**The Spirit of Christmas – part 1: “God with us!”**

**Leader’s notes**

**HOOK**

**1. When do you plan to celebrate Christmas this year?**

**2. Do you have any traditional foods you eat at Christmas?**

**3. What is the most significant tradition in your Christmas celebration?**

**4. When you think of “I’ll be home for Christmas”, what picture comes to your mind?**

**BOOK**

**Read Matt. 1:21**

**4. What’s the main purpose of Jesus coming to earth? (**To save us from our sin.)

**5. Were Mary and Joseph spared a lot of problems when they took on the role of Jesus’ parents?** (Just the opposite: they had to escape to Egypt, re-immigrated to Israel, tried to find a safe place to live, and lived with the pressure of raising God’s son who was destined to die.)

**6. Read Matt. 1:23 and Isaiah 7:14. What sign did God give King Ahaz 725 years before the birth of Christ?** (A virgin would have a child). **What’s the good news for us in the name “Immanuel, God with us”?**

**7. How do biblical prophecies that are fulfilled encourage us?** (God knows where the future is headed, and his prophetic words are reliable. They may take longer to be fulfilled than we’d like though.)

**8. Who is the primary focus of biblical prophecy? Read Luke 24:44 and Psalm 40:7,8.** (Jesus is #1; God’s children are #2).

**9. Agree or disagree: The final authority in all matters of faith and practice isn’t the Bible; it’s the Holy Spirit speaking through the Bible.**

**TOOK**

**10. Is there anything God has been speaking to you about that you find challenging to do?**

**11. How does the fact that God became man encourage us? Read Hebrews 4:16**

**12. What area of your life do you most need to remember that God is with you?**