

LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

Advent Series 2018

These questions are for the **December 16, 2018** sermon, "The Child of Christmas." Please read the sermon passages (Isaiah 9:1-7) together out loud.

Sermon Outline

AS WE CONSIDER THE PROMISED MESSIAH, NOTE . . .

1. The grace that is retentive (1-3)
 - a. "Retentive" means that God's grace will never let go of God's people.
 - b. Note the way that Isaiah uses contrasts in order to emphasize God's faithfulness:
 - i. "former times" and "latter times": God protects his people from attack.
 - ii. "darkness" and "light": God's light overcomes darkness.
 - iii. "us" and "you": God is able to do what "our" efforts could never do.
 - c. Joy is a distinguishing characteristic of the Christian life.
 - i. It is the second of the "Fruits of the Spirit."
 - ii. "If we are miserable, it's because we have said, 'No' to joy." -JI Packer
2. The Son who is given (4-6)
 - a. No government or oppressor will be able to prevent God from delivering his gift.
 - b. God uses few people (Gideon) to defeat the many (the Midianites, see Judges 6-7).
 - i. God may limit resources in order to reveal his own strength and sufficiency.
 - ii. His Son is the ultimate victory, delivered at just the right moment.
 - c. In fact, the government will belong completely to Jesus. He reigns over all.
3. The reign which is enduring (7)
 - a. Jesus, the ultimate King, will reign forever.
 - b. God is unstoppable. He has delivered on his promise; He has delivered his gift.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: God's grace will "never let go" of God's people. Check-out Matt Redman's song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76ifTTuL4XI>. How does Christmas cause you to reflect upon the salvation that is yours in Jesus Christ? How does the fact that it is GOD holding on TO YOU bring you peace and comfort and hope?
2. Based on #1, above: Sometimes we think (especially at Christmastime) that we must lecture all of our family members who do not know Jesus Christ, but sometimes our overflowing joy might better impact the people around us. Do you think people in your family are pointed to Jesus Christ based upon the way you choose joy? What can you do to improve in this area?
3. Based on #2, above: "God sometimes limits our resources in order to reveal his strength and faithfulness." Describe a time in your life when you experienced this. Are you experiencing this now? How does God's past faithfulness and strength impact your current outlook/attitude?
4. Based on #3, above: The rule and reign of Jesus Christ over all things will have no end. The kings and queens of this world often think they are strong, but in the end, all their strength and decisions and power grabs are "as the dust on the scales" (Isaiah 40:15). That means that all their deciding and working and strategizing has no impact on Jesus Christ's kingdom. Discuss.