

Sermon Based Study - Gateway Groups, Merced

"Bond Together/Grow Together"

For the week of 12/10/2023

For you as the Teacher/Host

Remember to begin each Small Group session with a word of prayer. Please keep in mind that the purpose of this curriculum guide is to cultivate a deeper relationship with the Lord and each other through conversation that intentionally engages the weekly message.

Quick Review Discuss the message briefly. Did anything challenge or confuse you?

Opener Question or Activity: What are the funniest things your children, or others children you've watched, have done? Why was it so funny?

Sunday's Main Scripture Text: Matthew 2:13-18 "Christmas through the eyes of the Children of Bethlehem"

Digging Deeper: *(Teachers/leaders, feel the freedom to NOT ask every question.)*

Go back and read the Christmas story from Matthew 2:1-18.

1. The Wise Men were more accurately Magi - Eastern Astrologers, which was a sophisticated scientific study of the celestials(Stars and planets). State some ramifications to their coming to worship the newborn king?
2. Is there anything that you could find ironic about who answered King Herod's question in vs 4-6? How knowledgeable were the religious leaders?
3. Who are the people you know who have "heard" about Jesus and yet refuse to believe? Why do people refuse, in light of the evidence?
4. Herod's response in vs 16-18 is horrific. Why would a loving God predict this act, and allow it to happen? For how long would these people remember this event throughout Bethlehem, let alone Judea?
5. How can you respond to the Christmas story as it relates to children? What areas in church help us highlight the importance of children knowing Jesus?
6. How has children's ministry impacted you personally, from the past as well as the present? How can you encourage those working with children in the next 3 weeks?

Apply it today: What was most important for you to remember today and why?