



# Small Group Study Guide

# SENT

DELIVERING  
THE GIFT OF HOPE  
AT CHRISTMAS

**December 6, 2020: “Jesus Sets Us Free”**

## **OPENING PRAYER**

Heavenly Father, thank you for sending Jesus into this world to set us free. Thank you for freeing us from the power of sin. Thank you for bringing good news to the poor and freedom for the oppressed. Father, we know that you call us to join you on this mission to elevate the dignity of all people and free them from oppression. But we don't always get this right. So, show us where we are treating people as less than us, and help us treat them with dignity and respect. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

## **SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:**

### **Matthew 1:21 (NIV)**

<sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

### **Luke 4:18-19 (NIV)**

<sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
and recovery of sight for the blind,  
to set the oppressed free,  
<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

### **Romans 5:7-8 (NIV)**

<sup>7</sup> Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

## INTRODUCTION

Every December, we sing the song “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus,” which reminds us that ‘he came to set his people free.’ And maybe you have sung that song for decades but you never stopped to ask the question “What does he set us free from?” So, what does he set us free from?

Jesus was sent to set us free and there are two ways he sets us free. First, he sets us free from the power of sin. Because of Jesus, sin is not our master. Second, Jesus came to liberate the oppressed and he did that by elevating the dignity of the individual. Jesus now sends us to offer God’s great gift of love and acceptance to others.

## QUESTIONS

- 1) Do you find the Christmas season stressful or enjoyable? Why?
- 2) Read Matthew 1:21 on page 1. Do you tend to view the story of Christmas as Jesus **providing forgiveness** for your sins or as Jesus setting you **free from** sin? What has shaped your view of the Christmas story?
- 3) Is it difficult for you to believe that sin doesn’t have to be your master? Is it difficult to believe that Jesus has set you free? Why or why not?
- 4) Read Luke 4:18-19 on page 1. What stands out to you about the words of Jesus? How can you join Jesus in this mission?
- 5) Read Romans 5:7–8 on page 1. How does this passage change the way you view your value as a human being? How does it challenge the way you view others?
- 6) What person or group of people do you power up around, look down on, treat as less than, or maintain a bad attitude toward? What causes you to respond to that person or group the way you do?

## FINAL APPLICATION

What is one thing you can do this week to begin to treat a person or group with dignity that you have treated as ‘less than you’ in the past?