

Community Group Leader Guide

For the Week Of December 3, 2023

Sermon Series: Once Upon a Time

Watch the Leader Video and find all your resources online at

<https://clifec.com/community-group-resources/>

Need to watch the sermon? Check out our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@CommunityLifeChurch>

Announcements:

Christmas Eve Times 2023

Celebrate the birth of Christ at one of our many Christmas Eve services across all c|Life campuses. For times and locations, visit clifec.com.

Comfort and Joy Service

Join us on December 14th at 7 pm on our Forney campus for our annual bereavement service. It's a time of solace for those who find the holiday season challenging.

Icebreaker:

1. What's your favorite pop culture origin story? For example, A nobody named Peter Parker is bitten by a radioactive spider and becomes the infamous Spider-Man!

Quick Review:

This week marks the beginning of our new sermon series, "Once Upon a Time," an exploration of the story of Jesus' birth through the unique perspectives of each Gospel. The series aims to deepen our understanding of the Nativity by examining how each Gospel writer presents this pivotal event.

Our journey began with Matthew's Gospel. Matthew's account is distinct in its emphasis on fulfilling Old Testament prophecies and establishing Jesus' legal and royal lineage. By starting with the genealogy in Matthew 1:1, the Gospel sets the stage, linking Jesus directly to key figures like David and Abraham, emphasizing His role as the long-awaited Messiah. Matthew not only roots Jesus firmly in Jewish history but also reaches out to a broader audience by showcasing how prophecies are fulfilled in Jesus, bridging past promises with present revelation.

This week's sermon invites us to see the Christmas story not just as a familiar tale but as a profound narrative that intertwines prophecy, history, and divine intervention, all converging in the birth of Jesus Christ.

Make It Personal:

1. How would you describe your beginnings? What family and time were you born into? When did you first come to know The Lord?
2. What is a way that you've seen God at work through your beginnings? For example, if you grew up in a Christian home, how has that affected you?

Go Deeper:

3. Look over Matthew 1:1-17. What do you notice? Why does Matthew go to such lengths to show Jesus' lineage?
4. Read Matthew 1:18-24 and Matthew 2 together as a CG. Take time to really think about it. Is there anything about these scriptures that is surprising to you? What elements about 'the Christmas story' stand out to you?

Action Steps:

1. Reflect on the genealogy of Matthew 1 and let it remind you that God is in control of everything. If it is God's plan, it will prevail.
2. Emulate the dedication of Mary and Joseph by setting aside your plans and embracing what God may have for you in this season.

Prayer Requests:

1. Pray for sharing Christmas and the upcoming ministry opportunity that our church has.
2. Pray that churches around the world will be full of people who are open to receiving the truth of the gospel this Christmas season.

Feel free to use this guide to facilitate discussion in your community group. Modify the questions as you see fit.