

UPSTATE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Light of the World

December 1

Isaiah 9:1-7

Things to Know

Jingle Jam

December 4 - Click Here for Details!

Christmas Coffee House

December 6-7 - Click Here for Details!

Christmas Night of Worship

December 15 - Click Here for Details!

Studying God's Word In Community

Reminder. Seek to understand and apply God's word, **not** rehash the sermon.

Read

Read Isaiah 9:1-7 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
- What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?
- Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
- What do you need help understanding about this passage?

Sermon Recap

- Christians do not celebrate Christmas like the rest of the world does. We must elevate our celebration of Christmas because we understand the true meaning of Christmas.
- Darkness is the descriptive state of the world in which we live.
- Christmas is more than a holiday; it is the promise of hope in the midst of darkness.
- Hope will not come from the earthly realm. Real hope has to come from outside this broken world.
- God's solution to a world in darkness comes in the form of a child born to us and given by God, whose name is Jesus.

Discussion Questions

- 1. **Hope in Darkness**: Isaiah 9:2 speaks of people walking in darkness and seeing a great light. How does this imagery resonate with the story of Christ's birth, and how can it encourage us during difficult or dark times today?
- 2. **Names of the Messiah**: Isaiah 9:6 gives the Messiah titles like "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father," and "Prince of Peace." Which of these names stands out to you the most during the Christmas season, and why?
- 3. **Joy and Celebration**: In Isaiah 9:3, the increase of joy is likened to harvest celebrations. How does Christmas bring a similar sense of joy, and how can we share that joy with others?
- 4. **Peace and Justice**: Verse 7 speaks of the Messiah's reign, bringing endless peace and justice. In what ways does Christmas remind us of the peace Christ offers, and how can we reflect His justice and righteousness in our lives?
- 5. **Fulfillment of Prophecy**: Isaiah 9:1-7 was written long before Christ's birth, yet it points directly to Him. How does this prophecy strengthen your faith in God's plan and the significance of Jesus' birth at Christmas?

Scripture

Isaiah 9:1-7

1 Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—

2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

3 You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.

4 For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.

5 Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom,

establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Living on Mission In Community

Before you close the group, answer this question:

How is God leading me to respond to His Word this week?

Christmas is the ultimate reminder of what the gospel truly is. Humanity dwells in deep darkness and unimaginable need. There is nothing we can do to solve our problems, so God sends his Son, Jesus Christ, to do what we cannot do for ourselves. This is light in the darkness. How is God calling you to show his light this Christmas season?

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

- 1. How did you feed yourself?
 - (What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)
- 2. How did you feed others?
 - (How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)
- 3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - (What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)

Leader Resources

If you are a leader and would like extra resources or a full curriculum guide, **CLICK HERE.**

