

**DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?
SHEPHERDS
WEEK 3: DISCUSSION GUIDE**

READ

This week Scott talked about the shepherds in the Christmas story. These were uncivilized country folk. They were not accepted, included, or trusted by the rest of society. In spite of this, God chose them to be the first recipients of the greatest birth announcement of all time. The outcasts became the guests of honor. The nobodies became the VIPs.

This is at the heart of what Christmas is all about. You matter to God. He doesn't care about if you are on the inside, outside, upside, or downside. With Jesus there is no longer an in crowd or an out crowd. Everybody is loved and accepted and invited to participate in what He is doing.

Scott contrasted this idea to the Roman way of life that serves as a backdrop for this story. In the ancient world that Jesus was born into, you had to be a free Roman citizen to be on the inside.

Today we can still feel like outsiders at times. And sadly, as Christ followers, we can often make others feel like outsiders.

DISCUSS

Tell us about a time when you felt like an outsider. It could be an instance when you weren't invited, felt excluded, or just didn't feel like you fit in.

What is your emotional response when you feel like you are on the outside?

Do you think that we do anything at church; intentionally or unintentionally, that can make visitors feel like outsiders? If so, can you think of an example?

Is there a place in your life where you presently feel like an outsider?

Is there someone in your life who may feel like an outsider? What can you do to make that person feel included?

PRAY

Thank God for the fact that Jesus includes everyone of us. Pray that we will understand that we matter to God and that to Him we are insiders, no matter how we may feel. Pray that we will reach out to marginalized people, and those who need to know that they matter to God. Pray that as a church, and as individuals, outsiders will matter to us.