



Part 4 Discussion Guide

Face the Issue:

Merry Christmas!

In part four of our Christmas series “The Rest of the Story”, Jeremy shared with us the excitement of that first Christmas. We often speak of the excitement of Christmas as seen through the eyes of a child or in terms of getting or giving that perfect gift. But the rest of the story is that the excitement of Christmas is truly about Emmanuel, God with us.

The angels had that excitement. The shepherds felt that excitement. How about us? How do we feel?

Thinking about the things of God and reading His word is not like sipping coffee and reading a magazine. The word of God challenges us and changes us. Sometimes it can be food to our soul and sometimes a hammer to our head. Sometimes soothing and sometimes like being stuck with a pointy stick.

Share or think about a time when reading something in the Bible felt like a hammer.

Share or think about a time when reading something in the Bible felt like food.

What does it mean for your everyday life that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?

Into the Word:

Christmas can challenge us, too. We hear that it should be all peace, love, and joy but sometimes that eludes us and we wonder how we are supposed to feel.

Christ came to address this for us. He came to be Emmanuel. A Wonderful Counselor, an Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. He even told us so.

Read John 17:1–5

What was Christ accomplishing according to this prayer?

What evidence do you see in this prayer that the one who is blinding eyes, who has schemes to bend minds from God, and who prowls about looking for ones to devour is losing?

During his time on earth, Jesus did not look like the Son of man prophesied in Daniel 7:14, with authority, glory, sovereign power, and an everlasting kingdom of all peoples, nations, and languages that will never be destroyed. Why was that? (If Christ had first come this way, what would have been the sacrifice for our sins?)

The vantage that Christ has that we suffer from not having is a view of eternity. Eternity is essential in understanding who Christ is. He, as God, sees the end and the beginning in one view.

John 17:1 says that the Father will glorify his Son and Christ will then glorify his Father. What evidence was there of that happening? How do verses 2 and 4 help explain it?

Knowing God is essential according to John 17:3. What does it mean to know God? How do we go about getting to know him? How long will it take us to get to know God?

What does John 17:5 tell you about the eternal nature of Jesus? And what does that mean for how you live now?

Apply The Word

God is the Almighty One. But he is also Immanuel. That is the true “rest of the Story”. That little Christmas Child is God Most High and God With Us. He exists beyond the limits of time and space, but he’s also Immanuel—God with us..

AC Dixon shares this story:

A friend of mine who was quite a lover of the hunt told me the following story.

Rising early one morning, he said, “I heard the barking of a number of dogs chasing a deer. Looking at a large open field in front of me, I saw a young fawn making its way across the field and giving signs that its race was almost run. It leaped over the rails of the enclosed place and crouched within ten feet of where I stood. A moment later two of the hounds came over, and the fawn ran in my direction and pushed its head between my legs. I lifted the little thing to my breast, and, swinging round and round, fought off the dogs. Just then I felt that all the dogs in the West could not and would not capture that fawn after its weakness had appealed to my strength.”

So is it when human helplessness appeals to Almighty God. I remember well when the hounds of sin were after my soul that at last I ran into the arms of Almighty God. (Quoted in *EM Bounds on Prayer*)

The Rest of the Christmas Story is that God entered space and time 2000 years ago in Bethlehem. His is knowable. Do you know Him??