



Week #4 LOVE ALL

BIG IDEA

This Christmas, let us conspire to Love All and help people find their way back to God.

SCRIPTURE:

*8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." 13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." 15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." 16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. **Luke 2:8-20***

OPENING THOUGHTS

What is your favorite Christmas movie?

When you think about "loving all," who are the people that often get left out of that equation?

BIBLE DISCUSSION

Read Luke 2:8-20

What words or phrases stand out to you the most? Why?

In the first century shepherds were at the very bottom of the society, often associated with bandits and otherwise "dirty folk." They weren't even allowed in the temple because they were considered too religiously unclean.

How does knowing this background information about shepherds impact your understanding of the birth story of Jesus? Explain?

LIFE APPLICATION

It's often hard for us to accept that God came to love us all, including ourselves. It's hard to let that sink into our hearts and minds fully. Does anything hold you back from feeling and knowing this? To what degree do you live with sense of God's love?

NEXT STEPS/CHALLENGE

Just as the shepherds went and told their story to others, whom could you tell your story to this Christmas? Who do you know that needs to know love and how can you be a Blessing to them?



LEADERS GUIDE Week #4 Love All

OPENING THOUGHTS

Use the opening question to get people warmed up and sharing, and then use the second question to get people thinking about who might/does get left out during the Christmas season. Be prepared to push the group to think broadly as possible.

BIBLE DISCUSSION

Get the group talking about what they notice in the text for the first time. Don't be afraid to linger on this question. Most of the time there are details in the text that people pick up only after given enough time to look it over. Get the group to consider what it says about God that he would reveal himself in this way to the shepherds.

LIFE APPLICATION/CHALLENGE

As the group focuses on those that might need to experience the love of God this Christmas, don't forget that all of us may struggle to know and experience God's love ourselves. Some in your group might struggle to really believe God loves each of them individually. The more the group becomes able to express those kinds of thoughts and feelings the more the members of the group will experience the love of God through community.