

## Study Guide

Monday, December 7- Friday, December 11

**Monday, December 7. Read Luke 2:10-11.** Mondays always seem like slow days. We don't want to get up. We would rather call in sick or stay in bed late into the morning. Even our newspaper has very little to report on Monday. But our passage in Luke is all about GOOD NEWS!! Just what we need on a Monday. What is the Good News? A child is born. But not just any child. The Messiah. The Savior. Did the shepherds really know the extent that child would be their Savior? A better question is: Do we? This IS good news, but only if you know the rest of the story. So, is this GOOD NEWS FOR YOU?

**Tuesday, December 8. Read John 15:12.** Jesus reminds his disciples that he loves them in this verse. And then our most famous verse reminds us of how much God loves us. **Read John 3:16.** Read it in different translations and see if it brings to light something you haven't noticed before. Reflect on the following: God's love is a *protecting love*, but it's not always a *preventing love*. We all go through pain. God may allow pain to humble. God sometimes allows pain to restore us. Sometimes God allows pain to refine us. **Read Luke 15:11-32.** Can you see in the story how God humble, restored and refined the prodigal son?

**Wednesday, December 9. Read Romans 8:35-39.** These words were written to a church that was about to undergo terrible persecution. This passage reaffirms God's profound love for his people. It reminds us His is a protecting love and not a preventing love. These verses bring a comforting promise. As believers have gone through very difficult times, these verses point them back to being joined with Christ and it is impossible to be separated from Him. His death for us is proof of his unconquerable love. In Christ we are super-conquerors and his love will protect us from any of those forces we can't see with our human eye.

**Thursday, December 10. Read Matthew 1:23 and Psalm 139:7-12.** The Psalmist reminds us and Jesus' own name testifies to the fact that GOD IS WITH US. He is not above us. He is not below us. He is WITH us. What does this mean? It means God wants to identify with us. He is not some holier than thou who has never known what it's like to try to live a godly life on this earth. It is a big deal for us that God became LIKE one of us so he would be able to identify with us AND help us in our journey to be like Him!! The phrase "God is with us," also communicates that it is possible right now! How? Because of the Holy Spirit that dwells in each one of us. This means we are NEVER alone. And we NEVER face ANYTHING by ourselves. Believers in Christ ALWAYS have the Holy Spirit "with" them.

**Friday, December 11– Read Romans 8:31-34.** Have you ever thought that because you aren't good enough for God, he will not save you? Or you ever feel as if salvation is for everyone else but you? Then these verses are especially for you. If God gave his Son for you, he isn't going to hold back the gift of salvation! If Christ gave his life for you, he isn't going to turn around and condemn you! He will not withhold anything you need to live for him. And always remember, God is the one on the sidelines, in the stands, and walking beside you, cheering you on. Because He is FOR you and wants you to be everything He created you to be!!