

Scandal: God was Born Discussion Questions
11.26.17

Leader Prep Section

Take time before your small group meeting to prepare by reading through the questions and scripture passage so that you can select 4-5 questions that are best suited to your group.

Try to work through at least one question from each of the sections - Hook, Book, Look, Took in order to move from observation to application.

When possible spend time in prayer for each member of your group.

Hook - Ice breaker type questions to help make the transition into the study time.

1. When does time feel “empty boxes to be filled” or “flat and homogenized to you”?
2. What are some moments when time has felt sacred and holy?

Background

Luke begins his retelling of the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus with an introduction that includes key characters like Mary and Joseph, Elizabeth and Zechariah and two amazing hymns of praise. The first song comes from Mary in response to her encounter with the angel and the Holy Spirit and the second is from Zechariah after his son’s (John the Baptist) birth. The first chapter of Luke sets the scene for what will happen in chapter 2 a moment that sets in motion the salvation of the world. For Luke setting this scene squarely in its historical context is important so for us as modern readers we need to linger over these verses and contemplate what it would have been like for a young Jewish couple to live in the first century in Roman occupied Israel.

Read Luke 2:1 – 20

Questions

Book - These questions are designed to get you into the text itself.

1. Why do you think Luke includes this historically verifiable information in his narrative about Jesus?
2. How does Luke emphasize the sacredness of the time when Jesus was born?
3. How does Mary respond to the sacredness of this moment (2:19)?

Look - These questions will take you on a deeper look at what the passage means for us today.

4. Why do you think Jesus was born at the time he was and not before or after? (Read Galatian 4:4 – 5 for the importance of the moment Jesus was born.)
5. In what ways does our world encourage us to view all time as the same, empty boxes to be filled?
6. In what ways do you see people in our world longing for sacred time (perhaps the emphasis on meditation, love of weekends and vacation, people going on pilgrimages, etc)?
7. In your words, what is the difference between religion as “Our search for God” and Christianity claiming that it is about “God’s search for us”?

Took - These questions are focused on applying the big idea from the text to our lives.

8. How do we go about anchoring this story in the first century while celebrating in the 21st century?
9. What practices have helped you over the years be grounded in *Kairos* while living in a *Chronos* world?

10. What do you feel God inviting you into this particular Advent season?
11. What does this make you want to pray?

Closing

Please encourage your group to participate in the Advent Devotional Reader this season. As we prepare for the celebration of the birth of Christ (Advent) make space in your day-to-day bustle to reflect on the fact that Jesus left heaven to come to earth so that we might have a way to salvation. This is an amazing gift and yet it can get lost in the stress of the purchasing, wrapping, giving and receiving of the “perfect” gifts. Take time as you finish your time together to pray for eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to perceive the sacred moments during this Advent.

Reminder: This Christmas, may we step away from the mechanical sameness of tick-tock time and allow Advent to be punctuated by moments of sacred time.