



Our Story: Outsiders | December 14, 2016

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

The Christmas story is a story of outsiders. It's not a perfect "made for tv" movie script. This year as you consider the Christmas story learn about the outsiders in the story because that version of the story makes it more resemble our story.

Key Verse

Luke 2:10 (NIV)

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people."

Discussion

No matter what we have done in our lives, we have all experienced what it feels like to be an outsider. Some of us have been the new kid, some of us have felt excluded, and some of us haven't fit in.

1. In what circumstances or groups of people have you felt like an outsider?
2. How do you think you have contributed to someone else feeling like an outsider?

Sometimes we read the Christmas story and see it like all the pretty pictures and songs that have been created around it. However, the story is nothing pretty. There is a precursor to Jesus's birth when an angel first appears to a couple who could not have kids...an outsider. Then Jesus was born to an unwed couple displaced from their homes because of their heritage...outsiders. Even the shepherds in the fields where the angels appeared were outsiders.

3. What do think each of these characters in the story were feeling at the time (Joseph, Mary, Zechariah, Elizabeth, the shepherds)?
4. Which of the characters do you relate to most? Which of the feelings described in question 3 describe your story?

Contrary to how we celebrate today, as primarily an insider holiday, an angel appears to the shepherds and says that the news of Jesus will bring great joy for ALL people.

5. What are some types of people or groups of people who are treated as if they are not part of the ALL from the verse in Luke?
6. If you were to share the Christmas story with an outsider, how might you tell the story differently?

What's Next?

The example God set by coming to Earth as an outsider and in such a lowly place makes the outsiders insiders. Our God went before us as a displaced child of unwed teenagers born in a barn. No matter what you are facing, God has gone before you...He has walked in your shoes. He loved us enough to come to Earth and experience the difficulties of being an outsider so that we could be insiders. Consider how you fit in the story this year and look for the places that God came to meet you where you are.