

Socks and Underwear: Matthew 1:18-25

Part 1: Hope

At Christmas there is a tension between what we want and what we get. The tension is natural because Jesus was born into conflict.

The Family conflict: Jesus' birth was a _____
_____.

The Political conflict: Jesus' birth was a _____
_____.

*The birth of Jesus brought the hopefully message that God is with us. Hope is the expression of **confident expectation** for a better future.*

*Hope allows us to _____ face _____ with
_____.*

"Immanuel" gives us reason for hope in 2 powerful ways:

1. _____ is with us.
2. God is with _____.

Life Group Study Guide

This week, before you go to your Life Group:

Read Matthew 1:18-25. What questions do you have? How would you summarize this passage in your own words?

Life Group Discussion Questions:

What is the best gift you have ever received for Christmas? What is the worst gift you have ever received for Christmas?

Read Matthew 1:18-25. Imagine what it would be like for Mary, Joseph, their families and their friends to experience this. What do you think would be some of the family conflict that might arise in this situation? Put yourself in the place of the characters in the story. What do you think you would have done if you were them?

Can you remember anything about the political context in Israel at the time of Jesus' birth? What kinds of conflicts were happening nationally for the Jews of that time?

Hope is the expression of confident expectation for a better future. How do you think 'the sign of Immanuel' would bring hope to Mary and Joseph? The Israelites? Think about the statement "God with us" applied to Jesus. In what ways does this bring encouragement and hope to the situation?

Do you agree with the statement: *Hope allows us to confidently face conflict with Christ like character?* Why or why not? What do you think the relationship is between our hope and how we live our lives?

Do you consider yourself a hopeful person? Why or why not? How can the hope of "God with us" make a difference in how we see the world around us today?