



SERIES OVERVIEW

"The Lucia Wreath"

Preacher: Pastor Meghan DeJong

December 2, 2018

[Series Sermon Recordings](#)

[Discipleship Resources](#)

SUGGESTED SUPPLIES

Note cards (or paper) and pens.

QUESTIONS?

Email Abby

Abby@highrock.org

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

HOW TO USE: *The three sections below (opening, sermon content questions, and application) represent the three connections we emphasize at Highrock: connecting to **God's People**, connecting to **God Personally** and connecting to **God's Purposes**. Select at least one question from each section or create questions that are more specific to your group.*

WEEKLY CHECK IN

Use a few minutes at the beginning of your time to follow up on any action items shared from last week. Was there a **next step or application** challenge that they took on this past week? What did they learn about themselves and following Jesus?

CONNECTION QUESTIONS

Choose ONE of these that fits your group, or modify it so that it will fit your group better. These can make great **opening questions** or **ending questions**. If you have had a really in-depth conversation, ending on a light note can help transition to concluding your time Together on a less intense question.

1. What are some of your Christmas traditions? Have they changed over the years?

SERMON QUESTIONS

Use a **couple of the questions** below or make up your own. You can always begin with: "Do you have any questions about what you heard in the sermon this week?" Or, "What stood out to you from the Pastor's sermon?"

1. Are there rituals or traditions that you have which once used to have meaning? What was the reason some of your Christmas traditions began?

- a. How can traditions and symbols be helpful to you in this season to remind you that God is with you?
 - i. **Sermon Reference:** *"In the next few weeks, you'll hear about the signs and symbols of **Christmas** that have become superficial trappings of the season. But what if those same signs and symbols could be brought back to life? What if we could become like little children again? What if they could actually become invitations to wait for God with us, Immanuel?"*

2. What activities or expectations make Christmas "Christmas" for you? Are there ways that you are busy making Christmas happen which might actually get in the way of being present to this season?
 - a. What was this holiday season like at home growing up? What were the ideals set by the grown ups for what Christmas meant or how it was observed? Was it chaotic, stressful, busy...?
 - b. How might you want to shape this season differently for yourself or your family?
 - i. **Sermon Reference:** *"We might say that we love things like food, and Christmas carols, and time with family, but % of adults have reported increased stress during the Christmas season. In fact, 41% of adults who celebrate Christmas report feeling like they work **HARDER** to achieve the "**perfect Christmas**".*

3. *What gets in the way of your being present to Immanuel?"*
 - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"We overspend, overeat, overschedule and are exhausted. The world can feel so chaotic and dreary. All of the Christmas lights in the world don't seem to give enough clarity or joy. Immanuel? God with us? Sometimes it's hard to sense God at all."*

4. What do we learn about God from the reference below from the creation of the world? What are God's intentions? What does God desire of us? What are ways that God desires to be present with us?
 - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"The world was supposed to be this really awesome thing, where there God was present, and it was life bearing! God was the light that broke up the chaos, helped give order and direction. People were invited to just be with God, and through the light of God, work towards God's purposes...So Jesus, knowing full well that it would cost him his life, entered into the world. He left the comfort and security of heaven and entered into the brokenness of our world. He was literally God with us. He provided this spotlight that helped people see God again, in the midst of the darkness. Jesus' mission was to provide the light for people to follow God again- to be whole- and he did whatever was necessary to make that happen."*

5. Who has been an example to you about how to bring light into the world? How do/could you try to emulate them?
 - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"But as people who are seeking to follow Jesus, scripture is pretty clear that we can't **JUST** have good intentions. James 1:22 says that we can't just listen to the word, because we just trick ourselves into thinking we're all good. We have to do what it says! But how do we do that? One of the most helpful ways of learning how to live a life that brings light into the world is through imitating people who do that."*

6. What do you think of this quote by St. Lucia, "...whatever you give away at death for the Lord's sake you give because you cannot take it with you. Give now to the true Savior, while you are healthy, whatever you intended to give away at your death."
 - a. What might you be able to say no to, give away, give up in this season of Advent to help you make more space to be present to God, to rest, to be present to those in your life?

7. What are your thoughts/ feelings/ responses to Pastor Meghan's questions, Where do you find yourself working to bring Glory to God instead of just working? Where is the light of the world, the light that points to God shining from YOUR work? **(Matt 5:14-16)** Are you a light to this world, or are you just blending into the darkness?
 - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"After realizing that I was overworking instead of working in the Light of God's purposes, I took a real day off. I took my Apple Watch off, I left my phone and computer untouched. I spent time with my son, and*

found myself delighting in him! That week, I kept to a rule about not being out of the house more than 3 nights. My husband and I had a good conversation, instead of just a quick goodbye in the morning! Instead of using the car for phone calls that I felt I had to make, I used that time for connecting with God in prayer. My workload didn't disappear, but I also wasn't a failure! I made room for a little of God's light to enter into my world- and God showed up. God lit up my life and chased the shadows away."

APPLICATION/S

1. How would you like your life to bring light into your relationships and workplace this Advent season?
 - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"When Lucia knew that her mission was to give her life to GOD'S purposes, she gave up comfort for the sake of bringing the light of Christ to the world. She had access to EVERY good thing the world had to offer, and she used it all for God's purposes. Lucia's life and death were all for the glory of God. Her work and service brought light into the darkness."*
2. What are some practices which you could incorporate into your day to help you slow down and present to God? What are some red flags of stress, overworking, chaos that you can be intentionally looking out for?
 - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"What if you committed to just 20 minutes of prayer every day? Maybe it's during your lunch break, or on your commute. (Matt 11:28) Jesus promises that coming to him will be a place of rest and renewal- what a gift in the midst of a overscheduled world! There's a popular type of prayer, a breath prayer, that gets your physical body and your spirit in tune with a rhythm of rest. You breathe in and say a name for God- maybe, Light of the World. On your breath out, you bring something to God- let me be a light. They work together to bring light into your day, so that you can light up the darkness!"*
3. If you are a parent, what are some practical ways you can make time to intentionally be present to your kids? What would it take to slow your schedules down and create a pattern of rest together?
 - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"Just as Christians imitate how Jesus chose to be present with people, kids need examples of adults choosing to be present. Being an involved parent doesn't always mean scheduling your kids' lives. It might mean setting an example of how to say no and inviting your children into patterns of rest. It might be uncomfortable for you. But you're not alone. I know that sometimes it's easier for me to keep my kids busy than to engage with them"*

CLOSING

Summarize the key points of your discussion and encourage people to **share one action step** they could take during the next week based on what they have shared. **Take time to pray together.** Write those down and start next week by checking in with how it went, or better yet, check in during the week!

RESOURCES

SERMON SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

John 1:1-5, 9-13

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world

did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

SCRIPTURE STUDY: 5Cs

If you are interested in studying the scripture more deeply, one way to study scripture is through using the 5 Cs. Read through the passage and move through each C. The goal is not to move through them quickly but to really consider each section. If you wanted to study the passage together, you, as the leader should take some time beforehand to complete the Cs and it can be helpful to have group members come prepared with the first 3 already considered. Then, as a group you can briefly talk over some of the points and then have a longer conversation about curiosities and conclusions. This study tool will be posted within all of the discussion questions.

- **Context:** What is the literary context of the passage? What comes before? After? Context within whole book? Relation to main idea of section, book, testament, whole Bible?
- **Christ:** How is Jesus revealed here? If in OT, prefiguration, typology, prophesy, implications for Christ's person and work? How is he needed, anticipated, fulfilled?
- **Crux:** What is the main idea? Try and find a section of the text that states it and have reasons for why that is the main idea? How do the other points support it?
- **Curiosities:** What is surprising about this text? Controversial? Mysterious? Shocking?
- **Conclusions:** What are the implications for our lives? Application? How do we think, feel, and act in light of this text?