WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Joy to the World, Hark the Herald, O Come All Ye Faithful

WELCOME

This Christmas. How is your Christmas different from last year to this year?

WORD

ISAIAH 1:6

[6]*For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.*

THE WONDER OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a great time to talk about Jesus. As followers of Christ, we must take this opportunity to share the gospel to give a proper context and meaning to this season. Gift-giving during Christmas is fine but our primary focus should be on the wonder of Christmas – Jesus.

To wonder is to marvel and to say, wow! The gift of wonder is the ability to be amazed at both the small and big things. It is seeing more when others see less. To wonder is the beginning of worship because worship is to marvel in our awesome God.

THE WONDER OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT
(LUKE 2:8–10)

The announcement of the birth of Christ was given to shepherds who were the lowliest people during that time. But the Lord in His wisdom, chose to announce the message of Christ's birth not to kings and the wealthy but to shepherds. This is to let the whole world know that the good news is not just for the select few but for people from all walks of life.

The wonder of the announcement is the **good news** of **great joy** for **all people**. God is on our side and He wants all of us to be joyful and not to be afraid.

Somebody once said that Christians should be the happiest people on earth. In spite of what happens in the world, we still have every reason to be joyful. This is because God in His sovereign wisdom revealed to us the true meaning of Christmas.

THE WONDER OF THE NAME OF JESUS
(LUKE 2:11)

The wonder of Christmas is Jesus Himself. Jesus was born for us a **Savior** who is **Christ** the **Lord**.

A historian, who is not even a Christian, said that Jesus is irrevocably the very center and easily the most dominant figure in history.

If Jesus had not been born, women and children will remain marginalized, but Jesus radically elevated their status in society and in history.

Followers of Jesus pursued His teachings. Christians established orphanages, hospitals and schools. The first book which the students read was the Bible and the chief learning objective of schools was to know Jesus and God in the context of eternal life. The first universities in the world were notably Christian schools. Christians also influenced the government. In fact, the U.S. and British constitutions that respect human rights were founded on Judeo Christian ethics.

If Jesus had not been born, this would be a dark world to live in. Sadly today, many people no longer wonder at the amazing truth of the Christ in Christmas. They want the blessing of Christmas but not Christ Himself.

THE WONDER OF FULFILLED PROPHECY
(ISAIAH 9:6)

Jesus is the reason for the season. He is born for us the Savior to save us from our sin.

Jesus is the fulfilment of the prophecy. Old Testament prophecy tell us that we have all gone astray as sheep, but God has caused all our sins to fall unto Him (**Isaiah 53:5**). A virgin will conceive a son, and she will call Him "Immanuel" (**Isaiah 7:14**). Unto us a child will be born, a son will be given to us, and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace (**Isaiah 9:6**).

WORD (cont'd)

Christmas took place to fulfill the prophecy about Jesus our Savior (**Matthew 1:22–23**). The earliest prophecy about the Messiah is found in **Genesis 3:15**, that there will be an enmity between the seed of the devil and the seed of a woman, who is Jesus, born of a virgin.

According to Bible scholars, more than 350 prophecies from birth to the resurrection of Jesus have been fulfilled. The law of probability of all these prophecies being fulfilled in one person is 1 to 17th power, which is close to impossible. However, they were all divinely fulfilled and proven with historical facts.

The greatest problem of humanity is sin. The power of sin is so real and irresistible. Sin will blind us and slowly but surely destroy us if we do not turn away from it. But God so loved us that He sent a Savior to save us from our biggest problem of sin.

The central message of Christmas is the love of God to all of us. If we remove Jesus from Christmas, we are in big trouble. But as we meditate on the wonder of Christmas, we will find ourselves in awe of Jesus, the Son of God, Christ our Lord and Savior who is the reason for the celebration of Christmas.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. **The Christ of Christmas.** Who is the Person of Christmas according to **Isaiah 9:6**? How real is He to you?
2. **Merry Christmas.** Why do you greet people "Merry Christmas"? What does it really mean?
3. **It's the Most Wonderful Time.** How will you make this Christmas season become the most wonderful time of 2017 for you as a committed follower of Christ?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Christmas is the best time to share the love of God through Jesus. Seize the opportunity this season to share the wonder of Christmas during parties, reunions, and other social gatherings. Make a relevant and practical summary for each: *the wonder of the announcement, the wonder of the name of Jesus, or the wonder of fulfilled prophecy,* that other people will understand.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. **Thanksgiving**
   - Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. **Country and the World**
   - Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
   - Repentance and Salvation

III. **Church**
   - That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
   - Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
   - Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. **CCF Facilities**
   - Worship and Training Center
   - Prayer Mountain

V. **Personal Concerns**
   - Deeper intimate relationship with God
   - Righteous living
   - Salvation of family and friends