



Gilead Lake Group
Sunday 6:30 p.m.

Hosts: Tyson and Lisa Franks
867 Gilead Lake Road, Bronson
Contact: David Minard
(517)756-8000

Bronson "B" Group
Thursday 6:30 p.m.

Hosts: Evert and Linda Smith
896 Pleasant Hill Road, Bronson
Contact: Jim Wickey
(517) 369-6229

Coldwater Group
Monday 7:00 p.m.

Hosts: Matt and Kendra Siefken
776 Union City Road, Coldwater
Contact: Scott Carpenter
(517) 278-3376

Youth Study Group
Thursday 6:30 p.m.

Hosts: Bidwells
617 Gilead Lake Drive, Bronson
Contact: Sharon McMeen
(517) 227-7540

Bronson "A" Group
Wednesday 6:00 p.m.

Hosts: Solano and Jennie deAraujo
974 Dewsenberry Road, Bronson
Contact: Frank Cabrera
(517) 369-9783

East Gilead Group
Thursday 6:30 p.m.

Location: BGCC
Contact: Brandon Carpenter
(989) 277-5988

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Small Group Discussion Guide

Week of December 3, 2017

Open your group with a time of sharing and prayer.

This week we are going to look at “Countering Lies that Destroy Lives of Today’s Youth.” The key is to examine those lies that destroy lives without being distracted by fantasies that fascinate children’s imaginations. As we approach the Holiday Season there are many stories about Christmas to accommodate this once pagan holiday.

While it is true the early church took a pagan holiday and made it its own, the virgin birth and the Old Testament prophecies surrounding Christ are worth celebrating.

The current sting and out-right hurt many Americans are experiencing has more to do with a cultural shift. The folklore of Christmas is returning to its pagan origin. Two unequally yoked beliefs are splitting. In some ways it’s similar to a messy divorce. The once happy marriage Christians had with their national heritage has now made its way to the courts of public opinion. Who is going to get custody of Christmas? Will visitation be split between the two families? Will Xmas, as it has been shorten to, change its last name to Happy Holidays so not to offend the “other side?” Or will Christians simply give up the illegitimate Holiday? Many have done just that, while others celebrate both the fun of folklore and Glory of God sending His only begotten son into the world, born of a virgin.

- I. Read the glorious salutations given to Mary ([Luke 1:28](#)). She is visited by Gabriel to give a message from God. Note “*you are highly favored,*” meaning you have done nothing deserving of God’s great blessing. Are we not the same? How are we deserving of God’s favor? Read Mary’s response and discuss what ways we can echo her proclamation ([Luke 1:46-55](#)). Mary marveled in God her savior and accepted as good God’s promise ([v. 38](#)). Today’s youth need to hear Mary’s humble acceptance of God’s blessing, her acknowledging she was not deserving. In like fashion, regardless of how good we might be, we are undeserving of God’s blessings upon our lives. According to Jesus, He will send, not a great angel as is Gabriel, but the Holy Spirit to breath fully into our hearts new life. Read [Romans 5:5](#); [Genesis 2:7](#); [Galatians 4:6](#) and comment.
- II. It is interesting the contrasts between Santa who gives gifts to well deserving children and God who gives *the gift* to undeserving mankind. Both keep lists. Who should most people actually want as their judge; Santa who shows no mercy (*Ho Ho Ho*) or God who forgives? The only deserving present Santa gives are lumps of coal to be used to stoke an already hot fire. The news the angels delivered to the shepherd “*keeping watch over their flocks at night,*” was “*be not afraid.*” Read [Luke 2:1-20](#) and discuss why the shepherds were so happy.
- III. Next and/or finally are those who came from afar looking for the “*One born King of the Jews.*” They were a bit late, otherwise they might had run into the shepherds. However, they did find Jesus in a Bethlehem house (Read [Micah 5:2](#)). Regardless of such differences between folklore and the actual account, those who sought Him found Him. Read [Matthew 2:1-9](#). An important lesson these Magi have taught us can be summarized in Jesus’ own words ([Matt. 7:6-8](#)).

Close by giving thanks to God for a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the birth of Christ. Ask God to give parents and others wisdom in raising today’s youth.



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