



SDG Discussion Guide

Luke 2:8-21

December 17, 2017

For starters:

Distractions: Do you have any welcome distractions this holiday and if so what is one of them and why? New favorite TV series? New pet? Close friend visiting?

Throw It Away: What stuff would you get rid of if you had the chance / time / energy?

Getting In Focus: What tools or aids help you focus on your day-to-day responsibilities or interests more clearly?

Interaction with the text: (The following questions are meant to provide points of further interaction with the respective sermon text including its contextual details. Feel free to forward the questions to your small group members ahead of the respective Sunday; or, group members may find these questions in print on that Sunday.)

Read slowly and aloud the selected text in your group, taking turns as you can. Before doing so, pray and ask God to speak to your group. Note well what points and questions are raised for you. As time permits, read the passage a second time-- slowly and aloud. Notice, what may God be highlighting for your discussion and learning?

Now that you have read and reread the text, what points and questions of the text arose this time? Spend plenty of time in your group to address these. What else did you notice? Any angles unseen before now? Explore and see how God may steer the discussion. The following are further questions for reflection and discussion.

1. What three titles are given to Jesus in verse 11? What is significant about them?
2. God appeared to Zechariah, Mary and the shepherds when they were just being themselves. What's in a divine encounter, that is what does the appearance imply about what it means to be "spiritual"? How has God spoken to you lately in the ordinary flow of life? Or, how has God utterly surprised you lately-- in the ordinary flow of life?
3. What precious event or events has God done that you "treasure in your heart"?
4. What do you treasure the most about God with you in an utterly personal way?
5. Who was the "angel" who first told you about Jesus?
6. What effect has the news of Christ's birth – of God becoming human among people just like us in our day-to-day lives – had on you in this year? Spiritual commitment? An awakened sense of joy? Confusion? Hope for the future? Thankfulness for God's forgiveness? Other?
7. As you continue to reflect Christ's coming, what may God be showing you? Consider seriously those around you in need, those down or alone. To whom may the Spirit be leading you this Christmas?

Spend plenty of time in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to help you to pray. Continue to ask God to instill in you a heightened sense of anticipation for the coming of our Lord and what that means in how you will spend your Advent days leading to Christmas.