



FACILITATOR'S GUIDE—YOUTH

Year 3—The God Who Pursues Relationship: A Story of God's People

Module 6—Jesus and His Church

Lesson 1: The Birth of Jesus, A King—Matthew 1-2; Luke 1-2

ENCOUNTER 1—Community Discussion

Read selected passages from Matthew 2 and Luke 1 together out loud as a group. Encourage each person to journal through the passage using these questions. After allowing sufficient time for reflection, invite the group to share their thoughts.

How is this God's story?

How is this others' story?

How is this my story?

How is this the world's story?

ENCOUNTER 2—Community Discussion

(Read the biblical reflection included with this lesson. The questions are designed for your group to enter into a meaningful dialogue about the Scriptures. The bulleted teaching points are taken from the reflection and correspond to the questions.)

GOD'S STORY

What does looking at the birth of Jesus do for us?

- The birth of Jesus not only gives us a glimpse of how Jesus was born but it also gives us a great glimpse of who God really is.

What are we reminded of about God as we look at the life of Jesus?

- From the birth of Jesus we are reminded that God is immanent, transcendent, immutable and incomprehensible.

What is God's immanence? Transcendence? Immutability?

- God's immanence means that God is not operating as God distantly or in isolation from God's creation.
- God's transcendence means that God is superior to God's creation and Jesus is proof of God's transcendence.
- God's immutability means that God does not change.
- God is truly incomprehensible. God and the works of God cannot be explained or fully described.

OUR STORY

What does it mean to have Jesus as the King of your life?

- If Jesus is Lord (king) of our life, then He reigns in all of our lives. This means we:
 1. Renounce self
 2. Submit all of who we are
 3. Submit all of what we have
 4. Trust in Him to lead
 5. Respond in obedience to Jesus' teachings

OTHERS' STORY

What is the kingdom of God?

- The kingdom of God is the reign of an everlasting sovereign God over all creatures and over all things.
- The kingdom of God is also the term Christians use to define the realm of salvation we enter when we become followers of Jesus.

Who is a part of God's kingdom?

- The kingdom is comprised of those who are willingly submissive to the Lord and are choose to live in peaceful community with God, self, others and the whole cosmos.

What does the kingdom of God look like?

- Citizens of the kingdom of God, who live under God's reign and the lordship of Jesus value...
 1. telling the truth and keeping their word
 2. generous living and a desire to serve others
 3. living the perfect love of God by blessing and praying for others — even those who are our enemies
 4. forgiving others and finding peace with all
 5. keeping God, and others first, not their own interests
 6. honoring the convictions of others
 7. striving for holiness in all areas of their lives

THE WORLD'S STORY

What are some of the ways to overcome the fear of sharing your faith?

- Here are several ways to overcome the fear of proclaiming and performing the gospel story:
 1. Trust that God is with you, as God promised in the Great Commission
 2. Trust that the Holy Spirit goes out before you
 3. Trust that God is active in the world and what we are doing is simply joining God where God is already at work.
 4. Trust your own story of redemption
 5. Trust that the Scriptures are living and active
 6. Trust your approach—no one knows your family and friends like you!

PRAYER

(Lead your group in corporate prayer.)

Jesus, You suffered for us in total submission, showing us the way to a new kind of living. Under the direction of your Father, until the very end and through the very beginning, You fulfilled the perfect plan of redemption.

Teach us, we pray, the meaning of submissiveness, our wills consistently submitting to our Heavenly Father.

Remove our desire for and weaknesses of disobedience, shaping us to do the will of God alone. Guide us on the road of submission, casting our souls into total obedience and surrender.

Teach us to walk in the path of virtue, Hand in hand with Jesus and with one another.

Amen.

WEEKLY PRACTICE:

(Read the weekly practice out loud, and challenge your group to practice *missio* beyond today.)

Before your group gathers next week, find time to develop a list of areas in your life you are unable to submit to God. After you develop this list, share it with one of your friends. Ask this person to follow up with you in a couple of weeks and ask you how you are doing. The best thing to do is set up a time to meet either in person or by phone and discuss how you are doing. You will be surprised how well it will help you to know that someone else is aware of your areas of rebellion or disobedience.

BECOMING MY STORY

(Encourage the group to spend time this week in God's Word, allowing it to penetrate their heart and life.)

James 4:7

Romans 8:7

Proverbs 3:5-6

Exodus 20:5

Spend time this week reading and journaling through the above scriptures. Reflect on how the passage is God's story, my story, others' story and the world's story. In the context of Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2, consider the following questions:

How are they related to Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2?

In what ways are they different and do they shed light on Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2?

Consider other passages you might know related to Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2 and read them this week, journaling as you go.