



Everyone recognizes the look of Christmas. What everyone needs to recognize is that Christmas should change how we look at everything. This series will explore some of life's greatest themes through the lens of the birth of Jesus.

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 We love to look at our lives and our families through the lens of Christmas. At no other time of the year do we mail or post more pictures of ourselves. Why do you believe that is true?

2 CHRISTMAS reframes how we picture everything. Christmas challenges us to look at everything in a new light because it announces the most starting claim in history. **Read 1 John 4:2-3.** How does the truth that “*God came to earth as a man*” change how we look at everything? Give some examples.

3 GOD... is on the throne. We live in a world that often seems out of control, or even worse, under the control of very dark powers. How does the story of Christmas encourage us to live with hope in the midst of a world where the “Herods” seem to be winning?

4 Rick reminded us that “*Bethlehem was not a last-minute brainstorm of God*” (see **Genesis 3:15**). Why is that significant and how does it fit into the one big story of salvation that the Bible is telling?

5 GOD... is in our midst. Christmas pictures a God who is not only over it all, but who has chosen to be in the middle of it all with us. **Read Matthew 1:22-23.** How does the picture of a God who understands reframe the way we view and cope with the hardships of life? Share an example of how this has been true in your life.

6 GOD... is on our side. Christmas doesn't just picture a God who is with us but a God who is for us. In fact, it announces the good news that God is willing to do for us what we could never do for ourselves. **Read Matthew 1:21 and Luke 2:10-11.** How does Christmas reframe the diagnosis of the human condition? Why is understanding this so crucial?

7 God became a man to take our place so that we could have a place with Him forever. **Read 1 John 4:10.** Why is this such “good news”? Christmas is a great season to share this news with your “one”. Spend some time as a group praying for the people in your life who need to be reminded of this great news. Encourage everyone to look for opportunities to boldly share this truth with others.

Closing thoughts

JESUS is the best way to picture God. The birth of Jesus challenges the popular narrative that God is distant and angry and in need of being appeased. Christmas is God wanting you to know who He really is. **Read John 1:14, 18.** Jesus did not come to change God's mind about us; he came to change our mind about God. This Christmas season make every effort to see God through the lens of the coming Jesus. It will change the way you view everything else.





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1 Rick began this series by reminding us that Christmas reframes how we picture everything. He challenged us to reframe how we view God (we saw that Jesus is the best way to picture God). This week's message asks us to picture a new view of wisdom as it reframes the question, "Who is the true wise man?" What is one thing that resonates with you from these first two lessons?

2 WISE PEOPLE often look foolish. When you think about the birth story of Jesus how were some of the main characters (Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the wise men) considered "fools" by their contemporaries? The Bible tells a story that directly challenges the wisdom of the world. Read **1 Corinthians 3:18-19**. How does the world's view of wisdom compare to the Biblical view of wisdom?

3 WISDOM UNDERSTANDS... that anything is possible with God. Conventional wisdom mocks the credibility of the supernatural (angelic visits, virgin births, moving stars, etc.). But the Christmas story reminds us that "God can do anything!" (**Luke 1:37**). Most followers of Jesus believe that to be true; they just don't believe God can do anything in and through them like Mary did. Too often our fear of appearing foolish aborts what God wants to conceive in us. How have you experienced that to be true in your life?

4 WISDOM UNDERSTANDS... that nothing is sovereign but God. We must understand that Jesus came to be a redeemer; we must also

understand that when he came he was already a ruler. **Read Matthew 2:1-2**. Notice that they were not looking for a kid; they were looking for a king. How does this fly in the face of the wisdom of the world?

5 Wisdom recognizes that all the "Herods" demanding our allegiance today are pretenders, and that the real foolishness is the refusal to transfer sovereignty to God. How does the story of Christmas clarify where your true allegiance should be?

6 WISDOM UNDERSTANDS... that everyone is important to God. Christmas birthed the most inclusive faith the world has ever seen because Christmas pictures a God who cares about everybody. **Read John 3:16**. With that in mind, how does Christmas reframe God as the original seeker? How does Christmas reframe the way we picture ourselves?

7 What is one area of your life where you need to apply God's wisdom instead of continuing to rely on worldly wisdom?

Closing thoughts WISE PEOPLE look to Jesus! Jesus reframes all the answers to life's greatest questions. He tells us who we are, why we matter, and where we're going. He's not just Savior; He's not just Sovereign; He is smart! **Read 1 Corinthians 1:24-25**. That's why wise men, and wise women, still come to worship him.





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1 This week's message reminds us that the birth of Jesus reframes the way we should picture love. What are some of the reasons people often have trouble giving and receiving love? How has this been difficult for you?

2 LOVE LOOKS like Christmas. The Bible contains a lot of stories, but they all come together to tell one big story. How would you summarize that story in one sentence?

3 At the center of this story is a baby. **Read John 3:16-17 and 1 John 4:7-10.** As you reflect on these familiar passages what stands out to you about God's great love? How has that changed the way you love God and others?

4 BECAUSE LOVE... gets close. Most religions picture God as fixed, immobile, and hard to reach. Christmas pictures a God who hits the road compelled by love. John reminds us that God "**became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood**" (John 1:14, MSG). What is so significant about God's willingness to get so close? How have you experienced his closeness recently?

5 BECAUSE LOVE... goes low. Christmas communicates and commemorates the greatest demotion in history. **Read Philippians 2:6-8.**

What are some of the things Jesus gave up for us? What does that tell you about his character and how does that impact how we should live?

6 BECAUSE LOVE... gives all. God loved us enough to become a man; He even loved us enough to become a servant. And if that's as far as His love went, we would still be lost. God had to love us enough to become a substitute. **Read 1 John 3:16.** With that in mind, how does Christmas rebuke the notion that "*being good is good enough*"?

7 Spend a few moments reading and reflecting on these passages: **Hebrews 10:4-5, 10, 2 Corinthians 5:21, and Romans 5:8.** What's one thing that each of them points out about the big story the Bible is telling? How do you need to respond to these truths?

Closing thoughts

All other religions tell us how to look for God. Only one faith declares that **LOVE LOOKS for you!** God came looking for you not "because of" but "in spite of." His love is not created by your worth; His love creates your worth. **Pray Ephesians 3:17-19** over your group. May we all remember that Love is looking for you this Christmas. Please receive the gift.

