reading? (other than the designated reading)

Where did you see God in your daily life?

Step 2: GET FED

Scripture

John 1:1-18 (ESV) ¹ *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* ² *He was in the beginning with God.* ³ *All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* ⁴ *In him was life, and the life was the light of men.* ⁵ *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.* ⁶ *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.* ⁷ *He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him.* ⁸ *He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.* ⁹ ***The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.*** ¹⁰ ***He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.*** ¹¹ ***He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.*** ¹² *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,* ¹³ *who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.* ¹⁴ ***And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*** ¹⁵ *(John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”)* ¹⁶ ***For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.*** ¹⁷ *For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.* ¹⁸ ***No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.***

Matthew 1:18-25 (ESV) ¹⁸ ***Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way.*** *When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.* ¹⁹ *And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.* ²⁰ *But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.* ²¹ *She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”* ²² *All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:* ²³ ***“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).*** ²⁴ *When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife,* ²⁵ *but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.*

Luke 2:1-20 (ESV) ¹ *In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.* ² *This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria.* ³ *And all went to be registered, each to his own town.* ⁴ ***And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,*** ⁵ *to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.* ⁶ *And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.* ⁷ ***And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.*** ⁸ *And in the same region there were shepherds out in*

the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, **I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.** ¹¹ **For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.** ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel **a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,** ¹⁴ **“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”** ¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ **And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.**

John 3:16-18 (ESV) ¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that **whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.** ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that **the world might be saved through him.** ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

Luke 19:9-10 (ESV) ⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ **For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.**”

1 John 4:9-10 (ESV) ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that **God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.** ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and **sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

Acts 4:12 (ESV) ¹² **And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**”

Questions

(John 1:1-18) John tells us that the Word (Christ) was in the beginning, was with God, and was God. (vs 1) In the Word was Life and the Light of men. (vs 4) The Light was coming into the world. (vs 9) He came to His own people and those who received Him obtained the right to become children of God. (vs 9, 11) The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. (vs 14) Grace and truth came through Christ. (vs 17)

Matthew and Luke tell us more about God coming in the flesh in the form of a child. They reveal He would be conceived miraculously through Mary by the Holy Spirit, His earthly father would be Joseph, His name would be Jesus, He was born in Bethlehem, He was of the lineage of David, an angel declared the good news to shepherds that a savior was born, and He would save His people from their sins.

John reiterates Jesus would save His people from their sins in John 3:16-17 and 1 John 4:9-10. Luke and Peter echo John’s pronouncement in Luke 19:9-10 and Acts 4:12.

What a magnificent gift that God would become flesh and bring us grace and truth and the right to become children of God!

Why would God deign to come into our world?

Why would God, in the form of Christ, be willing to give up a portion of His deity to come into our world?

Why is the birth of Jesus so meaningful to us?

Step 3: GET ACTIVE

- Each day this week, meditate on the magnificent gift of God being willing to come into the world for us.
- List at least five consequences for our lives of Christ’s coming into the world.
- Study your life carefully to make sure you have appropriated Christ’s sacrifice for your life.