



## Seeing Christmas: The Tree & The Lights | December 4, 2019

### Discussion Guide

#### The Scoop

One of the best things about Christmas is setting up the tree. It's usually the first indication that the season is here. But what does that have to do with Jesus? If you want to hear more about this, read below.

#### Key Verses

**Luke 2:13-14 (NIV)**

*"Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.'"*

#### Discussion

Most of us kick off the Christmas season with a familiar annual activity – setting up the Christmas tree. And while the activity itself is familiar to many of us, families each have different traditions when they do this. Some set it up while listening to Christmas music, watching a Christmas movie, or drinking hot chocolate. Others enter neighborhood contests where they compete and are judged based on the quality and uniqueness of lights and ornaments.

1. What are your traditions while setting up your Christmas tree?
2. Does setting up your Christmas tree set the season in motion for your family? Why or why not?

Regardless of any traditions you may have experienced while setting up your Christmas tree, doing so typically sets the Christmas season in motion. And whether it was created by our kids or passed down to us by a grandparent, most of us have a Christmas tree ornament or two that mean something to us. Similarly, there are things that we experience during the Christmas season that can have more meaning when we consider the Jesus story. And the exciting thing is, seeing Jesus in some of these things can make our holiday season come alive in a new way.

3. What Christmas ornaments or décor that you own have special meaning to you?
4. In what ways do you think elements of Christmas, like the Christmas tree and lights, can point us to Jesus?

In Luke 2:13-14, we read about the celebration that happened when Jesus was finally born. And in her book, *Seeing Christmas*, Karen Stacy encourages us to consider how we can see Jesus in something as simple as our Christmas tree and lights. She says that the Christmas tree points us to Jesus because it's full of memories and love. It represents our history together. Additionally, she says that the lights also point us to Jesus. They remind us that he shines and brings peace.

5. What characteristics of Jesus do you see in your Christmas tree and lights?
6. What would it take for you to see more of Jesus during the Christmas season this year? Is this something that comes naturally for you, or would it be difficult?

#### What's Next?

When we approach the Christmas season with a childlike lens, it's easy to see that there is meaning in things like the Christmas tree and Christmas lights. They point us to Jesus because of what they cause us to remember and celebrate. They encourage us to remember each event in the Christmas story, and build our anticipation to celebrate the birth of our savior.

This week, as you live out and engage your faith, pause and take time to reflect on the memories of each thing that happened in the Christmas story. Think about the anticipation of the season – time with family, memory making, traditions, etc. – as an example of the anticipation of Jesus' birth. And as you plug in your Christmas tree lights for the first time, think about a similar celebration that happened when baby Jesus entered our world.