



Seeing Christmas: The Food | December 18, 2019

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

One of the best parts about Christmas is how it engages all of the senses, especially the food. If you want to hear more about how food and Jesus go together, read below.

Key Verses

John 6:35 (NIV)

"Then Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'"

Discussion

One of the very best parts about Christmas is its distinct smell. The holiday candles, fresh cut tree, and all of the food; there is so much richness in the Christmas season. For most of us, the food is probably at the top of that list. We all grew up around particular holiday foods, and whenever we smell it, it tends to make us super nostalgic – Christmas cookies, Chex mix, hot cocoa... whatever it might be. The reality is that even though it may look different for all of us, the food is really a crucial piece of experiencing Christmas.

1. What are some of your favorite holiday foods? What are some of the special memories you have that are associated with them?
2. Why do you think the food is such a crucial piece of Christmas – making it, serving it, and eating it together?

In this series, based on the book *Seeing Christmas* by Karen Stacy, we are talking about how all of the different things that we experience during the Christmas season point us back to Jesus, including the food. In the book, Karen says that holiday food just tastes like bliss, and how blessed we are to be eating like this. She also says that the food reflects Jesus, because we taste his goodness in every bite. There is flavor and there is fullness.

3. What holiday food tastes "like bliss" to you?
4. How do you see Jesus reflected in some of your favorite holiday foods?

In John 6:35, Jesus declares that he is the bread of life. Whoever comes to him will never go hungry, and whoever believes in him will never be thirsty. There is something about the food, especially when we prepare it, put a lot of time and energy into it, and give it as a gift to others, that points us back to Jesus' provision for us. It reminds us of the way he came to serve, and that our most basic needs depend on him. During this time of year, even those of us who don't normally have access to three meals a day, typically get fed. And the reason all comes back to Jesus – he wants to ensure that we are full.

5. Describe a time where you served someone else a meal during the holiday season. What was this experience like for you and how did it point you back to Jesus?
6. Why do you think Jesus cares so much about us being full and fed? What about his nature and goodness makes him rejoice when we feel this way?

What's Next?

As we prepare for Christmas, and start to make all of our favorite things, we need to remember Jesus in the midst of it. Many of us "feast" during this time of year. We celebrate with our family and enjoy good food. During those celebrations, we would miss something if we didn't pause and think about Jesus. Jesus is deeply connected to the desire inside of us to be fed, to be full, and to serve others.

This week, as you live out and engage your faith and Christmas, reflect on the blessings you have to be able to give, to serve, and to make all of your favorite holiday foods. And as you eat the food, think about Jesus and what he came here to do that fills you up, so that you are never hungry and never thirsty.