



Life Group Guide

A GUIDE FOR LIFE GROUPS, FAMILIES OR INDIVIDUAL STUDY



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VIDEOS

“FEAR NOT! -THE ANGELS OF ADVENT | SUNDAY, DEC. 19 STARTLING NEWS FROM AN ANGEL

ADVENT 4 (LOVE)

OPENING PRAYER

Father God, right now we are faced with so many challenging circumstances in this imperfect world. Too often we find ourselves face to face with fear and uncertainty. We are grateful for your promise in 1 John 4:18 reminding us that “... perfect love drives out fear...” Your love for us is perfect, as demonstrated by Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross. Remind us that you are with us and that perfect love was born at Christmas! In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

CONNECTING QUESTION

Tell about a time you felt insignificant or not up to a challenge.

SCRIPTURE READING

Read Aloud & Meditate on God’s Word: Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:26-38

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EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Read Luke 1:28. Favor is one way God demonstrates his love and affection for us. In verse 28, the angel Gabriel is telling Mary that the Lord is with her in the midst of her fear and uncertainty. How does this encourage you today in your own life? What might it mean to be “highly favored” by God?
2. What specific words does the angel Gabriel say to Mary? What truths about Jesus are emphasized here, both literally and figuratively? Read verse 30. What might have been the most difficult part of this encounter for Mary to understand?
3. There is no doubt Mary was initially troubled by Gabriel’s words. Read verses 34-37. What fear did Mary express? Was her fear justified? Why or why not? (See Deuteronomy 22:20-21 & 23-24.) What was Gabriel’s response, specifically in verse 37? In what area of your life do you need to believe that nothing is impossible with God?
4. In verse 38, Mary says, “I am the Lord’s servant...may it be to me as you have said.” In spite of her fear, Mary knows she is loved by God. How can we also submit our fears to God, knowing we are deeply favored and loved by Him? Read Romans 8:28 for guidance.
5. Mary was a “regular” person, seemingly insignificant in her community. Yet God chose her to play a significant role in fulfilling his perfect plan. Have you ever struggled with approval or acceptance from the world around you? How does Mary’s story remind you of how God feels about you?

6. Read Micah 5:2-5. Micah prophesized that the Messiah will come from insignificance and worthlessness. Why do you believe God ordained this important detail as part of His plan? How can this encourage us in times when we feel forgotten, insignificant, or as if we have no lasting legacy?
7. Even if you never see your influence on the world, you can know for sure that God deeply loves you and you are of significant value to him. How can we reconcile any feelings of insignificance we may have with the truth about God's love for us?
8. In Micah 5:5, we are reminded that Jesus is our peace. How have you experienced the peace of Christ this Christmas season?

FOLLOWING JESUS

In your daily rhythm, recognize that your achievements and accomplishments are not a prerequisite to the amount of love God has for you. How can you show unconditional love to those around you, especially during this Advent season?

CLOSING PRAYER

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus and anticipate His return, ask God to help you remember that you are no longer a slave to fear because of Jesus' love. Thank Him for the gift of Jesus: perfect love that came to be with us on earth. Ask God to remind you that striving is unnecessary, and that you are accepted, loved, and "highly favored" just as you are.

Our Father...