



Advent Conspiracy—Worship Fully

Connecting:

1. Most of us have very specific memories about the Christmas season, both positive and negative. What are some of those positive memories? How would you describe the best Christmas you ever had as a child? What made it special for you?
2. Do you still look forward to the Christmas season? If so, what do you enjoy about the season? If you no longer look forward to Christmas, why not?
3. What word would best describe what you want to experience this year during the Christmas season? What are some obstacles that get in the way of that happening?
4. What practical choices do you need to make to ensure that the Christmas season remains a time of focused worship? How might you remind and encourage each other as friends to do this? As a family? As a church?
5. Read Luke 2:8-20 together as a group. The shepherds are well-known participants in the Christmas narrative. Think about the images you have seen on traditional Christmas cards, nativity scenes, or even the way shepherds are portrayed in a typical church Christmas program. How have we been led to picture these first visitors to the manger?
6. In this passage, we are told that the shepherds were a socially despised group (poor, criminal, outcast). Can you think of any parallels to this group today?
7. The shepherds are the first ones to whom the angels announced the birth of Christ. What does that tell us about the heart of God toward social outcasts? How does this relate to the message of Christmas?
8. In what ways does the worship of the shepherds differ from our celebration of Christmas? What are some specific ways in which our contemporary celebration of Christmas moves us away from the worship the shepherds experienced? What can we do to recapture that sense of wonder and gratitude?