

Sunday Assembly Reflection

WRITTEN BY: Robin Russell

REFLECTION: Jim reflected on the big story of Jesus as he unpacked several vignettes or “video” scenes from the Gospel of Matthew. In a first-century culture filled with tension, violence and fear (not unlike our own today), Jesus came with great purpose and without fear: to end the exile of his people, to save them from their sins and to provide them with his constant presence. Yet his experience on earth was not without danger. In fact, he was a refugee with a price on his head! In identifying with people living on the edge, Jesus showed he had a heart not just for his people Israel but for the whole world. As we emulate him, we need to be willing to get low and lift him up. He is worthy to be adored.

As we approach Christmas, I was challenged to remember that we are not celebrating a “nice, sweet story” of an infant in a manger, but recognizing the mind-blowing fact that God has invaded our lives with his very presence, and that he wants to live inside us. Truth be told, though I believe in the idea of the virgin birth, it’s always been a bit embarrassing to admit it. After all, miracles of that sort are frequently a source of ridicule from those outside the faith. However, Jim’s message encouraged me to think bigger about it. Creating new life inside Mary is not out of character for God who creates the new birth in each of us who believe; it’s just his most outrageous example! He longs to be with us so much that he is willing to endure humiliation and identify with the humanity he created. That fills me with a sense of awe and appreciation that overrides any awkwardness!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: *Please pick one of the questions below to answer in your small groups; more if you have time. Be sure to pray for each other at the end.*

1. God is wooing everybody, and is ahead of us in loving the whole world. Is there anyone or any people group toward whom your heart needs to be expanded to better align with His love?
2. Jesus spent nearly his whole life in obscurity in backwater Nazareth, when he had a great call on his life. Share with your group a time when you felt overlooked as far as God’s purposes for your life. How does Jesus’ example encourage you?

Sunday Assembly Reflection is written by Lake Highlands Church members for Lifegroups and individuals to receive more from the spoken Sunday Assembly message through reflection and quick discussion. It is published on the first three Monday’s of the month. If you are interested in knowing more about a Lifegroup or have a question about the reflection, please contact Donjalea Crane, donjalea@lakehighlandschurch.org or contact one of our Lifegroup leaders by going to lakehighlandschurch.org/Lifegroup-listings.

Lake Highlands Church Sunday Assembly Sermons are published weekly as a podcast. They are available on iTunes and lakehighlandschurch.org.