

Christmas Series

Scripture and Background Information for December 6-12.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

This week we'll start our new Christmas series. While we as a church prepare a special celebration every weekend, we will focus on Jesus, the center of Christmas and how His birth provides those things we most want in this world.

Background for Isaiah 9:6-7:

Isaiah was a prophet in a difficult time. He faced the serious threat of the ancient world power Assyria as it was about to run over Judah and take the people captive. The people of Israel lived in rough, harsh, and dark times (Isaiah 8:22). There was not only physical darkness but also spiritual. Immorality and secularity ruled the nation. Isaiah, the prophet, served in these hard times.

Isaiah's message was a message of judgment for immorality and injustice. Nevertheless, his message also included light for the future. Our text speaks of future hope in which God would bring future peace. Isaiah prophesizes the one, Jesus, who would bring eternal peace. Christmas happened so that people could not only live life in eternal peace with each other but also have peace with God. As God, Jesus will build his kingdom and rule the whole world. Although Judah found itself in dark times, the light was on the horizon.

Some questions to engage with the text:

1. When Isaiah speaks of future hope, how does he describe it?
2. When Isaiah speaks of the future child to be born, he also speaks of Christ's deity and role as Prince of Peace. God gave a gift, his Son. On Christmas, we follow God's example and give Christmas gifts. Having God's example in view, what is the real purpose of Christmas?
3. What is the driving force for future peace?

Note: Even if you find yourself in rough, harsh, and dark times, Christ brought light! He offers everyone eternal peace. God gave His special gift on the first Christmas. Today, people need Him more than anything else!

Scriptures for upcoming weeks:

December 13-19

Ruth