



# Group Leader Guide - Week 2

## Sermon Recap

Josh highlights the contrast between the idealized image of Christmas as the "most wonderful time of the year" and the reality of stress, grief, and pressures many face during the holiday season. He emphasizes that while Christmas is a time of joy, it can also bring feelings of sadness and loneliness, especially for those experiencing loss or hardship. Josh then explains that God needed Christmas to personally show His love and connection to humanity, illustrating that Jesus did not just come to spread a message but to embody the message of divine rescue and hope. Ultimately, he encourages listeners to reflect on their feelings this Christmas and to offer a hand of love and support to those who may be struggling, reminding everyone that God deeply understands and empathizes with our experiences.

# Ice Breaker

What is your favorite thing about the Christmas season?

## Discussion Questions

▼ What does the term 'God needed Christmas' mean to *you*, and why do you think it's significant to the story of Jesus?

- *Context:* Josh emphasizes that God didn't just want to tell us about His love; He needed to show it by sending His Son. This idea is central to understanding the purpose of Christmas.
- *Application:* How can understanding that God needed Christmas change the way you celebrate and view the holiday season in your life?

▼ In what ways do you think people today might feel 'distant' from God during Christmas?

- *Context:* Josh discusses how Christmas can be a reminder of grief or distance from God for many people, despite it being a festive time.
- *Application:* Have you ever felt distant from God? How did that experience affect your life and faith?

## Read Scripture

### ***Galatians 4:4-5 NIV***

<sup>4</sup> But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.

### ***Romans 5:6-8 NIV***

<sup>6</sup> You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

### ***Hebrews 4:14-16 NIV***

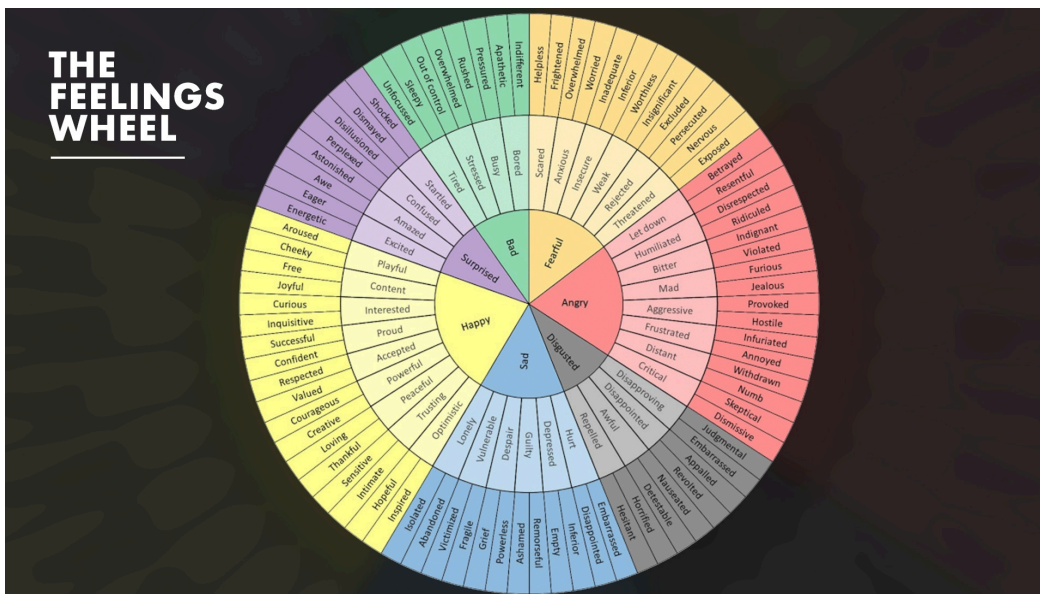
<sup>14</sup> Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, <sup>[1]</sup> Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

# Discussion Questions

▼ How does the idea of 'divine rescue' through Jesus's human, sinless, and eternal sacrifice impact your understanding of God's love?

- *Context:* Josh explains that Jesus was fully man and fully God, which made His sacrifice meaningful for the forgiveness of sins.
- *Application:* Think of a time when you needed help or rescue. How does that experience relate to understanding what Jesus did for us?

▼ Josh mentions 'What are you feeling this Christmas?' using a feelings wheel. How can identifying your feelings help you connect with God more deeply?



- *Application:* Reflect on your own beliefs. Do you feel like your relationship with God is more about rules and religion, or is it personal and relational?

▼ Josh gives this challenge to ask yourself this week: 'What if this Christmas you gave God a chance to meet you where you are?'

- *Context:* Josh references Romans 5:8, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. So what if we take one step toward Him this week?
- *Application:* Take a moment to identify how you're feeling this holiday season and ponder Josh's second challenge: 'Will you reflect the love that rescued you?'

## Prayer

- Ask for prayer requests shared in the group.
- Pray for God to help you embrace the true meaning of Christmas this week.
- Ask for guidance in showing love and compassion to those around you.
- Seek strength to let go of holiday stress and truly enjoy the season.

- Take steps toward God meeting us where we are, and reflect the love that rescued us.

## Rewatch the sermon

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