



Discussion Guide

Date: 11/30/2025

Sermon Title: Where can I find light in dark times?

Scripture: Isaiah 9:2-7

This discussion guide is a layout to be used with a group or class. We have included opening and closing prayers to start and end your group. The guide may be used for personal or family reflection as well.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy God, as we enter this season of Advent, we come with longing hearts. We seek Your light in the darkness around us and within us. Speak to us through Your Word. Awaken hope within us. A hope that comes not from circumstances, but from Your unfailing love and the promise of Christ. Guide our minds and shape our spirits as we gather together today. Amen.

Opening Question:

1. As we begin the Christmas season, what is a family memory or a special tradition that you do this season of Christmas?

Digging into the Word:

The prophet of Isaiah speaks to a weary and oppressed community living in fear and despair. Into their darkness, God promises a future filled with hope—not because their problems disappear, but because God is present and will act. Advent teaches us that hope is not wishful thinking, but confidence grounded in God's character and promise.

Read Isaiah 9:2-7 (NRSV). Try a few different versions prior to digging into these questions.

1. What images or phrases stand out to you in Isaiah 9:2–7? Why?
2. Where do you see darkness in the world today? In your personal life?
3. Isaiah doesn't let calamity have the last word. What does "light" symbolize in this passage? How does God's light differ from the world's idea of hope?
4. Why do you think the hope God promises comes in the form of a child as verse 6 says? What hope does this give to you, your family, and the world?
5. Which of the names given to Christ—Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace—most speaks to you in this season?

Other scriptures to consider:

John 1:1–5; Psalm 27:1; Romans 15:13; Revelation 21:23

Sermon Questions:

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1. Have you ever experienced a season of “Polar Night” or are you in one right now?
2. Do you know what we as Christians are proclaiming during Advent?
3. Do you notice any current trends in society that echo TPIII’s reign in 733 BC?
4. Can you ever appease a bully?
5. What do you think it means for the faith of those who heard Isaiah’s prophecy about a child of light reigning forever in love, but who never got to see that prophecy come true?
6. Will you choose to curse the darkness or light a candle in it?
7. Can you heed God’s calling for us to reflect the light of hope in this world?

Applying it:

1. How have you experienced God’s light in a dark time? What makes it difficult to believe in hope in dark times or our present day?
2. How might we be bearers of hope to others during this Advent season?
3. Where is God inviting you to watch, wait, or trust more deeply in this season?
4. What small act of hope could you offer this week to someone who is struggling?

Wesleyan-Theological Reflection:

John Wesley emphasized the present and active grace of God, even in suffering. Hope is rooted in God’s redeeming work and the assurance that Christ is with us. John Wesley wrote: “Our hope is not built on anything in us, but wholly on the promise of God.” Wesley taught that God’s prevenient grace is already shining light into every life, drawing us toward Christ even before we see it fully. For Wesleyans, hope leads to holy living, shaping how we respond to the world’s pain with compassion and action.

CLOSING PRAYER

God of light and God of hope, shine upon us as we wait for Your coming. When darkness whispers fear, remind us that Your light is stronger. When hope feels distant, ground us again in Your promises. Send us out as bearers of Your hope to a hurting world. Come, Lord Jesus—fill us with Your light. Amen.

WAYS TO RESPOND (or challenges for you this week)

1. Light a candle each day and reflect:
Where did I see God’s light today? How can I share it tomorrow?
Write a prayer of hope and keep it somewhere visible.