



Waiting for Christmas 2: Waiting for Love

Casey Tygrett

For this series leading up to Christmas, we're doing the studies a bit differently. Each weekend we'll be looking at a passage that prepares us for the "coming" of Jesus into the world. We want to take you a bit deeper into each week's passage. Enjoy!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about your house growing up—what was your favorite Christmas tradition? What was your LEAST favorite tradition and why?
2. Read Isaiah 40:1-11 out loud. Consider reading through it twice, and listen for any words or phrases that stand out to you. Jot them down for later.
3. Many people think that the book of Isaiah is broken up into three sections: Chapters 1-39 are the warning of the coming capture of Judah and deportation to Babylon, chapters 40-55 are the message of hope that God will return Judah back to their land, and chapters 56-66 are a closing encouragement for life in the land. Talk about whether or not Isaiah 40:1-11 makes sense as an encouraging message of hope.
4. John the Baptist quotes Isaiah 40:3-5 nearly 500 years later as he prepares the way for Jesus (see Luke 3:4-6). Talk about how the words of Isaiah could apply to Jesus (specifically 40:5). Talk about how you see "the glory of the Lord revealed" in the story of Christmas.
5. Talk about how the message that "people are like grass" (40:6) hits you—talk about how you have come to learn about your own life and how fragile it is. Compare the fragile nature of our lives with the message of God who "stands forever" (40:8).
6. The promise of return to Judah includes an image of God as a shepherd who takes care of his "sheep" (the people of Judah) in a close and delicate way. Talk about how that gentle, delicate image relates to what we find out about God through Jesus. How does the Christmas story reveal God as the "shepherd" of all of us?
7. The entire message of Isaiah is about coming home—the people are waiting to come home and God promises to come and rescue them. This Christmas, talk about a place where you may need to be rescued—a place where you may need comfort, where you need consistency, or where you need care. Pray as a group for each other that God might help you find your way home this Christmas.