



DECEMBER THEME

CHASING CHRISTMAS

SCRIPTURE Matthew 25:34-40,
Matthew 20:28

BOTTOM LINE We get to celebrate a king who came as a baby to serve rather than be served.



- Be sure to look at the large group interactions so you know what things to draw your kids' attention to throughout large group.

MY GOAL FOR THE NIGHT:

THINK ABOUT THIS

Have you ever felt like Christmas is just one big competition that you just can't win? Maybe you're hoping that your family can keep it together or that you'll feel the magic of Christmas morning when you race down the stairs. But the snapshot that we share with the world is just that, a snapshot of a messy, chaotic, maybe boring holiday season. Jesus didn't come to push us to do more to make Christmas feel perfect, He came with the gift of grace and closeness, serving rather than being served. As you wait for something to change, remember that the anticipation of this season leads to the perfect gift on Christmas- a baby Jesus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Large Group

1. Pay attention to the Perfect Christmas snapshots in the middle of the Christmas chaos.

- Family Christmas dinner**
- Christmas photo shoot**
- Christmas morning magic**

Small Group Study

Connect

Highs/Lows and Prayer Requests - Share your "highs" and "lows" with the group and then gather prayer requests to distribute to the group for prayer throughout the next week. You can get paper for this activity at the leader bin cart or you can have the students use their phones. We suggest setting up a "group chat" using one of the following platforms: iMessage on iPhone, email, groupme, snapchat, instagram, or facebook.



Questions

- What would an Instagram snapshot of your perfect Christmas look like?
- Where can we get lost in the messyness of the Christmas season?
- What are some things you have to do to make Christmas feel like it should?
- How can traditions be a reminder of the reason for the season?
- How can traditions be a barrier to new perspectives of the Christmas story?
- What is something that you are anticipating? How are you preparing for that?
- Read Matthew 25:34-40, the Righteous take Jesus literally when he lists all the ways serving “the least of these” and serving Him are the same. How does it feel more important to directly “serve Jesus” rather than others?
- What holds us back from serving others? What motivates us to serve Jesus?
- If Jesus came into the world as a decorated king, how would that change his relationship to us and ours to him?
- Do you think about Jesus as a baby or a king? How does that label affect how you think he feels about you?
- In Matthew 25:34, Jesus says that we are blessed, the kingdom is prepared, and invites us to take our inheritance. How can we use our blessings and inheritance to serve others?

Notes and Prayer Requests

EXTRAS

Perfect Christmas

Write down all of the things that would need to be perfect for this year to be the best Christmas ever. Go back through your lists as a group, and pick out the ones that would be the easiest and hardest to give up this Christmas. What is God asking you to do through letting these ideal things go? Maybe He's asking you to drop expectations, dig deeper into the season, look differently, or see the good in what's already set in front of you this Christmas.

Christmas Island

If you were stranded on a desert island, what 5 things would you want with you to celebrate Christmas?

Christmas Story

What if we did Christmas without Christ? What would it be about? With a partner or in your group, attempt to retell the Christmas Story without referencing the Bible.

JUST FOR FUN

Christmas Fish Bowl

What You Need: Bowl/Hat/Basket, scraps of paper, pens

What You Do: Everyone writes down 3 Christmas themed things on small pieces of paper. Throw all of the paper in a bowl/hat/basket. Go around the circle and each person will have 45 seconds to get the group to guess as many pieces of paper as possible. When the bowl is empty, throw all of the paper back in and start Round 2. Repeat for Round 2 and 3.

You will go through the bowl of paper 3 times in rounds.

Round 1: Describe the word/phrase without using any of the words on the paper.

Round 2: Charades

Round 3: Sounds