



Discussion Guide for “The Bright Sadness”

O Christmas Tree Week 3

It can be hard for us to know how to navigate the complex experiences of the holidays. For some, it’s a time of great joy; for others, struggle and sadness. Advent offers us a unique avenue into these spaces by inviting us to confront pain and disillusionment with hope. How can we wait in the bright sadness for God’s arrival?

Scriptures for Further Reading

Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Luke 3:7-18; Philippians 1:3-11

[Click here](#) to read all scriptures

Passage for Sacred Reading:

Sacred Reading is a way of reading Scripture with an eye toward transformation, not just information. You can find a [step-by-step guide here](#). The passage for this week’s sacred reading is [Luke 3:7-18](#).

Questions for Discussion

1. Growing up, was Christmas a source mainly of positive or negative experiences?
2. Share a time your expectations or experiences surrounding Christmas caused conflict with those you love.
3. Return to Zephaniah 3. What expectations did God’s people have that weren’t being met? How did God engage those expectations?
4. Tom claimed that Advent is a unique vehicle for us to engage the swirl of emotions and experiences of this season. What did he mean by that?
5. What would it take for you to sit in silence this week and listen?