

Scandal: God was Born Discussion Questions  
12.03.17

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. What is your ancestry? Where are your people from? Do you think of this as a major part of your identity? Why or why not?
2. Take a piece of paper and write down the different "tribes" you are part of? (Think extended family, hometown, where you live now, alma mater, etc...)

Background

The history of Israel is replete with interactions with the one true God. It began with the call of Abram and the covenant God made with him. From that point forward the people of Israel were marked as God's own, but they often did not live like they belonged to and worshipped the one true God so their story includes kings like David and prophets like Isaiah who were sent to lead the people in how they should follow God. Isaiah gave the prophesy that the savior of all would come from the line of David and he would usher in the Kingdom of Heaven. You can imagine there were those who were anxiously awaiting that moment, some who had given up hope and others who just went about their days with no particular thought to the promises God had made. It is in this reality the story of Jesus takes place. At the time of his birth Israel has been dramatically reduced in size from the golden days under David and Solomon and now are occupied by the Roman Empire. The Roman Emperor called for a census to be taken that required everyone to return to the town associated with their ancestry.

In the story of Jesus's birth we meet his parents and they are on their way to Bethlehem from Nazareth for the census. The journey took place toward the end of Mary's pregnancy and would have covered roughly 80 miles and likely taken about 4 days to complete.

Read Genesis 12:1 – 3; Jeremiah 33:14 – 16; Luke 2:1 – 8

Questions

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

1. Why did Joseph head from Nazareth to Bethlehem?
2. How would you summarize the promise God made to Abraham in Gen 12?
3. How would you summarize the promise God made about the line of David in Jeremiah 33?
4. Why do you think God chose his son to be born a Jew?

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

5. Does choosing his Son to be born a Jew means he loves them more? Why or why not?
6. Did God call the Jews more to make their life easy and good or more to use them to reach the world? What is the significance of your answer for Christians (who consider ourselves called) today?
7. What does God's calling of the Jews tell us about God's view of race, ethnicity, peoplehood?

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

1. Christian said, "His people > Our people." How do we live this out? What does this look like to live out as a church?
2. How is this good news for our world today? How do you think God can use this reality to reflect his deep love to those who do not know him?
3. In our world torn apart by issues of globalism, nationalism, and race describe what a church would look like that both affirms each person's tribe, tongue, and nation (doesn't pretend they don't exist) but also affirms that allegiance to Jesus is bigger than these? What would Hillcrest look like if it lived more and more into this reality?
4. What does this make you want to celebrate? What does this make you want to repent of? What does this make you want to pray for?

**Closing**

Advent is the time of year we focus on our eager anticipation of the return of our King.

Remember, God chose a teenage girl, a carpenter from a small rural town in a backwater country of the Roman Empire to usher in the Kingdom of God and Jesus entered the scene as a baby. Because this is true, imagine what God can do through you and I as we too embrace the scandal of his birth. Take a few minutes to pray together that this season which can be challenging for many would be a time of renewed joy.