

# COMMUNITY GROUP GUIDE

## The Disappointments That Stole Christmas

For the week of December 1

Bottom Line: Disappointments can keep us from the joy God wants to gift us this Christmas.

1. What's one thing that has completely surprised you this year (in a good way!)?
2. Think about a time when your expectations for a holiday or special occasion didn't align with reality. How did you respond to the disappointment?

Read Luke 1:28, 31-35, 39-40, 56

*<sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." <sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." <sup>35</sup> The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God..."*

*<sup>39</sup> At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, <sup>40</sup> where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth... <sup>56</sup> Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.*

3. What does Mary's willingness to say "yes" to God's plan, despite the potential risks and challenges, reveal about her faith?
4. Why do you think that God chose someone like Mary, a young, unmarried woman in a humble position, to be the mother of Jesus?
5. What does Mary's song of praise (read Luke 1:46-55), tell us about her understanding of God and His work in the world?
6. In what areas of your life might you need to surrender your expectations and trust that God's plan is better than your own?
7. How do we keep our hearts open to joy when disappointments threaten to take over during the Christmas season?



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