

# TALKING POINTS

## CHRISTMAS 2020 - HOPE

### LEANING IN

Every December 25th, it seems like the whole world stops and celebrates the birth of this baby, Jesus. The unfortunate reality, though, is the celebration is often simply as far as they go. What the world loses sight of is the fact this baby came to save the people from their sins.

If history repeats itself, the greatest gift and truth of Christmas will go unclaimed - the reality of forgiveness of our sins through Jesus. Billions of people this year will stop for Christmas and they will celebrate with gifts and meals, and yet miss the most profound truth of Christmas - that God can save us from our sins.

So today, we celebrate the unexpected, the impossible, and the unexplained. Everything about Christmas is outside the norm of what we can expect or understand in the world. Yet God enacts miracles by suspending what *should* happen and by His intervention, produces what *will* happen - no matter how improbable to us.

Most importantly, Christmas is not the end of the story, it's the beginning. And the miracle of Jesus' birth is just the first of many miracles to come - which continue to this very day - if we are open to them. The miracle which God began on Christmas day would ultimately conclude with Jesus making a way for us to be cleansed of our sins and have peace with God.

Read Luke 1:26-31

How can we help others around us to see the *complete* miracle of Christmas?

### LIVING IT OUT

Since the very nature of Christmas is miraculous, to our minds it appears unexpected, impossible and unexplained. But these three aspects of the Christmas miracle reflect how God *often* works in our lives:

**God Does The Unexpected** - from His inconsequential place of birth, to His low station in the world, to His encounter with Paul on the road to Damascus, we can see through the life of Jesus how much God does the most amazing things in ways we least expect.

Read John 1:45, Acts 9:1-6

Can you share a time when God did something truly unexpected in your life?

**God Does the Impossible** - the greatest danger in the Church is *not* believing God is the God of the impossible. From His virgin birth to His empty tomb, God has given us evidences through the life of Jesus how *nothing* is impossible for Him - and how He can do much more than we can ask or think.

Read Luke 1:31-38, Mark 16:1-7

How can we learn to trust God more in the midst of "impossible" circumstances?

**God Does The Unexplained** - God's ways are above our ways and He is *still* in the "miracle business". We limit God's power in our lives when we don't leave the door open for Him to move in ways we don't understand or can't explain. God is far above all our limitations and we need to trust Him to do all He is capable of in our lives.

Read Matthew 1:21, Isaiah 55:8-9, Ephesians 3:20-21

How can we keep from becoming cynical regarding miracles in our day-to-day lives?