



## SDG Discussion Guide

Matthew 2:1-12

January 6, 2019

For Starters:

Do you have any New Year's traditions you observe and if so, what is one?

What is something you like to do, or do not like to do, at the start of a new year? It could be anything?

Have you ever had a major "aha" moment or epiphany (when there was something previously unknown to you and all of a sudden you gained insight or made a discovery)?

Guideline: The following is meant to provide an approach for further interaction with the respective sermon text and surrounding passage. Feel free to forward to your small group members ahead of the respective Sunday. Group members may also find these questions in print on that Sunday.

1. As you can, read aloud the passage in your group. Before you begin your discussion, pray and ask God to speak to your group. Notice, what may God be highlighting for your discussion and learning?

2. Now that you have read the text together, what points and questions arose? Spend plenty of time in your group to address these. Explore and see how God may steer the discussion.

3. Read the following quote and share your thoughts using the below questions as a guide:

*Churches, typically, have been better at giving answers than they have been at receiving questions. Classes and Sunday School sessions, well-taught as they may have been, have churned out routine answers to routine questions for a long time. For the most part, it is outside the classroom where people encounter their spiritual challenges and where there is the greater opportunity to learn and to grow spiritually. The ways of the routine questions and answers have thinned a bit.*

4. What part of the quote resonated with you? How has its assertion been true or not in your own faith?

5. Read aloud Matt 2:1-12 again, this time from a different Bible translation (eg, read from the Message after first reading from the ESV).

a. In the story, there are two different responses to the news of Jesus' birth: (1) Herod's response was one of fear and skepticism; (2) the response of the wise men was fitting to their profile: they were interested, they wanted to find answers to their questions, and they were seekers of truth.

1. When have you experienced both of those responses in your faith journey?
2. Which category would you say you are more in right now?

b. Share an experience from your past when a full faith in God was hard for you, one from which you were able to overcome and learn?

c. What are any obstacles to faith and following Jesus that you have to contend with? Doubt? Negative experiences with other Christians?

1. What was helpful in navigating the obstacles?
2. Did God show you any personal growth from the experience and if so, what was it?

6. Read, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (Heb 11:1)." Pray together as a group that God would give you an "aha," insightful understanding of his love for you and your group early in this new year. Move forward this week expecting an aspect of Jesus' love, newly discovered.

\*These questions were adapted from an Epiphany study guide from Christian Church Buckhead: [storage.cloversites.com/christianchurchbuckhead](http://storage.cloversites.com/christianchurchbuckhead)