

THE FIRST *Christmas* GATHERING

Week 2: December 13-19

10min Welcome / Introduce Guests / Share Life
Recall the Guidelines / Open in Prayer

2min **Share the Vision: The church is God's family. Your small group is like your immediate family who you live real life with and encourage each other to obey God's commands.**

5min **Hook Question:** Can you share about a difficult decision that you are glad you made?

Ask someone from your team to read or tell the following background for the story:

2min Today's story continues the story of Jesus' birth. God's revelation of Himself and His favor towards Mary was nothing short of life changing. Mary was a virgin, betrothed to a man named Joseph. Suddenly, Mary and Joseph had an unplanned pregnancy on their hands like no one in human history had ever experienced before! Mary was pregnant, but she did not conceive through Joseph, but by the Spirit of God. Who would believe such an outlandish tale!

Joseph was a good and just man. When he found out that Mary was with child, he had a difficult decision to make. Joseph loved God and he loved God's law. He wanted to do the right thing towards God and towards Mary. He also knew the baby was not his biological child. What a terribly difficult position! God had compassion towards Joseph's struggle. During what was likely the most difficult decision of his life, God met Joseph at His point of need. This is where our story begins...

Tell the story from Matthew 1:18-25: Remember to change up the storyteller often.

12min **Rebuild the story:** Group members retell the story based on what they remember.

Read the story from Matthew 1: 18-25: Ask the group to read these verses.

Discussion Questions: learn to talk about God's Word with others...

Head
Questions:
Quicker
tempo.

- What do you like or dislike about this story?
- What does this story teach us about ourselves?
- What does this story teach us about God?
- How did God's Word spoken to Joseph change his perspective?

Heart & Hand
Questions:
Slow down &
wait!

- How do you need to apply this story to your life?
- Who could retell the story for us? **CHALLENGE:** Tell the story to someone this week!

Next week is the beginning of the Christmas break. There will be curriculum provided if your group would like to gather for small group. If you decide not to have traditional small group, what could you do together to stay connected? Close in prayer.