

RECAP

As you reflect on this past week, where did you notice God's invitations to wait?

How did you respond?

Where did you watch and see God's presence at work?

IDEA 1

Steve started his sermon by sharing that we like things to be easy.

"There's so much in our modern world that has been made easy. I like easy. And, I don't think I'm the only one who likes easy, which causes some problems for us."

Where do you see examples in the world today of things being made easier?

Why do you think we "like easy"?

In what ways can things being easy cause problems for us?

IDEA 2

Steve's main point throughout his sermon was the truth that following Jesus is difficult.

Read Matthew 1:18-25

Through the life of Mary and Joseph we see that following Jesus is a call to:

1. Radical obedience
2. Self-denial
3. Embrace discomfort and suffering

In what ways do you find it difficult to follow Jesus?

Is there something from the 3 calls described above that you find particularly challenging?

Where in your life are you responding to the call of radical obedience, self denial and embracing discomfort and suffering?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Steve highlighted that Joseph and Mary were able to keep going when things were difficult because they paid attention to the markers of faith in their life.

What are the markers of faith in your life? What are the things you remember and hold on to when it's difficult to follow Jesus?

Give space to think about these questions and then share your responses together as a group.

Read Isa. 7:14

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel"

Pray and thank God together that He is a God he keeps his promises, and that He is Immanuel (God with us) in the difficulty.

APPLICATION

"The only thing that will give you the power to forsake it all is to see the joy of the treasure is worth more than the pain of sacrifice"

What does it look like for you this week to fix your eyes on the future joy that comes to those who embrace the difficult call of following Jesus?