



Christmas

Christmas • December 2023

Overview

Christmas is one of the biggest celebrations of the year for people - both Christians and non-Christians alike. As followers of Jesus, Christmas is a profound celebration of God entering time to come and redeem humanity from sin. It's so much more than gifts and time off work. Christmas lends itself to some wonderful opportunities for spiritual conversations because everyone talks about Christmas!

Over these four weeks of Life Group discussions, we will celebrate our Saviour and consider how we can share our faith this Christmas using the traditional advent themes of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

Outline

1. Jesus, the Hope of the world
2. Jesus, the coming Prince of Peace
3. Jesus, the one who brings Joy
4. Jesus, God's gift of Love

Hope

Week 1 • 3 Dec 2023 • Luke 2:29-32

Jesus coming is hope for all peoples, for all of time

1. Can you think of a time you were excitedly anticipating something and it didn't live up to the hype?
What about a time when you were super excited but the event exceeded your expectations?
2. Read Luke 2:22-40 together to get the context of this week's key verses.
 - a. Assuming Simeon was an old man, how do you think v26 would have affected his life?
 - b. What would that moment have been like when Simeon saw Jesus?
 - c. What words does Simeon use to describe Jesus?
 - d. How does the description of Jesus being "light" speak of hope for our world? (Hint - think spiritual darkness).
3. Hope is present when we long for something to happen. Jesus' incarnation brought a message of hope to the world: God cares, and he is going to redeem us from our own mess. This is radically different from what we are encouraged to place hope in the world.

- a. What do you see people hoping will happen in their lives or in our world?
 - b. What do you see these people putting their hope in to bring this about?
 - c. What hope do you personally take from the Christmas story?
4. Who in your life could do with some hope right now?
- a. How can you share this message of hope with them?
 - b. Pray that you would have a clear opportunity to share with them this Christmas season.

Peace

Week 2 • 10 Dec 2023 • Isaiah 9:6; John 14:27

Jesus is God's prophesied plan to reconcile all people to himself

1. What gives you peace? What robs you of peace?

2. Have you ever had a time when you felt peaceful but the circumstances surrounding you should have determined you to feel the opposite? Why was that?

3. Isaiah 9:1-7 is one of the great prophecies of Jesus coming
 - a. Which picture in the passage sticks out most vividly for you?

 - b. What do you notice about peace in this passage?

 - c. What do you learn about Jesus from this passage?

4. Read John 14:25-27
 - a. What stands out to you in these verses?

 - b. What did Jesus mean by saying that he doesn't give "as the world gives"?

- c. What link is there between Jesus talking about sending the Holy Spirit, and him giving us peace?

5. What differences are there when you hear peace talked about in the wider world?

6. What areas in your life are you lacking peace? What can you do to experience God's peace in those areas today?

7. Who in your life needs to hear Jesus' offer of peace right now?
 - a. How can you share this message of peace with them?
 - b. Pray that you would have a clear opportunity to share with them this Christmas season.

Joy

Week 3 • 17 Dec 2023 • Luke 2:10-11

Jesus is the one who gives true and lasting joy

1. Take turns sharing the number one song that fills you with joy the moment you hear it (and maybe play a few seconds of it to see who catches the joy!)

2. In Luke 2:10 the angels tell the shepherds that the birth of Jesus will “cause great joy for all the people”.
 - a. Read Isaiah 9:1-7 then discuss why the coming of the Messiah would bring joy to all people
 - b. How does this topic of joy relate to the message of hope discussed in week one?
 - c. In what way does this joy overflow in the shepherd’s lives? (see Luke 2:20).

3. The angels said joy would result when Jesus was born, then Jesus said joy would be the result again when he returns. Read John 16:19-24.
 - a. Why will there be joy when Jesus returns a second time?



- b. What reasons do we have to be joyful while we wait?

4. In what ways can you fill up your joy tank this Christmas (whether things are going well for you or not)?

5. Who in your world needs to hear this message of joy?
 - a. Pray for an opportunity to share some joy with them this Christmas season.

Love

Week 4 • 24 Dec 2023 • John 3:16-17

Jesus is God's gift of Love to the whole world.

1. Go with me here, but what movie scene where someone sacrifices themselves for another person is most memorable to you? Why?
2. Read John 3:16-17 and John 15:13 together.
 - a. What stands out to you the most in these verses?
 - b. Most people know 3v16 but probably not 3v17. What do you think people miss by not knowing 3v17?
 - c. What is it about someone dying for someone else that we find so deeply moving?
3. Jesus gave up his life for you in the greatest act of love.
 - a. What does he ask of us in response in Matthew 22:34-40?
 - b. How does loving in this way require us to die to ourselves?
4. Do you find it easy to receive God's love? How does it make you feel to ponder that Almighty God loves you that much?
5. Who in your life needs to hear this message of God's love for them?
 - a. Pray that you will have the opportunity to share it with them this Christmas season.

