

Matthew 1:18-24; 2:13-23; 7:7-11 | James 1:22

What do you do when a dream dies?

Joseph's Choice:

- Be Righteous
- Don't Be Afraid
- Listen and Follow God's Leading

Don't Be Afraid

- Righteousness looks a lot like trust.
- Trust looks a lot like obedience.
- Obedience is the next right thing.

Keep trusting God when circumstances change.

When God speaks, respond immediately.

Don't be afraid to take the next step of obedience and trust.

Life Group Study

For week of December 4, 2022

Many of our Life Groups use this insert as a discussion guide throughout the week. We encourage you to take that next step in your journey with Jesus & His church by joining one today! <https://rlc.pub/groups>

Share your story

What insight, question, or resolution did you discover as we worshiped the Lord together this past Sunday?

What was one of the hardest Christmas situations you've had to face as a family? What helped you carry on in perseverance?

Connect to God's story

Read Matthew 1:18-24.

Jeff shared Joseph's Christmas story on Sunday. What character qualities do you see from Joseph? How does he handle his fear and allowing God to change His plans?

What do you do when God interrupts your well-reasoned plan with a plan of His own that goes in a different direction?

One of Jesus' names is Immanuel meaning "God is with us". How important to you is the presence of the Lord when weighing big decisions?

As we walk with the Lord we see His faithfulness over and over again. Matthew shows us God's faithfulness to what He has said through His prophets being fulfilled at Jesus' birth. How can the faithfulness of the Lord continue to grow your willingness to trust Him even when you are afraid of the outcomes? What helps build your faith?

Read James 1:19-25.

The letter from James is a letter filled with wisdom. What nuggets of wisdom do you find from James?

What does "doing what (the Word) says" look like? How are you at putting into practice reflect the Lord and becoming like Him?

What do you think of a person who would look in a mirror, saw everything was a mess, and walked away without fixing anything? How is this like a person who just hears the Word and does nothing with what he heard?

Is there something God is showing you that He wants to address?

Take some time and pray for each other asking the Lord to help you see clearly how He is forming you and grow in courage to obey even in the midst of fear. Praise the Lord that He is Immanuel... God with us!

Advent Conspiracy

Be a part of a different story this Christmas, one that celebrates our King and brings hope to the watching world.

[Worship Fully] It starts with Jesus. It ends with Jesus. This is the holistic approach God had in mind for Christmas. It's a season where we are called to put down our burdens and lift a song up to our God. It's a season where love wins, peace reigns, and a king is celebrated with each breath. It's the party of the year. Entering the story of advent means entering this season with an overwhelming passion to worship Jesus to the fullest.

[Spend Less] Before you think we're getting all Scrooge on you, let us explain what we mean. We like gifts. Our kids really like gifts. But consider this: America spends an average of \$450 billion a year every Christmas. How often have you spent money on Christmas presents for no other reason than obligation? How many times have you received a gift out of that same obligation? Thanks, but no thanks, right? We're asking people to consider buying ONE LESS GIFT this Christmas. Just one. Sounds insignificant, yet many who have taken this small sacrifice have experienced something nothing less than a miracle: They have been more available to celebrate Christ during the advent season.

[Give More] God's gift to us was a relationship built on love. So, it's no wonder why we're drawn to the idea that Christmas should be a time to love our friends and family in the most memorable ways possible. Time is the real gift Christmas offers us, and no matter how hard we look, it can't be found at the mall. Time to make a gift that turns into the next family heirloom. Time to write mom a letter. Time to take the kids sledding. Time to bake really good cookies and sing really bad Christmas carols. Time to make love visible through relational giving.

[Love All] When Jesus loved, He loved in ways never imagined. Though rich, He became poor to love the poor, the forgotten, the overlooked and the sick. He played to the margins. By spending less at Christmas, we have the opportunity to join Him in giving resources to those who need help the most. As we as a community of faith continue to take hold of these simple steps in Advent Conspiracy we have been able to feed and help and support many individuals and families in our community. One less gift, unbelievable presence in the name of Christ.

For more ideas on how to be a part of a different story this Christmas visit: adventconspiracy.org