
The Angels of Christmas

HEARING GOD'S VOICE IN ADVENT

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 3 December 11, 2022

“Acting on the Unbelievable”

OPENING PRAYER

Thank you, O God, for your love and thank you for coming to us in Jesus. Today we ask that you would help us to see the broken places in the world that need to be more like your kingdom. Use us, we pray, to close that gap. We pray this in the powerful and matchless name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Matthew 1:18-25 (NIV)

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ 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.”

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

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INTRODUCTION

After learning that his fiancée was pregnant with a child that was not his, Joseph is devastated and feeling betrayed. But an Angel of the Lord comes to Joseph in a dream and tells him that Mary’s unbelievable story is actually true. How would Joseph respond? Joseph decides to marry Mary and raise the Christ child as his own. It’s a familiar story for many of us... but what does it tell us about God’s will for us?

The gap between the way the world is and the way the world is supposed to be is the stuff of God-given dreams. Like Joseph, we are called to pay attention to those dreams and then act upon them in order to make this world more like the Kingdom of God. And, like Joseph, we are called to humbly serve God without looking for recognition. What dream is God calling you to act on?

QUESTIONS

1. Do you remember a lot of your dreams when you wake up? Do you have any recurring dreams while you are sleeping?
2. Are there faith issues that leave you with serious belief questions today?
3. Have you had to give up some cherished dream to obey God?
4. Read Matthew 1:18-25 on page 1. What stands out to you about this passage?
5. In Luke 1:38, Mary said, “I am the Lord’s servant. Let it be with me just as you have said.” In Matthew 1:24 we read that Joseph “did just as an angel from God commanded.” What is God calling you to listen to, to believe, and then to do or be this Advent season?

FINAL APPLICATION

What is one thing you can do this week to give someone joy this Christmas?