



**Sermon Discussion Guide**  
Advent 2019: God With Us  
Matthew 1:18-25  
Ronnie Garcia, December 15, 2019

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**Step 1: Reflect on the Text**

Read the Scripture printed above. What stands out to you? What do you find interesting and/or important? What is challenging or causes you to have questions?

**Step 2: Reflect on the Sermon**

INTRODUCTION

1. Jesus is "God with us." In the 90's Bette Midler wrote a song called, "From a Distance" which posits that God is watching us from a distance. Why is Christmas an affront to that vision of God?
2. What was your one, big takeaway from the sermon? How would you summarize the main theme of the sermon in one phrase or sentence?

THE PROCESS OF GIVING A NAME (vv. 20-21)

1. Citing the narrative of Adam naming the animals, we learn that in the Ancient Near East the person who names someone/something is not the owner. If naming was given to a manager or steward, then what is the significance of Jesus arriving with a pre-decided name? Have you ever thought that Jesus is charged with managing you? Developing you? What would that look like?

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NAME (vv. 21, 23, 25; cf. 1 Tim 2:5-6)

1. The name Jesus was the single most common name in Israel derived from "Joshua" (i.e. Salvation is of the Lord). This was significant in the sense that Jesus is very much one of us, who can represent us. At Christmas time, we can see the representative, without necessarily asking him to be *our* representative. Have you asked Jesus to represent you before God? Or, will you attempt to represent yourself with your good works?

**Step 3: Final Reflections**

1. If Jesus is our representative, what does God look for in order to accept us and bless us? Conversely, what do we look to, in order to feel secure in God's love?
2. How has your understanding, appreciation, and love for Jesus and the gospel grown as a result of this study?
3. In what areas of faith and practice are you feeling convicted by the Holy Spirit to act as a result of this study?