

# THE TEARS OF CHRISTMAS

Matthew 2:13-18

PAT NEMMERS

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The questions below are designed to be used by Saylorville Church Cell Groups as they meet during the week following the Sunday morning message at Saylorville. The intent is not for groups to answer every question, but for leaders to use the questions as a guide as they tailor the discussion to the unique needs of their group. The Sunday message and these questions can be found each week at [www.saylorvillechurch.com/sermons](http://www.saylorvillechurch.com/sermons).

## CONNECT WITH YOUR GROUP (10-15 MINUTES)

- Are you traveling over the Christmas season? If so, where are you going? How will you get there? Are you looking forward to the trip?
- Try to imagine being Joseph and Mary as they traveled to Egypt with Jesus. Brainstorm with your group - what might have been some of the thoughts or feelings they had during their experience.

## APPLY THE BIBLE (45-60 MINUTES)

- **Remember** what you talked about last week. Anything you need to follow up on as a group?
- **Review** the notes you took on Sunday. What is **one thing** that sticks out to you about what you heard?
- **Read** Matthew 2:13-18. In his message, Pastor Pat gave us **reasons to take heart this Christmas**.
- **vs. 13a** - Joseph is told by God to flee with his family to Egypt while Herod tries to destroy Jesus.
  - Have there been times in your life when you knew God was telling you to “flee” from a place, a person, or a tempting situation? Talk about one or two of those times.
  - During those times, do you tend to believe God is protecting you from something, or keeping you from something you really want? Why do you think that?
- **vs. 13b** - Pastor said, “If your times are in God’s hands, your timetables should be too.”
  - Are you a planner? Does your planning ever cross the line into taking things into your own hands?
  - How does the rest of Scripture help us understand that *your obedience is more important than your plans*?
  - What would it look like this week if you put your timetable and your plans into God’s hands?
- **vss. 16-18** - Herod killed all the baby boys in Bethlehem under two years old trying to destroy Jesus.
  - Christmas can be a time of tears for many people. Are there reasons that you experience sadness, hurt, or tears at Christmas? Share those reasons (and even the tears) with your group.
  - It’s not wrong to have tears at Christmas. John Piper said, “When there are simple, straightforward jobs to be done, and you are full of sadness, and tears are flowing easily, go ahead and do the jobs with tears.” Psalm 126:5-6.
  - Have you ever talked to your tears? What will you say to yourself this Christmas when the tears come?

## If you love Jesus, you can take heart this Christmas:

- a. *He knows your plight* - He knows you in your affliction (Psalm 31)
- b. *He hears your pleas* - God hears you, even though He may not respond the way you want
- c. *He feels your pain* - He knows you, and He cares for you through your pain
- d. *He is sanctifying your person* - God never leaves us, but He never promises a hurt-free life.
- e. *He is preparing you for perfection* - Pain on earth reminds us too long for Heaven

***The Captain of your soul is also the Capturer of your tears.***

## PRAY TOGETHER (5-15 MINUTES)

- Comfort those in your group who may be hurting a little more during this Christmas season.

