

PERSONAL REFLECTION GUIDE

12/8/24

At Southland Church, we are committed to help you KNOW Christ, LIVE like Him, and make Him KNOWN. This guide is designed to help you reflect on and apply what you learned from the sermon this weekend. Use this guide as a quiet time this week. Write your answers in a journal, with the date and main passage noted at the top of the page.

- What main point from the sermon stood out to you? What did the Holy Spirit convict you of or encourage you with?
- Think of the Christmas story from the perspective of someone who never heard it before. What would raise the most questions? What would be hardest to believe?
- **Read Luke 1:1-4.** Why did Luke write this gospel?
- Is it possible to have "certainty" (v.5) in the matters of faith and religion? Why or why not?
- How is religious certainty similar (& different) from scientific claims to certainty?
- Can you think of anyone in your life who may struggle with believing the certainty of Christ? How might reading Luke with him/her help?
- **Read Luke 1:5-25.** In this culture, being barren was a sign of great shame and believed to be caused by hidden sins. What do you think Elizabeth and Zechariah dealt with from the people around them because of their childlessness?
- What does Elizabeth's miraculous pregnancy tell you about the power of God and how he works in the world?
- Zechariah is described as righteous and blamelessly obedience (v.6), but he stumbled in unbelief (v. 18). How common do you think the issue of unbelief is among Christians? How come?
- When is a time you struggled to believe a promise of God or something God's Word said?
- What sorts of things can help you or other Christians battle unbelief?
- John was sent to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. What is something you can do to prepare your heart for celebrating Jesus this Christmas season?
- Write one step of obedience the Holy Spirit is leading you towards this week. Who will you tell about this step, in order to help you?

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT WEEK

Read Luke 1:26-56. List the things that Mary rejoices in. Which brings you the most joy?



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FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE

Southland Church is committed to helping parents raise the next generation of disciples who KNOW Christ, LIVE like Him, and make Him KNOWN. This guide is meant to help you as a family, particularly those over 12 years old, to discuss the Sunday sermon. You can do this in an evening devotion or over lunch after service.

A few tips to get started: (1) Make this a phone-free conversation. You and your family put the phones away, except for the person who looks up the Scriptures. He/She would read the passage and then put his/her phone away. (2) Set the pace for how vulnerable to be. If you give a shallow answer, you are more likely to get a shallow answer from your kids. (3) Do not feel like you have to ask all of these questions. Just focus on having a good honest discussion.

Open with prayer, asking God to lead you to know more about Christ and live like Him.

- What stood out to you from the sermon this week? What challenged or encouraged you?
- Describe a time that it was hard for you to believe something good was going to happen. Maybe making a team or getting a good grade or getting a gift.
- **Read Luke 1:5-25.** For years, Zechariah and Elizabeth had no children, and they continued to pray for them. What do you think that was like them?
- When Zechariah heard what the angel said, he didn't believe it. Why do you think it was hard for him to trust the words of the angel?
- Zechariah was described as righteous and blameless, but he still doubted. What does this tell you about people?
- If God promised you something that seemed impossible, how would you react?
- When Zechariah didn't believe the angel, God made him unable to speak. What does that tell you about God?
- Why was John important to the ministry of Jesus? (**vv. 16-17**)
- What is one thing you are waiting on from God?
- What can help you trust God while you wait?
- Who is one person in your life who needs to hear the hope of Jesus this year?
- What is one thing you want to put in practice from these passages or the sermon?

Ask if there is some way you can pray for your family members, and then close in prayer.



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