

Dig Deeper @Home – “Awe and Wonder”
Complement to lesson on 12/18/22 – “Offended”

ICE BREAKER – Questions to open dialogue and learn more about those gathered

1. What’s your favorite Christmas cookie?
2. How do you typically respond when offended? How do you respond when you realize you have offended someone else?

MEMORIZE – Matthew 1:21

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

READ – Matthew 15: 1-28

Questions to ponder/discuss:

1. Re-scan the text and consider...
 - a. What did the Holy Spirit cause to “jump off the page” as you read?
 - b. Is anything repeated? Contrasted? Compared? (If so... why might that be?)
 - c. What are the verses revealing about God? About people?
In light of these, what needs to change in your life? What are you already doing well?
2. Jesus references a prophecy from Isaiah. This comes from Isaiah 29:13. Take time and look this scripture up in the original context.
 - a. What do you notice about it?
 - b. What might the religious leaders have gained if they went back to this text and studied it?
 - c. In particular, how did Jesus fulfil v14 in his life and ministry?
 - d. What about you? Does Isaiah rightly prophesy about you in 29:13? In what ways do you honor God with your lips but keep your heart far from him? What would it look like to seek the Lord with all your heart?

EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITY – Manufactured Enthusiasm

This activity is meant to be done with more than 1 person. Think of a subject or topic that you have absolutely no interest in, whatsoever. Take turns excitedly and enthusiastically explaining to those around you why you love the topic/subject you picked and more importantly, why they should as well. In other words, try honoring with your lips when your heart is far from something. After you all get a chance to do this, consider the words from Isaiah that Jesus quoted: “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me...”

- What new insights did you gain about this verse from the activity?
- What might you understand differently about God’s perspective after going through the activity?
- What do you want to remember from this activity?
- What do you want to apply to your life?

SING (Suggested songs to sing. Use these, or any favorites of the gathered group, to worship Jesus!)

The First Noel – Mennonite Hymnal #137

Joy to the World – Mennonite Hymnal #122

To Us A Child Of Hope Is Born – Mennonite Hymnal #125

Hark the Herald Angels Sing – Mennonite Hymnal #135

PRAY

This is a time to gather around for prayer requests and to share how you have seen God at work. A time to hear where God is showing up in our lives and where we need Him to help us in our lives.

Sending prayer based on the series:

Holy Spirit, this Advent season may I not just honor Jesus with my lips, but also draw my heart closer and closer to Jesus and keeping my heart near to Him at all times. Amen.