

Instructions:

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you pick 3-5 questions to discuss that pertain to your group's unique style and needs.

**Series: Draw Near**

Luke catches us up on all the fancy rulers of the day, listing off their network of connections and territories. He paints a landscape of power and social control. Yet, despite all of these mighty rulers—those who were most equipped to dictate messages to the masses—the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. Who? Where? Of all the people God could've chosen as a vessel for God's message, God chooses an offbeat, repentance preacher in the middle of nowhere. The irony surely was not lost on the early listeners of this story.

But we know who John son of Zechariah is. We know he is a miracle child, born strong in spirit from a situation of barrenness. We know his story parallels that of Christ. We know that he foretells good news of a world where the crooked will be made straight and the hills made smooth.

Perhaps this is where God's truth emerges: from the mouths of those we least expect, from the so-called "powerless," from those who lurk on the margins of society or power or the edges of our own lives.

Key Scripture: Luke 3:1-6; Luke 1:67-79

Questions based on this week's teaching:

1. What voices fill your ears right now? As you think back, what voices have shaped (or are shaping) your consciousness, your choices, and your perception of the world?
2. How do you define God's truth? What helps you discern what is true?
3. In your own life and our world, where are the voices of truth crying out from the wilderness? Are we listening to those cries?
4. In this season of truth-seeking, where will you draw near?
5. **Seek truth this week.** Spend time in scripture and prayer, making room for God's presence, word, and truth in your life.
6. **Optional: Read the attached poem through twice, pausing for a moment of silence in between.**

Draw near to truth by Sarah Are

Truth is like sand—
slipping through my fingers
every time I turn on the news.
So day after day, I gather the dust at my feet
and build sand castles of the world I want to see—
Sand castle cities with fair housing, no walls,
families united and a name like Love.

And when the waves threaten to tear them down,
I will rebuild.
For the truest thing I know is that
God is love,
and love is stronger than fear.

So at the end of the day, if you need me,
I'll be taking sand-soaked alternative truths
and turning them into sand castles of a better world—
A world rooted in love,
which I will keep building
until "love," and "truth" and "God" all sound like synonyms.

Questions of reflection:

What speaks to you in this poem?
What is the world you'd like to see?
Where do you see the truth of God's Kingdom emerging?