



Walking by Faith in an Uncertain World

Luke 2:1-7; Matthew 2:13-15

PREPARE

Self-preparation: Sit in silence and allow your mind to quiet down. Then read Matthew 1:18 and Luke 2:25-30 and contemplate the power of the Holy Spirit.

Group preparation: Open your time as a group with silent prayers of thankfulness. Have a group member break the silence with an opening prayer.

OPEN

Are the preparations and plans for Christmas stressing you out and robbing you of Christmas joy, or are they life giving and spiritual?

DISCUSS

Do you feel that you *mostly* bring to God, your **agenda/hopes/needs/desires**, and ask Him to bless them? Or do you more often seek God's agenda for you, first?

Read aloud from Luke 2:1-29; Matthew 1:18-24 and Matthew 2:1-2

Discuss how the characters in this Christmas story are seeking and responding to God's agenda.

Where in this story are **agenda/hopes/needs/desires** being interrupted?

How do you think you would have responded **today**, if you found yourself in the character's "shoes" from the Christmas story (how would you be embracing or fighting the "interruptions"):

Joseph _____

Mary _____

The shepherds _____

Simeon _____

Magi _____

(The Magi traveled a distance roughly from Christ Church to Utah... and back again!)

Long journey's in Jesus' day were risky. Read Matthew 2:13-15 and talk about the circumstances surrounding Joseph's abrupt departure from a home they must have been fairly settled into. Talk about what it takes to do a "midnight move" on the basis of faith.

What are you willing to change about *this* Christmas, to seek a deeper connection with Christ? What part of your **agenda/hopes/needs/desires** need to be examined?

In Daniel Taylor's book, *The Myth of Certainty*, Taylor writes, "*While certainty is often beyond our reach, meaning – something far more valuable – is not. Meaning derives from a right relationship with God, based on risk and commitment.*"

What's your response to this quote? What kind of risks and commitments do you think he is talking about?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Join in prayer before the Lord of the Universe, asking for the courage to risk more in the journey. He took the ultimate journey from comfort and convenience, to be born into a humble manger, surrounded by poverty and evil, only to be mocked and crucified... all in order to save you. Ask for the courage to journey with Him, doing so with more risk and more commitment. Ask Him for the power of the Holy Spirit as you journey well through Advent and beyond.

NEXT STEPS

- **Plan your spiritual "road trip" for the remainder of Advent.**
 - Where will you schedule time for prayer and reading His word?
 - How will you spend more time in His word?
 - What will you risk during this journey?
 - Think about how and where you are going to spend your time.