

LET IT BE CHRISTMAS



sStudy Guide

All The Lonely people

December 7, 2008

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INTRODUCTION

God has brought 'up there' down here so that we'd be lonely no more. One can't read the Christmas story reflectively without being struck by the examples of loneliness. Mary must have experienced loneliness when called to bear God to the world. Joseph must have had moments of loneliness in the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Jesus Himself, leaving the glories of heaven to endure the wood of a manger and a cross, must have been tempted to give up hope. God answers our loneliness at Christmas by reminding us that He is with us, that in Jesus He is Emmanuel and enters into our loneliness.

Begin by reading Luke 2:1-7

1. Have you ever felt lonely? Explain.
2. Many poets and theologians have described the spiritual journey as a lonely sojourn or pilgrimage. Do you agree? Explain.
3. Re-read the text again, this time putting yourself into the story. Who did you most identify with and why?
4. Reading the text emotionally, I am most aware of loneliness in the phrase, "There was no room for them in the inn." No room for God? Where do you see God being marginalized in society these days?
5. Jesus wanted all those who felt like there was no room for them in society to know that there was room at His table for them (Luke 14:15-24). Who are the marginalized in our society today?

Moving Forward

The Bible states in Revelation 3:20 that Jesus stands at the door of our hearts - and churches - and knocks. If anyone opens the door, He'll come in and eat with them. To share a meal in the ancient world was to share deep relationship - to be with each other. If someone were to ask you how you would make room for Jesus in your life this Christmas, what would you say? Jesus said, "Whatever you did to the least of these my brothers, you did to me." Is there anybody Jesus is asking you to make room for in your Christmas this year? It might be the way to move from isolation and aloneness into community.

changing your mind

The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these my brothers of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40