

## **An Epiphany Journey with Jesus to Thrive in His Kingdom**

### **Session One: 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

“This is the only way to be sure we’re in God. Anyone who claims to be intimate with God ought to live the same kind of life Jesus lived.” (1 John 2:6 MSG)

Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy (1 Peter 1:8)

It was great to see 14 people online. We were Ian and Sonya Stocker, Nick and Sarah Jarrett-Kerr, Avril Chadwick, Kay Friend, Beth Ashton-Hilton, Wendy Reakes, Matthew Thomson, Francis Urwin, Margaret Morris (Glastonbury), Jonathan and Viv Haywood (Nempnett Thrubwell) and Gillian Durbin (Compton Martin, whose microphone sadly wasn’t working). Howard Worsley gave his apologies.

Our objectives for each session are to engage in deeper conversations and prayer. More specifically each session focusses on how each episode in Jesus’s life and ministry might

- Help us to know and experience the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge
- With the help of the Holy spirit, encourage us to live our lives as apprentices of Jesus
- Establish small steps that would lead quietly and surely to inner transformation

In our study time we also continue to use the signpost formula introduced to us by Howard.

- Is there something you wish to question?
- Is there something about which you wish to comment?
- Is there something to encourage us?
- Is there something to warn us?
- Is there something to help lead us to inner transformation?

After Introductions, we read Matthew 2:1-11, (The Magi celebrating the wonder of the Incarnation) and Luke 2:25-40. (Simeon and Anna recognising Jesus as the Messiah) In studying the Incarnation as the start of union with Christ we asked three focused questions

1. What the Incarnation means for us as apprentices and disciples of Jesus
2. What we learn from Christ becoming a helpless baby
3. How we think the Incarnation allows God to identify and empathise with us

The discussion brought out a number of themes:

- God, the creator of the world, allowing himself to be utterly helpless and reliant on others
- Jesus coming into our messy world and then living in us (“I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20)
- The helplessness of the baby; the emotion and love that Simeon felt on holding the baby Jesus can also be visualised by us as it also felt by us with grandchildren and babies . “Though we have not seen him, we love him” (1 Peter 1:8)
- The vulnerability of a baby; we should not be afraid to show our emotions and take them to the Lord - to be vulnerable as he allowed himself to be
- Trust in God, handing control over to Him. Trust as a watchword for 2021

- Joy and hope because of God's love for us (John 15)
- God's love in his created world and "matter"; we should enjoy the world in which we live.
- We should also remember to be playful and have fun in our own Rule of Life
- Jesus as an example of humility – in following Jesus as his apprentices, we should exemplify humility as well
- Placing these matters in our hearts as Rules of Heart as well as Rules of Life