

*Third Sunday in Advent ~ December 16, 2012*



***Life Group & Family  
Discussion Guide***

***“A Light Has Dawned”***

**Isaiah 9:1-7**

During this third week of Advent we will reflect upon Isaiah’s prophecy of a divine Son who would be called “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

The miracle of Christmas is that Jesus, the Son of God, came not to a righteous, obedient people, but to a “people walking in darkness.” When we were “living in the land of the shadow of death,” God pursued us and took the punishment we deserved. He would have been perfectly just to let us go our own merry way to hell, but he didn’t. He so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, so that whoever put their trust in him would not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

Enjoy meditating this week on Jesus, the Light of the world!



## **DISCUSS WITH YOUR LIFE GROUP:**

1. **Read Isaiah 9:1-7.** What is significant about God's promise of hope to the people of Zebulun and Naphtali?

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2. **Read Matthew 4:12-17.** Why did Jesus choose Nazareth as the place of his upbringing and Galilee as the site of much of his ministry?

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3. What was the reason for the sad state of affairs in Israel during Isaiah's lifetime?

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4. How does Gideon's victory over the Midianites in Judges 6-7 point to the greater victory of Christ in the New Covenant?

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5. Share one benefit you receive from knowing that Jesus Christ is your:

- Wonderful Counselor
- Mighty God
- Everlasting Father
- Prince of Peace

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6. What worries you about the state of things in our nation today? What does Isaiah 9:7 say to those worries?

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7. How do you see God's heart for the nations in this week's passage?

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## **DISCUSS WITH YOUR FAMILY:**

If you are using an Advent wreath, light three candles (representing Hope, Love, and Joy), read Isaiah 9:1-7 out loud, and use the following ideas to help you worship at home this week:

1. Have each member of the family draw a picture that represents, for him or her, JOY.
2. Write your fears on a piece of paper. Now, with a magic marker, write one of the four titles given to Jesus in Isaiah 9:6 in big letters across the paper, tear the paper into pieces and throw it in the wastebasket. Believe that the Son of God drives out fear!
3. Discuss – If you had the power to change one thing about how Americans celebrate Christmas, what would you do?
4. By now you have probably received some Christmas cards. Pass them out to family members and pray for the people who sent them to you. Pray that they will experience the joy of Christ's coming.
5. Turn out all the lights and make the room as dark as you can. Talk together about how darkness feels. What fears and insecurities do you have in the darkness? What did Jesus do to dispel our darkness? Turn on a flashlight or light a candle and spend some time thanking God for sending his Son to earth.

# **SERMON NOTES**