

## WORSHIP

Suggested worship songs: Joy of the Lord, For unto Us a Child is Born/Open My Eyes Lord, Emmanuel God with Us, Holy Forever, O Come All Ye Faithful/His Name Shall Be

## WELCOME

What do Christmas lights remind you of?

## WORD

### Isaiah 9:1-7

<sup>1</sup>But there will be no *more* gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make *it* glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

<sup>2</sup>The people who walk in darkness  
Will see a great light;  
Those who live in a dark land,  
The light will shine on them.

<sup>3</sup>You shall multiply the nation,  
You shall increase their gladness;  
They will be glad in Your presence  
As with the gladness of harvest,  
As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

<sup>4</sup>For You shall break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders,  
The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian.

<sup>5</sup>For every boot of the booted warrior in the *battle* tumult,  
And cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>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.

<sup>7</sup>There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace,  
On the throne of David and over his kingdom,  
To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness  
From then on and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

Darkness is sad but light brings joy! Jesus Himself said that He is the Light of the world and those who follow Him will have the "Light of life" (**John 8:12**). One of the worst kind of darkness is not the physical kind, but a spiritual one. There are those who are in darkness but don't even know it! Only Jesus can bring us from darkness to light when we come to Him. These three things give us confident about that:

### **PAST PROMISES**

Why was the prophet Isaiah talking about a "great light" that will shine on the nation of Israel 700 years before Jesus was even born? The prophecy was given at a dark time --- Assyrian invaders were going come and conquer Israel and exile its people. God allowed this to happen because the Israelites have turned away from God. But God promised a great light to shine on those living in darkness (misery, destruction, death, ignorance, sorrow, wickedness). This describes not only Israel then, but also all people today who are living without Christ. Jesus alone can take you out of darkness into His light. God's promise was fulfilled when Jesus came 700 years after the prophecy. Corruption in our country makes us all feel that we are living in dark times! Even the church is experiencing darkness as we see persecution against Christians rise all over the world. Scandals in the church and a slowdown in the growth rate of Christianity, we also face darkness from within. On an individual level, addictions, disintegration of family, depression, sickness, financial crisis gives us a personal experience of darkness. Jesus referred to an even greater darkness called the "outer darkness", a realm utterly removed from God's blessing and fellowship, highlighting ultimate exclusion, shame, and irreversible judgment (**Matthew 25:30**). That is the darkness that Jesus ultimately came to save us from, but He also came to address the darkness we're living in this world. Hope has a name --- JESUS. The light that Jesus brings is God's presence, moral and spiritual enlightenment and the salvation of our souls (**Isaiah 9:2**). When the light comes on after a brownout, everybody rejoices! Isaiah wrote about the gladness (pleasure, delight, exceeding joy) that people will feel because of the light that Jesus brings (**Isaiah 9:3**). That sounds like...Christmas! The real happiness of Christmas is Christ. Way back in Isaiah's time, people relied largely on their harvests to survive. Their gladness came from having children (multiplying the nations), a good harvest, and victory over their enemies (**Isaiah 9:4-5**).

### **PRESENT BLESSINGS**

The Messiah that was promised in Isaiah was given different names (**Isaiah 9:6**):

Wonderful	Marvelous, majestic, miraculous
-----------	---------------------------------

Counselor	One who will advise, resolve, guide
Mighty God	Powerful, champion, the Almighty
Everlasting Father	Representing the eternal fatherliness of God
Prince of Peace	Captain, keeper of "shalom"

Today, we get to experience blessings because of how wonderful Jesus is. But our tendency is to lose our reverence of God. We need to regain and cultivate a sense of awe like what children have even about the simplest little things (**Psalms 33:8-9**). He is our Counselor when we lack and need wisdom for decisions (the knowledge and practice of a godly and. Upright life) (**James 1:5**). Though not all of us may hear God's voice audibly, He will guide us when need His counsel (**Isaiah 30:21**). Jesus is mighty God --- that Jesus IS God is an essential doctrine of the Christian faith, something to die for! All things came into being through Jesus...in Him was life, the Light of men (**John 1:1-4**). Jesus did not only create the universe, He is also the one who holds all things together (**Colossians 1:16-17**). He's the one who can put the broken pieces of your life together. What does it mean that Jesus is the "Everlasting Father"? Jesus reflects the glory of God; He is the exact representation of God the Father: Jesus is fully God and fully man (**Hebrews 1:3**). This means that when we are in an intimate relationship with Him, it is as close as His intimate relationship with the Heavenly Father (**John 10:14-15**). Finally, Jesus is our Prince of Peace. "Shalom" is the Hebrew word for peace here it means completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, reconciliation with God; peace with others; peace with oneself. The most important of shalom is that we now have peace with God because of Jesus (**Romans 5:1**). But even believers in Jesus need the peace He gives when we are troubled and fearful, and that's why Jesus gives us His kind of peace (**John 14:27**).

### **FUTURE GLORY**

How do we know that all these promises will continue on for eternity? We can be confident because God himself will accomplish it, and Jesus will reign forever (**Isaiah 9:7**)! Jesus alone will be our light in His heavenly kingdom, our home for eternity (**Revelation 21:22-23**). As for us, Jesus taught that we are the light of the world and must take every opportunity to share Christ to people (**Matthew 5:14, 16**). Not everyone has a public platform, but all of us can reach one person at a time with the gospel. And if you yourself need God's light in your life, ask Jesus to bring you from darkness into light (**Genesis 1:1-3**)! Turn on the light of Christ through your life and be the light to others this Christmas and for all seasons. A blessed and bright Merry Christmas, everyone!

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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

1. How have you experienced being brought from darkness to light by Jesus?
2. How has Jesus been any of these in your life: Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace?
3. What will you do to let people know about Jesus, the Light of the world?

## WORKS

### PRAY CARE SHARE

### IN ACTION

Pray for the light of Christ to shine brightly this season in the lives of your loved ones through your witness. Share the gospel to everyone you have the opportunity to do so as we celebrate the birth of Christ this holiday season. Let them know about the true Light of Christmas—Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

## 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; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For legislators to promote and support bills and laws aligned with God's Word.
- PRAY for the protection, safety and release of kidnapped American Christian missionary, Kevin, serving in Niger (West Africa). For God to turn the hearts of the kidnappers to repentance and salvation. Peace and comfort for Kevin's family.
- Pray for persecuted Christians in Sudan and Nigeria) --- many have been beheaded and murdered; earnestly seek God's intervention to stop the bloodshed. Pray for freedom from oppression, that God's word and His people bring them comfort and hope.
- PRAISE God that the rest of the living Israeli hostages have been restored to

their families safely! Continue to pray that the last remaining dead hostage will be returned to his family for burial.

- For Israel's war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory. For Jewish people worldwide who are experiencing a surge of antisemitism such as in the Bondi Beach (Sydney, Australia) terrorist attack; may this lead them to the Messiah, Jesus as they turn to God for help and comfort.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.

### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God, and make disciples
- For elders, pastors, deacons, and families to become holy, humble, harmonious, happy, and heart-working)
- For ministries and church expansions worldwide.

### IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain (MMRC)

### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper and intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends

## MEMORY VERSE

### Isaiah 9:6

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.

