

Light of the World



PART 3: It's Personal

INTRODUCTION

First-century Jews expected the arrival of a messiah. Scripture had recorded God's promise to provide them with a Savior. They believed that this messiah would be a political and military leader. He would save their culture by driving out the Roman Empire and making Israel a feared military power in the region once again. But when God orchestrated Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, he was up to something much bigger . . . and much more personal.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you could change one thing about the Christmas season, what would it be? Why?
2. Why do you think it's easier or more comfortable for people to think of Jesus as the Savior of all humanity than as their personal Savior?
3. Read John 3:16-17. In what ways does this passage reflect how God provided what we *actually* need instead of what we think we need?
4. "Yes, 'God so loved the world,' but he loved the world one person at a time." Is that difficult for you to believe? Why or why not?
5. What cultural or political issues do you find yourself wishing God would step in and solve? How do you think that desire influences the quality of your relationship with God for good or bad?
6. In what areas of your life—career, family, finances—are you tempted to "believe *that*" about God rather than "trust *in*" him? What is one thing you can do this week to put your trust in your heavenly Father? How can this group support you?

MOVING FORWARD

We think we need security and comfort. We think we need a life without conflict. We think we need the right job, a beautiful home, and a perfect family. In spite of what we think we need, God understands what we *actually* need: a personal Savior. That's why he sent his Son—Christ the Lord—to die for *your* sins and to give *you* hope by rising from the grave and conquering death.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

John 3:16-17