



# GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## WEEK 1 | GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### CONNECT

There is a popular Christmas song we hear this time of year called, “Mary, Did You Know?” written and originally performed by Mark Lowry. It has been covered by many artists over the years such as Carrie Underwood and Pentatonix. The lyrics center around questions asked of Mary, the young mother of Jesus, if at the time He was born she truly knew who she was giving birth to. During *Behold*, we focus on and behold who Jesus truly is. Take a moment to listen to your favorite version of this song. Pay special attention to the lines that tell us who Jesus truly is. For fun, if you are familiar with the song, before listening to it, spend some time trying to remember as many of the questions that were asked of Mary by filling in the next line of this question:

- **Mary did you know, \_\_\_\_\_?**

### CONSIDER

- **What was encouraging or challenging from the sermon and/or daily devotions this week?**

### CHRIST

#### Read Luke 1:26-38

- This is the story of Jesus’ birth being foretold. The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to let her know that, even though she was a virgin, she would be giving birth to a son. He also told her what to name him; Jesus. In addition to the name Jesus, He is given many other names in scripture. Here are five names given to Him in the New Testament and their meaning:
  - Jesus - Jehovah the Savior
  - Immanuel - God with us
  - Christ - the anointed one
  - The Word - the very expression of God
  - The Lamb of God - the sacrifice for our sins

**Is there one of these names that you think about the most when you think about Him? Is there one that you need to be reminded of more often?**

- In this story, we see four different attitudes that Mary displays during her interaction with Gabriel. She was troubled (vs. 29), she was afraid (vs. 30), she was confused (vs. 34), and she was convicted (vs. 38). There are times we go through a similar range of attitudes and emotions when we receive a message from God even when, like it was for Mary, the God of the universe is saying that He wants to use us in a mighty way. If we can all agree that God wants to use us, then the questions become, **(1) do you truly know what God wants to use you for and what your calling is based on the talents and abilities He has given to you and (2) where are you on the range of attitudes and emotions about that calling?**
  - **Are you troubled?** “God, don’t make me do something I don’t want to do.”
  - **Are you afraid?** “God, I’m not sure I can do that.”
  - **Are you confused?** “God, why me? I’m not qualified to do anything for you.”
  - **Are you convicted?** “God, I am your servant. Let it be according to your word.”

- We've looked at some interesting aspects of the foretelling of Jesus' birth found in Luke 1: 26-38, but scripture gives us some very enlightening context in the verses before this account. We see in Luke 1:1-4 that Luke was writing this letter to Theophilus (as was the book of Acts, also written by Luke). We don't know too much about Theophilus, but it is believed that he was a friend of Luke's who has yet to become a follower of Jesus and this was Luke's attempt to help him become a believer. We do know that Luke was a very learned man (he was a physician), and he thought it was important to "carefully investigate everything" and develop an "orderly account" of what was known about Jesus. **Would you say of yourself that you have "carefully investigated everything" and develop an "orderly account" of what is known about Jesus so that you might have the chance to win over a friend to Christ? Do you think that is important?**
- Another interesting story in Luke is the story of the birth of John the Baptist being foretold (Luke 1:5-25). It is strikingly similar to the story of the birth of Jesus being foretold in Luke 1:26-38. Note these similarities:
  - Just as the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, Gabriel appeared to Zechariah.
  - Just like Mary, Zechariah was gripped with fear upon seeing the angel.
  - The birth foretold was a miraculous one (Elizabeth was "well along in years").
  - Many will rejoice in his (John's) birth, just as many rejoiced upon Jesus' birth.
 The similarities between these accounts speaks to the importance of both. We know that John the Baptist was the one who went before Jesus and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world." In many ways today, we are the ones who are to go before Jesus telling others to "behold" Him. **Would you agree that our roles are similar to John the Baptist in that we should be telling others to "behold" Jesus?**

## CALLING

This Christmas season is the ideal time to invite someone to church. As we "behold" Jesus during this season, pray about who you can invite to come do the same.

**Daily Devotions:** Spend 15 minutes each day with Northside devotions. **Text DEVO to 81212 or use the Study tab in Northside's mobile app for daily devotions.**

### Memorize:

*"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."* **Isaiah 7:14 KJV**

**Further Study:** The word "behold" means to look, to open your eyes, to pay attention. It is not a word we use much anymore in our modern vocabulary. It is almost completely missing in modern English translations of the Bible. For example, "behold" is used just once in the NIV translation (Numbers 24:17), but 1,298 times in the King James version (KJV). Take a moment to look up some of these key verses in the KJV or NKJV:

- Job 5:17
- Psalm 27:4
- Psalm 33:18
- Luke 2:10
- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Revelation 3:20
- Revelation 22:12