

Sermon Discussion Guide

The Promise of Christmas: Week 1

Prayer

Take a few moments at the beginning and end of your group time to pray for each other and for your discussion in God's Word.

Read

Isaiah 9:1-2; Matthew 4:12-17; John 1:1-9

Main Ideas

This week, we kicked off our Advent series, The Promise of Christmas. Throughout this month, we'll be examining the ways in which Jesus is the fulfillment of the promised Messiah from Isaiah 9.

We began by examining Jesus' identity as light in the midst of darkness. Isaiah's prophecy- that the people "have seen a great light"- is described in John 1 as "the true light that gives light to everyone coming into the world".

Icebreaker Question

- Do you prefer white or multi-colored Christmas lights?

Discussion Questions

1. Why is the Advent season so significant for the Church? What have you found helpful in your own life to connect with God in the leadup to Christmas?
2. As a group, discuss Fleming Rutledge's quote- "Advent begins in the dark and moves toward the light."
 - a. What do you think she means by this?
 - b. How have you experienced God in your own seasons of darkness?
3. As a group, read Matt. 4:12-17, as Matthew quotes Isaiah 9.
 - a. What do you make of the connection between light and repentance? How is the act of repentance symbolized in this imagery of light and darkness?
4. As a group, read John 1:1-9.
 - a. What about Jesus' identity and purpose is symbolized by light in this passage?
 - b. Is there a part of your life where you need the reminder of v. 5- that "the darkness has not overcome" the light of Christ?