



If parents have good reasons for the names they give their children, how much more does God? The Christmas narratives in Matthew and Luke reveal those names, and those names reveal the gospel!

**These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.**

**1** Rick began by reminding us that “Names matter.” What are some specific ways name matter? Follow up: What is the story behind some of the names in your family?

**2** Read **Matthew 1:22-23**. What stands out to you the most from these verses? What does this name tell us about the mission of Jesus?

**3 THE LOSS OF “WITH”** *In 2020 most of us have experienced a profound loss of “with.”* What are some of the key losses you’ve experienced this year? Follow up: Have you had moments this year where you have felt abandoned by God? If so, share something you learned from that experience and/or how it affected you.

**4 “God not with us” is a lie that must be named.** *God will always be above us, but God never wants to be away from us.* How has this truth impacted the relationship you have with God? Share an example of a time you were reminded that you were created for fellowship with God.

**5 “IMMANUEL” IS A MESSAGE! “God” means that Jesus is more than a man.** *The startling claim of Christmas is that God appeared as a real man in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.* Read **Colossians 1:15-20**. Why is it critical to understand that Jesus is more than a man (fully man and fully God)? Follow up: How does it make you feel to know that God loves you enough that He became one of us in order to reconcile all of us to Him?

**6 “IMMANUEL” IS A MESSAGE! “Us” means his mission is bigger than “me”.** *It is significant that his name is not “God with me.”* How does Christmas include you but at the same time transcend you? Why is that important? Follow up: Read **Luke 2:8-14**. In what ways do these verses remind you that God’s mission is bigger than you? How does your life demonstrate that this is good news for “all people”?

**7 “IMMANUEL” IS A MESSAGE! “With” means our worth is more than we think.** *“Immanuel” is a name that ascribes value to others.* What are some ways Jesus demonstrated that truth to others in his ministry? How does Christmas rebuke the lie that some people just don’t matter to God? Follow up: Read **Isaiah 41:10, Hebrews 13:5-6, and Romans 8:38-39**. How do verses like these remind you that you are worth more than you may think? Who is someone you know that needs to be reminded of this today?

**8 THE RETURN OF “WITH”** – “God with us” is a truth that should be claimed. *The last year of Paul’s life was like 2020.* Read **2 Timothy 4:16-17**. What encouragement do you find today from these words from Paul? Follow up: How does our presence help point others to Jesus? Spend time praying for more “presence” for yourself and for someone else.

