

Countdown to Jesus

“Prepare”

GETTING STARTED

ICE BREAKER: Who do you most anticipate coming this year to share Christmas with you?

KEY THOUGHT: ***The God of hope has come to us***

GETTING THE POINT

Read Mark 1:2-3 & Isaiah 40:3

1. Verses 2-3 here are Mark's only direct reference to the Old Testament (aside from quoting Jesus referencing the OT.) Why do you think Mark referenced these Scriptures at the beginning of his gospel?
2. According to Mark, who is the messenger/the one crying in the wilderness? Who is the Lord Mark is referring to in verse 3? (*Hint: read Mark 1:9.*)
3. What is the significance that the word LORD is in all caps in the Isaiah passage? What does this reflect about Jesus?
4. If the original exodus looked like “Egypt → desert → Promised Land, what does the “new exodus of Isaiah 40 refer to?

GETTING DEEPER

Read Isaiah 40:9-11

1. What emotions are reflected in these verses? What do they tell us about God?
2. What picture of God is painted in these verses, and in this chapter?

GETTING PERSONAL

1. How does it strengthen your faith to know that Christianity is rooted in history?
2. What is the “new exodus” that Jesus came to bring in Mark's day? What does this look like in our day?
3. Mark powerfully and poignantly demonstrates in just a few sentences the uniqueness of Christ. Why do you think this is so difficult for some to accept today?
4. How does knowing that God came to us impact your sense of hope during this Christmas season?

PRAY...

that those particularly in need of God's Presence will sense Him near this Christmas season.