

Carols

O Come Immanuel

Though not always seen or felt, God is always with us. The gift of Christmas is Jesus—Immanuel. Despite what we have faced this year or are currently facing, each day holds opportunities for us to receive the promise that God is with us. When we embrace that faithfulness of God to be with us, we do not lose heart and we remember the eternal glory to come that far outweighs all of our troubles.

GETTING STARTED

As a child, were you the kid who wanted to find out what presents you were getting or the one who wanted the joy of the surprise? Has that changed as you've grown older? Why or why not?

GO DEEPER

1. Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. What have you lost heart or hope in this year? Does it seem like your troubles are light and momentary? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think Paul referred to our troubles as light and momentary? How do troubles in your life “achieve for you an eternal glory that far outweighs them all?”
3. Read Matthew 1:23. In what areas of your life do you need to receive the promise that God is always with you?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. Tell of a time where your prayers were answered differently than you were hoping or believing for. Scripture shows us that though not always seen or felt, Immanuel, God, is always with us. How did God reveal His presence and faithfulness in the midst of an unexpected outcome?
2. Pastor David mentioned that anticipation, like an unwrapped Christmas gift, is part of our joy in the Lord. What are you currently waiting for or anticipating that you can find joy in?

PRACTICE IT NOW

Take time as a group to pray over the situations shared where each person needs to receive the promise that God is always with us. Pray for joy in each area where you are anticipating God to reveal Himself.

BLESS

As an opportunity to serve and bless someone with the promise of “Immanuel—God with us,” invite some people in need of the hope and promise of Jesus to the “Walk to Bethlehem” at the Abilene Zoo. Use this as an opportunity to also share your story of God’s hope and faithfulness to be with you.