



COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE

For the week of December 4, 2022

Announcements

Because this is the last meeting of the Fall Quarter, the Community Group Study Questions are shorter than normal. As usual, your final meeting will include looking back on how God has worked this past quarter and taking Communion as a group. The Winter Community Group Quarter will begin the week of January 15, 2023. Have a great time off celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior! Merry Christmas!

- **For King and Country Christmas Concert** - December 9, at 7:00 p.m. at the Amalie Arena. This Grammy award-winning duo will be performing Christmas classics and their own brand new Christmas songs, along with some of their biggest hits. Get your tickets on our event page!
- **Gifts For Kids!** – Sign-up to purchase a gift with a \$40-50 value to give to low-income families. Gifts will be collected at STF from Tuesday, December 13, to Thursday, December 15. More details regarding collection of gifts (location and times) will be emailed to you following sign-up. Sign up on our event page!
- **Christmas Train** - Sunday, December 18. Join us from 5-7 p.m. for fun for the whole family! You can ride around the Christmas Tree Trail, listen to live music, take pictures with Santa, enjoy free food trucks, and more.

My Story

As we prepare for Christmas, here are a few fun questions to help get you in the holiday spirit!

1. The Christmas season brings several fun and varied traditions and preferences. Circle which one you choose and be ready to give a reason why.

This or That?

- * Tree up before Thanksgiving or after Thanksgiving?
- * Hot cocoa or hot apple cider?
- * Rudolph or Frosty?
- * Finish shopping early or finish shopping last minute?
- * Ice skating or snowball fights?
- * Secret Santa or White Elephant Exchange?
- * Shop in-store or shop online?

2. As the Christmas season approaches, what are one or two holiday traditions you enjoy the most?

Quick Review

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

Going Deeper

1. This weekend we launched our new series, Christmas at STF. As you read the following verses, how do they further describe the Kingship of Jesus?

Matthew 2:1-6 English Standard Version (ESV)

2 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; 4 and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 5 They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

6 " 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,

are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

for from you shall come a ruler

who will shepherd my people Israel.' " (Micah 5:2)

Philippians 2:5-11 New International Version (NIV)

5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

1 Timothy 6:12-16 New International Version (NIV)

12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, 14 to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

Hebrews 1:1-3 New International Version (NIV)

1 In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

2. We were challenged in this week's sermon with the truth that "Jesus is a threat to our ability to rule ourselves". Whether it's in our power, preferences, comfort, finances, sexuality, relationship status, prestige, or position. . . What in your life do you need to surrender to King Jesus today?

Remembrance

As followers of Jesus, we are able to celebrate the Christmas season because of the amazing gift God has given us – the gift of His son Jesus, born that we might have life through His death and resurrection! Communion is about remembering just that. Our time together this week will conclude by taking Communion and remembering this great gift God has given us through His son Jesus.

To prepare for Communion, read Luke 2:1-7, Luke 22:19-20 & John 15:12-17. What catches your attention in these verses as helpful to remember as you take Communion in your group?

Luke 2:1-7 New International Version (NIV)

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Luke 22:19-20 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁹ And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

John 15:12-17 New International Version (NIV)

¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

Prayer Requests

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