



### **Christmas reminds us that:**

- God wants you to live with hope.

- Hope is a result of God with us.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13 (NIV)

- Hope will give you strength in life.

Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:31

Hope deferred makes the heart sick; but when dreams come true at last, there is life and joy. Proverbs 13:12 (TLB)

### **Detours:**

- Can cause you to experience fear.
- Can cause you to doubt yourself.
- Can cause you to question God.
- Can cause you to lose hope.

Matthew 2:16 (NLT)

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him." King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?" "In Bethlehem in Judea," they said... Matthew 2:1-5 (NLT)

..."Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!" Matthew 2:8 (NLT)

When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod. Matthew 2:12 (NLT)

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." That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, and they stayed there until Herod's death...Matthew 2:13-15 (NLT)

### **A few things from this part of the story...**

- Potholes can be expected.

I've told you all this so that trusting me, you will be unshakable and assured, deeply at peace. In this godless world you will continue to experience difficulties. But take heart! I've conquered the world." John 16:33 (MSG)

- Detours are for your protection.

The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.

Proverbs 16:9 (ESV)

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Psalm 32:8 (ESV)

Trust GOD from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for GOD's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. Proverbs 3:5-6 (MSG)

- God provides for off the grid experiences.

You can be sure that God will take care of everything you need, his generosity exceeding even yours in the glory that pours from Jesus.

Philippians 4:19 (MSG)

Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? Matthew 6:26 (NLT)

### **Insurance for Assurance:**

- Protection that's right for you.

The LORD will protect you from all harm; he will protect your life. Psalm 121:7 (NET)

- You're in good hands.

God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.

Psalm 46:1 (NLT)

- Guidance when you need it most.

Your own ears will hear him. Right behind you a voice will say, "This is the way you should go," whether to the right or to the left. Isaiah 30:21 (NLT)

- On your side.

For I hold you by your right hand— I, the LORD your God. And I say to you, 'Don't be afraid. I am here to help you. Isaiah 41:13 (NLT)

## **Have Questions? Text them to: (559)464-5754**

### **Here are some questions that can be used in Connection Groups:**

*These questions also work well for personal time with God.*

- Have you ever felt that your life was detoured? Explain.
- How do you think Mary and Joseph must have felt with their detour in life? (ex: fearful, questioning themselves, questioning God...)
- Is it difficult for you to accept that detours can be for your protection? Explain.
- God provided for Mary and Joseph during their "off the grid" experience. Have you ever experienced God's provisions while on a detour? Explain.
- How can we have hope during detours in life?
- Do the insurance slogans remind you of God's protection? Which of these slogans speaks most to you? Why?

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