

Small Group Discussion Guide

Hope and Remembering in Advent – December 1, 2024

Luke 2:1-20

Small Group Discussion Guide

Theme: Remembering and Hope in Advent

Opening Activity (5-10 minutes): Nostalgia and Memory

1. Share a memory from your childhood that brings you a sense of nostalgia, especially during the holidays.
 2. How does nostalgia shape the way you view the past and experience the present?
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Discussion: Luke 2:1-20

Read Luke 2:1-20 aloud together.

1. The Powerful Rulers (Verses 1-4)

- *Reflection:* Caesar Augustus and Quirinius represent power and influence in their time. How does our culture today view political power and authority?
- *Discussion:*
 - In what ways do we look to political leaders to solve our problems or bring peace?
 - How might this become idolatrous?
- *Challenge:* Consider how focusing on worldly power might distract us from God's eternal kingdom.

2. The Passive Savior (Verses 5-16)

- *Reflection:* Jesus, the Savior of the world, is described as entirely passive in this passage.

- *Discussion:*
 - What does it teach us about God's power and character that He entered the world so humbly and passively?
 - How does this contrast with how we might expect a Savior or ruler to act?
- *Challenge:* Reflect on areas in your life where you are tempted to trust in human power over God's quiet but transformative work.

3. The Praisers and the Ponderer (Verses 13-20)

- *Reflection:* The shepherds praised, the angels worshipped, and Mary pondered.
- *Discussion:*
 - What can we learn from the responses of the shepherds and Mary?
 - How might remembering (rather than nostalgic escapism) lead us to worship and praise God?
- *Challenge:* In your current circumstances, how can you turn your gaze toward Jesus and respond with worship and trust?

Application: Hope in Advent

1. *Reframing Hope:*
 - How does the Advent season help us anchor our hope in Jesus rather than in temporary things?
 - Share ways you've been reminded of God's better-than-expected hope in your life.
2. *Looking Forward:*
 - How can remembering Jesus' first coming encourage you as you wait for His second coming?
 - What can you do this Advent season to focus on remembering rather than nostalgia?

Prayer and Worship (10 minutes)

- Spend time in prayer, asking God to help the group remember His promises and hope in Christ.
 - Listen to or sing Jon Guerra's *Lord Remind Me*. Reflect on the lyric: *"The one who heard our weeping became a child in manger sleeping."*
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Closing Challenge

- As you go through this week, pay attention to where you place your hope. Are you tempted to look to worldly rulers or fleeting things? Commit to looking at the manger, the cross, and the empty grave to find your hope in Jesus.
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This guide allows for reflection, personal sharing, and practical application while keeping the focus on Advent's deeper meaning