

**WEEK 2:** Waiting – the Love of Joseph**Date:** Dec. 13, 2020**Scripture:** Matthew 1:18-25 – Joseph waits on the Lord and waits for Mary because of his love for both.**Bottom Line:** Love is not a warm, fuzzy feeling but a conscious commitment to give oneself to another in kindness and sacrificial service. When we wait lovingly, we have purpose in the waiting.**Video:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k\\_7vCW7uvl8&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_7vCW7uvl8&feature=youtu.be)

**Preparation:** Mom and/or dad, take time to prepare well for this spiritual experience with your son or daughter and perhaps their friends. Proper preparation includes reading through this guide, setting up a comfortable environment, preparing the videos, materials (*everyone will need a Bible, pen and notebook/journal*) and snacks, and prayer. It also includes giving your participants time to prepare as well. Let them know in advance what you want to do and then remind them a few minutes before your start time so that they are ready too.

**Interactive game / activity** ([https://youtu.be/qas7\\_r7lr5U](https://youtu.be/qas7_r7lr5U))

- Christmas Presents Of The Past Trivia: A trivia game that challenges you to guess the most popular Christmas gift from a given year. Play using the video link [HERE](#). Each question will display for a couple of seconds, students can try and guess within the given time the question is up, or leaders can pause the video during each question to give more time to think / guess.

**Activity Debrief:** (This would be a good time to pass out snacks)

- What is your most favorite Christmas gift you have ever been given? What is your most favorite Christmas gift that you have given to someone else?

**Video Teaching:** Waiting with Love – Joseph [https://youtu.be/k\\_7vCW7uvl8](https://youtu.be/k_7vCW7uvl8)

Set-up: “Today we continue in our series titled “Waiting.” Advent means “arrival” and focuses our attention on the arrival of Jesus and four Christian virtues of hope, love, joy and peace. **What have you been learning from our Advent devotional? Anyone have anything God has been challenging them with as you have been reading?** Today we are focusing on waiting with love, looking at the life of Joseph and what we can learn from him. Let’s take a look.”

Play the video [HERE](#)

Ice Breaker:

- What are some “family traditions” that you love that take place during Christmas? If you don’t have any, what are some that you would love to start?
- What do you love the most about Christmas?

Discussion Starters:

- What do you think about some of the engagement and marriage traditions that were mentioned in the video that were true of couples during Biblical times?
- Knowing some of these traditions about engagement, how do you think Joseph felt when he was told the news that Mary was pregnant? How do you think you would have responded to this news?
- Why is it hard sometimes to sacrificially love other people?

Scripture: Read John 14:15-21 together as a group. Jesus here shares the promise of the Holy Spirit to the disciples, and reminds us that true love is about obedience to God. Obedience to God always requires some sort of sacrifice from us (at it’s simplest, giving up our selfishness to submit to God’s authority and follow Him instead).

*“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”*

Digging Deeper:

- How does Jesus define love in this passage? How does Jesus want us to express our love to Him? (verse 15, 21)
- What does Jesus promise to us in this passage? (verse 16-17, Holy Spirit) Why is this important to us? How does this help us? (Holy Spirit empowers us to show our love to God through sacrificial obedience)
- Why do you think Jesus didn’t just say, “If you obey me, then I will love you”? Why is the wording / phrasing of, “if you love me, keep my commands” in verse 15 so important? (sacrificial obedience is an essential affirmation of our love for Jesus, NOT a way to earn the love of Jesus)

Application:

- How can you sacrificially love Jesus this week? What do you need to stop doing or start doing to make this happen?
- How can you sacrificially love your parents or your family this week? What do you need to stop doing or start doing to make this happen?
- How can you sacrificially love yourself this week? Are there things you are doing or engaging in that are ultimately damaging to you? What do you need to stop doing or start doing to make this happen?

1:15 Closing activity & prayer: choose 1 of the following options for the whole group together.

- Singing: We've provided a worship song and a Christmas song, themed to hope and waiting. Pick one.  
Together sing, "With Us" by Hillsong (<https://youtu.be/kXG5buZgZp4>)  
Or, sing, "Oh Come All Ye Faithful," by Hillsong (<https://youtu.be/xzG4OOCog2Y>)
- Journal Response: Jesus clearly reminds us that our love for God is affirmed by our obedience to Him. Take some time to write down ways in which you want to sacrificially obey God this week. Then take a moment and write out a prayer asking the Holy Spirit to help you and give you strength to sacrificially love and obey Jesus.
- Scripture Response: Read and memorize John 14:21  
*"Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."*
- Prayer: encourage your son or daughter to use their notebooks to record prayer requests for the family. In addition to family requests, include the following...
  - How can we pray for the church and believers around the world today as we wait for Christmas?
  - How can we pray for our own church and church family today?
  - How can we pray for one another, in this household, today? How can we pray for you?
  - CLOSE IN PRAYER.