

CONNECTION GROUP QUESTIONS – DECEMBER 21, 2025

Title: The Love of the Lord

Synopsis: God's sign to Israel is not a warrior or a political solution, but God's own presence. The promise of *Immanuel—God with us* reveals that every act of God flows from love, a love that moves close, becomes vulnerable, and enters fully into human life. As we celebrate God's love made visible in Jesus, we are invited to follow that same incarnational love with one another and with our neighbors.

Scripture: Isaiah 7:10–17

Icebreaker

1. Would you rather help someone quietly without being noticed or help in a way that inspires others to join in?
 2. What's one way someone has shown you love by simply showing up?
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Read Isaiah 7:1–17

Background Questions

3. What situation is prompting God to intervene through the prophet Isaiah? What is happening at this point in history?
Leader Notes:
 - The Assyrian empire is rising in power and threatening the entire region.
 - Israel (the Northern Kingdom) forms an alliance with Aram to resist Assyria and pressures Judah (the Southern Kingdom) to join them.
 - When Judah refuses, Israel and Aram threaten to attack and overthrow Judah.
 4. What comfort does God offer to Judah in the middle of this crisis?
Leader Notes:
 - God, not political alliances, is Judah's true protector and rescuer.
 - Israel and Aram will not ultimately destroy Judah; they will fall to Assyria.
 - Assyria will still threaten Judah, but Judah will stand if they remain faithful.
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Meaning Questions

5. What meaning or significance does Isaiah connect to the birth of this child?

Leader Notes:

- The child is a sign that God is present with His people.
- The birth points to the nearness and immediacy of God's rescue, not a distant solution.

6. Why does Matthew see this story as significant in relation to Jesus?

Leader Notes:

- Matthew connects God's rescue of His people to the birth of a unique child.
 - Jesus fulfills the promise of *Immanuel*—God's presence dwelling with His people.
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Personal Application Questions

7. What are some places in our world where people are usually aware of or recognized God's presence?

Example: Athletes thanking God, Prayer's for illness or medical concerns, Prayer vigils in times of tragedy, Christmas and Easter holidays

8. Who is someone in your life or community that God might be inviting you to be more present with this season?

9. What keeps us from living incarnationally with others—stepping into their lives, struggles, or differences—and how might God be calling us to move past those barriers?

Example: Fear of rejection, anxiety about where to begin, pressure from other friends, need to maintain an image or a reputation

10. Where do you need God to be present in your life right now?