

Christmas **AT THE MOVIES 2018**

MESSAGE GROUPS - IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE - DECEMBER 16

LEADERSHIP THOUGHT:

Christmas is around the corner, and people all over the area are searching for meaning and significance during this holiday season. There couldn't be a more perfect time to invite those you know to one of our Christmas Eve Services! You can check out 12Stone.com/Christmas to see all of our 41 available service times across our eight locations. Encourage your group to identify one or two people who are near to them but far from God that they could invite to attend this Christmas!

ICEBREAKER:

Did you grow up with any unique Christmas traditions? Have you kept them over the years or created new traditions?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read aloud **Matthew 1: 18-23**

- **Q:** *The story of the first Christmas was a story of dreams being interrupted. Have you ever faced a time where your dreams and your reality didn't line up?*
- **Q:** *We all experience setbacks and disappointment. Often, that comes in the form of us choosing one dream over another. How have you navigated the temporary disappointment that comes when choosing to chase a greater dream? (ie: starting a family instead of a business, paying off debt instead of a new car)*

Read aloud **Mark 12: 30-31**

- **Q:** *How do you balance the tension of your personal dreams and desires with helping others? Have you ever experienced a time when you or someone else sacrificed a dream to "love your neighbor as yourself"?*

When we feel trapped or discouraged by life we have a decision to make. Will we look **inward** to ourselves to solve it, or will we look **upward** to God and trust Him for the outcome?

- **Q:** *What is an area where you have felt trapped or discouraged? (faith, finances, marriage, etc.) What is your automatic response when you feel this way - to look upward or inward?*

CLOSE:

Challenge your group to respond either out loud or in a private moment of reflection.

- **Q:** *What is the importance of perspective when facing disappointment? How does choosing to look upward help change the way you process through setbacks?*
- **Q: Romans 8:28** says, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him..." Do you live like this promise is true? What shifts can you make during the hard times to rely on God to work all things together for good?