

Talk It Over

Hope On The Horizon
(Week 3)
Light Is Reaching For You

SMALL TALK

1. When were you in need of, or grateful for, a flashlight?
2. When have you gotten up early to greet the sunrise?
3. What “dawn of a new day” are you anticipating on this year's calendar?

VIEWPOINT

4. **READ Isaiah 8:19-21.** Who will NOT “have the light of dawn” and why? Who will and why?
5. **READ Isaiah 9:1-7.** What suddenly changes the distressing darkness of Isaiah 8, removing its gloom? What surprising place will be honored by the “great light” described?
6. To what do we owe the rejoicing and hope described? (9:6)
7. What is mysterious about the grand figure of Isaiah 9:6-7? List each of the phrases describing him, then explain the mystery? (Hint: the New Testament affirms that this describes Jesus).

GETTING PERSONAL

8. How does a closer look at Jesus help you?
9. The song goes, “Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright”, does that describe your experience this season? Or is it not calm, not bright, and God seems silent? How can we pray for you?

PRACTICE!

1. What are you grateful for?
2. What is something God has been showing you this week (in His Word or some other way)?
3. About the people you are interacting with who do not yet follow Jesus, how can we join you in prayer?
4. What is keeping you from having a better answer to questions a - c?

December 20, 2020

Hope on the Horizon

3-Light is reaching for you

Some of us remember the “not very insta-gram” we used to call Christmas cards. A picture of a mountain cabin in a white Christmas comes to mind—the only white Christmas we experience is on those cards. Some photos do such a great job warming our hearts and reminding us that life is good.

[INSERT PICTURE]

My dog and “granddogs” after playing hard in the snow. Can’t you just feel the peace and warmth? I do.

What do you do when you live in a world you can’t quite escape, but you are hoping for a world you can’t quite create?

Christmas is about how Jesus was sent to create for us that life we are hoping for.

*Prophesied: 734 BC
Isaiah 9:1-2 & 9:6-7
Fulfilled: Matthew 1:18-23*

Isaiah 9:1–2 (NIV) 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.

Isaiah 9:6–7 (NIV) 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.

*Matthew 1:18–23 (NIV) This is how **the birth of Jesus the Messiah** came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.²¹ She will give birth to a son, **and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.**”²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: [Isaiah 7:14]²³ **“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”** (which means “God with us”).*

I. **Clearly, The MESSIAH will deliver us!**

Although Isaiah's prophecy is filled with unsolved mysteries until the coming of Jesus, that didn't mean everything was unclear to them. Everyone understood clearly that this prophecy was about the long expected coming Messiah / Christ / Anointed King.

*Isaiah 9:7 (NIV) ...**He will reign on David's throne** and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness ...*

This had been prophesied for centuries. But the unsolved mysteries here were new! And confusing to people. Why didn't God make it MORE clear?

These mysteries made the fulfillment possible. Hard hearted people would reject their Messiah.

II. **Mysteriously, God's deliverance is connected to a CHILD**

Isaiah 9:6 (NIV) For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,...

God's answer to the bullies swaggering through history is not to become an even bigger bully. His answer comes as a humble child.

III. Who is called **GOD**

Isaiah 9:6 (NIV) 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.

Why is this *born child* also called a *son that is given*? How can a child be called *Mighty God*? How can a child be called *Everlasting Father*?

Answer: Because the SON of GOD was given in flesh.

Mystery solved: The virgin born son of Mary was a “*child born*”, but the one and only divine *Son of God* who was with God from eternity past was a “*a son given*”! He never had a beginning, nor will he have an end, even though in his humanity he had a birth and a death! He came to us in the flesh at Christmas, but he reigned from eternity past, and reigns victorious for eternity.

The New Testament is consistent to present Jesus as fully man and fully God.

John 1:1–5 (NIV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

John 1:14 (NIV) The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

*God is reaching for you!
He gave his one and only Son.
He held nothing back and gave his all.*

This Christmas let's make sure we do not get stuck on the peaceful picture of the babe in the manger, let's get the big picture, the grand forever picture of majesty! What Christmas brings is FAR bigger than a nativity set can picture in a manger scene!

Isaiah 9:6 (NIV) 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.

The government will be on his shoulders

Jesus came and preached his coming Kingdom. Government of that kingdom is on his shoulders! He is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and LORD of lives.

Are you still trying to govern your own life all by yourself? How is it going...really? Don't you think it is time to let the King of all lives who has demonstrated his faithful love to govern and manage your little kingdom as well? He can handle governing your life much better than you have governed it without him.

He is the Wonderful Counselor

Do you have problems, can I recommend to you that you go see my counselor. He is really wonderful. I was so messed up, but he has helped me tremendously. I don't have it all together yet. In fact I unashamedly admit to you and let you in on a little secret. I go see my wonderful counselor everyday. Without him I can do nothing. You see, I know I'm messed up, but Jesus totally believes that's all over now, and he is showing me how life works in every way! Jesus loves me and knows me better than I love and know myself.

All this because he is Wonderful! I mean beyond imagination kind of wonderful.

He is Mighty God, and Everlasting Father

Colossians 2:9 (NIV) For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,

Isaiah 9:6 (NIV) 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.

He is the Prince of Peace

Jesus holds the key to peace, whether it's personal peace in your heart, relationship peace in your home, eternal peace with God in heaven—Jesus Christ is the key to your peace.

Do you have peace in your heart? Are you at peace with God, yourself, and the other important relationships in your life?

No matter how secure you feel, how much money you have, or how much “happiness” you squeeze into your day, if you don't seek Jesus you will not have peace. Wise men still seek him!

John 14:1 (NIV) “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.

This is an audacious claim! Except for one thing: Jesus brought all the credentials worthy of All our trust. He predicted his own death and resurrection!

“I'm all in”!

John 14:27 (NIV) Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 16:33 (NIV) “*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*”

There is Hope On The Horizon for you. The light is even now reaching for you! Will you reach out to him today? Hand over to him the weight of government over your kingdom. Will you make a commitment to see your wonderful counselor Jesus every day? He changed my life, he can change yours too, starting today!