

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

Egypt

Week 6: The Sympathy of God
Matthew 2:13-23

November 27, 2022
(Jeff Griffin, Senior Pastor)

Is God aloof? Or does He understand what we go through? Can He relate to us? Part of the plan of Jesus coming to us was for Him to experience life on earth and walk a mile in our shoes. This week we take a closer look at a young Jesus' journey into and out of Egypt.

Kicking It Off:

Yay or nay: Christmas decorations *before* Thanksgiving. What's your take on when it's best to decorate for Jesus' birthday? Have you always held this viewpoint, or has it morphed through the years?

Discussion:

1. Read Matthew 2:13. Imagine you were Joseph having a dream where an angel told him to flee to Egypt. What emotions do you think he would have felt in that moment? What would he possibly have feared about having to quickly evacuate and avoid King Herod's attack?

"After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. 'Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother,' the angel said. 'Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.'" (NLT)

2. What are some of the parallels between Jesus' time in Egypt and the history of biblical heroes like Joseph and Moses? (Consider sharing some highlights from the earlier lessons in this sermon series.)
3. Jeff mentioned the potential for key people in our lives (such as a parent, coach, or a boss) to not have much sympathy for our true feelings. Have you ever experienced that? How might that negatively influence someone's view of God? How did that impact your own view of God?
4. Read Hebrews 4:15. What kind of a high priest do we have as believers?

"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tested in every respect as we are, but without sinning." (NCB)

5. When we come to Jesus in our pain and He says He cares, how could that impact your response to what you're going through? How does it bring you comfort to know Jesus can relate to our everyday struggles, such as some that Jeff mentioned? How does it change your view of challenges you might face during the holiday season?

Family troubles
Rejection
Career frustration
Loneliness

Dread of death
Physical pain
Earthly death

Wrapping Up:

Thank God for His tender compassion when you come to Him. Spend some time brainstorming with your group on ways that you can help express sympathy to others within your spheres of influence in the weeks ahead.