



LIFELINE Discussion Guide

Week of December 9, 2024

1. Pastor Ryan reported that the average resident of Pennsylvania makes about \$52,000 per year. However, the average 'state college' costs \$100k for a degree, and a 'private college' costs around \$200k. Why do you think many Gen-Z students are looking seriously at blue-collar options? Look these careers up on Google and see what the average wages are in Pennsylvania today for:

Welder -- Plumber -- Electrician - HVAC Technician - Automotive Technician

2. **Read Luke 1:26-56 as a group.** Who would have ever expected that Mary would be such a hotly contested figure in Christianity through the centuries. Explain these two opposing views and why they are out-of-balance with the Bible:
 - a. *Mary is a sinless, patron saint who is worthy of veneration and prayers.*
 - b. *Mary is a meaningless girl whom God only needed for a human womb.*
3. Do we have any indication that Mary was from a wealthy or esteemed family? What was her situation in life at the time of this angelic greeting? Why do you think God chose her?
4. When the Lord came calling, you'll remember that Moses made excuses, and Jonah ran away. How did Mary respond in verse 38? What application can you make from this to your life today? (see Romans 12:1 and 1 Cor. 15:58)
5. Look closely at verse 47. What implication(s) can we draw from Mary's statement about rejoicing "...in God my Savior"? Did Mary need a Savior after all? How would you explain to someone that Jesus isn't just "a Savior", but the Savior to be accepted personally by faith?
6. Mary's song is often called "The Magnificat". How would you summarize the content in your own words? What is the connection between Father Abraham, the Nation of Israel, and JESUS?
7. No matter what might be happening in your life at present, why is Christmas a season for gratitude and praise? How do people sometimes turn Christmas "inward" instead of "upward"? Explain your answer.
8. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the most-willing, how willing are you to surrender to God's direction when He moves on your heart to follow, obey, or serve? What are typical roadblocks to our surrender?

*Close with a time of group prayer on this theme:
Lord, let my availability open the door to Your possibility.*