



December 10th, 2017 Discussion Guide

A Christmas Carol: “Spirit of Christmas Present”

Ephesians 5:15-21

Introduction

We are in the midst of Christmas Present. With two weeks until Christmas Day, our culture has definite ideas about the best way for us to invest ourselves before the big day – and the ideas involve a lot of spending. Christmas can end up being about overspending and overdoing in a way that leaves us broke and exhausted and relieved when it is over. We can do better – let’s discuss how.

Discussion Questions

1. Which of these words describe how you are feeling during this present holiday: worried, joyful, stressed, peaceful, frenzied, hopeful, overwhelmed, upbeat? Name a different description if yours isn’t listed.
2. Read the account of the magi coming to honor Jesus. Matthew 2:1-12. They acknowledged the majesty of this young Messiah by offering gifts that were fit for royalty. As you look at your current Christmas gift list, are there ways in which your gifts might communicate the reality and goodness of Jesus to the recipients? How can a gift to another person embrace the values of Jesus and cause them to understand what his values are, and what it is that you value?
3. As a group, is there some way that you could collaborate on a “Christmas Gift” to someone or some group that would honor Christ and the things that he values? Collectively, could you as a group take on the sponsorship of a Compassion child? Could you provide a goat, duck, chicken, or cow to a third world family for whom this would provide sustenance? Perhaps help provide a holiday meal at City Gospel Mission? There are so many opportunities to give of ourselves; our time, effort and presence, at holiday time. Explore that possibility as a group.



4. In Dicken’s Christmas Carol, the Ghost of Christmas Present calls to Scrooge with the invitation, “Come in and know me better, man!” Since Christmas is all about Jesus Christ, we would do well *to come in and know him better* during his holiday. In what ways are you growing to know Christ better, day by day? Not, what do you know *about* him, but how do you know him better as one person comes to know another person better? What difference has that made in your life?

5. As you read Paul’s encouragement in Ephesians 5:15-21 he tells us to walk as wise people, to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and to understand what the will of the Lord is. How do wise followers of Jesus walk through this Christmas season? How can we allow the Holy Spirit to fill us in a more complete way? What does that mean, to be filled with the Spirit? What is a new understanding you have recently gained as to the will of the Lord in your life?

Moving Forward: *The good folks of adventconspiracy.org/2017 encourage Christ-followers to Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, Give Presence, and Love All during the holidays. As a group, suggest some ways that you might personally hit all 5 of those benchmarks in the coming 2 weeks before Christmas – and beyond.*