



Un CHRISTMAS

MESSAGE NOTES & SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE WEEK 3 – UNEXPECTED INVITATIONS

TENSION QUESTION:

Who does God _____ to be a part of _____ ?

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them...²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

– Luke 2:8-18, 20 (NIV)

¹After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

DIGGING DEEPER:

1. Think of a time you received an unexpected invitation. Why were you surprised? How did it make you feel to receive it? Did you accept the invitation? Why or why not?
2. Why were the people involved in the Christmas story surprised that God had invited them into His story? How does their surprise reveal their humility?
3. How did they respond when they heard the news?
4. What are some of the ways that the participants in the Christmas story anticipated the revolution that Jesus would bring?
5. What did these participants do when they left their encounter with Jesus?
6. Why is it significant that God's invitation is open to everyone?
7. What does God require of us to receive His invitation?
8. Which of the four responses do you connect with the most? Why?
9. Which of the four responses do you connect with the least? Why?
10. What can you learn from how others have responded to Jesus?
11. How can you reflect each of these four responses in your own life?
12. To whom do you need to extend God's unexpected invitation?