

THE SONGS OF CHRISTMAS

THE SONG OF MARY

CATCH UP ON LIFE:

This is when we update each other on the things that Jesus has been up to in our lives since we last saw each other. As church family, we care about each other's lives: what we're celebrating, what we're mourning, what decisions we are praying through, and everything in between. (1 Thessalonians 2:8, Romans 12:10 and 15)

Suggested time: 20-30 minutes

- What can you thank God for this week?
- When were you most aware of Jesus' presence this week?
- When were you least aware of Jesus' presence this week?

For LifeGroup training resources check out MidtownLifeGroups.com

REVIEW THE MISSION:

Just like God the Father sent Jesus on a mission of reconciliation for us, Jesus sends us out as ambassadors of His reconciliation. We are called to make disciples wherever we go because Jesus changes everything. (John 20:21 and 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

Suggested time: 10-20 minutes

1. People:

- **Reactive** - Who in your life (family, coworkers, etc.) can we join you in praying for? Who has God put around you that is showing spiritual interest? Who is hurting and could use some love from our group?
- **Proactive** - Who are the people we are intentionally living on mission with (neighbors, STC partner organizations, or a specific demographic in Columbia)? What are our upcoming plans to love, serve, and build relationships with this group?

2. Plan: Are there any rhythms already planned, or an extra rhythm we could plan to create a way for these friends to connect with our group?

Pray: *Prayer is the fuel of God's mission. Let's pray for our people by name; pray for their needs, and opportunities to have spiritual conversations that help them take next steps toward Jesus.*

SERMON DISCUSSION:

God uses His Word to reveal Himself to us, equip us to live the good life He's designed for us, show us our sin, and strengthen us as we follow Him. We preach the Word on Sundays and apply it as a LifeGroup throughout the week. (2 Timothy 3:16-17, Colossians 1:9-12 and James 1:22-25)

Suggested Time: 20-40 minutes

For tools and resources to grow in your walk with Jesus, go to FollowingJesusTogether.com

I. Scripture Discussion

Primary Passages: Luke 1:46-56, James 4:6, Matthew 5:3, and Psalm 34:18

Read **Luke 1:46-56** out loud. Spend some time silently reflecting and journaling the following questions as a LifeGroup. (These questions can be used with any passage of the Bible to study on your own.)

- What stands out from the passage?
- What does the passage reveal to us about God?
- What does the passage reveal to us about people?

Share with one another what you thought and wrote about.

II. Sermon Discussion

What stood out to you from the sermon? Why is that?

In the passage, we see that God looks favorably upon Mary's humility and lowliness. What keeps you from being humble and seeing your lowliness? How specifically have you seen your pride get in the way?

In the passage, we see that, despite Mary's fear, she chooses to worship God and trust His promises. What areas in your life do you find it difficult to trust in God? What promises from Scripture do you need to cling to in those moments?

During this time every year, we take 3-4 weeks to intentionally focus on growing in generosity. We reflect on how much God has given us and how we can bless others. Below are the initiatives we are rallying towards as a church family. Take some time to look over these and initiatives and sign up at our [Advent series page](#) (or scan here:)



- **Sign up to tithe** - We want our first step of ongoing generosity to be towards the mission of our church. We are encouraging our church family to set up a recurring tithe because the gospel transforms us not just to be generous around the holidays, but throughout the entire year.
- **Give to Serve the City** - We want to fund the various Serve the City events we do throughout the year to ongoingly serve these organizations and the people they work with. These funds will also go towards our Serve the City Weekend on March 3-5, 2023.
- **Attend the Personal Finance Class** - We want to equip our church family to be spiritually healthy by stewarding the financial resources that God has entrusted us. On **January 28** from **9am-12pm** at our Downtown church, we're hosting a class that consists of practical training to manage your finances, pay off debt, invest well, and practice biblical generosity.

ENGAGE THE HEART:

Jesus calls us to walk in the light, confessing our sins to God and each other. God's Spirit works through confession and community to lead us to repentance. (Romans 3:23-24, James 5:16 and 1 John 1:5-10)

Suggested Time: 20-40 minutes

What has Jesus been teaching you this week through abiding with Him (Bible reading and prayer)? In our [Advent Guide](#), what stood out to you from the daily devotionals this week?

What sin(s) do you need to confess to God?

What are you struggling to trust Jesus with this week? How can you give Him control of it?

Where have you seen victory over sin in the last week? Where have you been encouraged in your walk with Jesus in the last week?

Pray: *James tells us that a community that regularly confesses sin and prays for each other will see a lot of healing. Confess your sins to God in prayer and pray for each other. **Pray** for the Spirit to work in you as you take steps of repentance.*

