



Christmas

December 6, 2015
Celebration | 8:45 am
Pastor David Mitchell

Our Hope is in the Light of Christ Isaiah 9, Matthew 4:12-17

Problem: My Hope is Fading. Isaiah 9:1

"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..."

- **Because of my misplaced hope in my resources alone. Isaiah 7; Psalm 20:7; 147:10-11**
"Then they will look to the earth, and behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and they will be driven away into darkness." Isaiah 8:19-22
- **Because my hope is lost from overwhelming issues in my life. Isaiah 7:2**
"When it was reported to the house of David, saying, 'The Arameans have camped in Ephraim,' his heart and the hearts of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake with the wind."

What are some of the things in life today that we put our hope in and prove to be untrustworthy?

Solution: How Our Hope is Renewed in the Messiah, Jesus. Isaiah 9:2-6

- **Seek God's "light" to reveal areas in need of renewal. Isaiah 9:2-3, Matthew 4:12-17**
"The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them. 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."

What is He shining the light on in your life?

- **Ask God to remove the burdens of the world. Isaiah 9:4, 5**
"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. For every boot of the booted warrior in the battle tumult, and cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire."

What burdens do you want Him to remove? Matthew 11:28-30

- **Submit to Jesus' gracious rule over your life today. Isaiah 9:6**
"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."

What aspect of Christ is most inviting for you? (see Digging Deeper on back)

- **Wait faithfully for Jesus' final return and rule over our world. Isaiah 9:7**
"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."

John 16:32-33, II Timothy 4:8, I John 2:28-3:3

Digging Deeper:

Isaiah 9 is a prophecy that is fulfilled in Matthew 4:12-17. Isaiah preached 700 years before the days of Christ. This again reveals the complete unity of God's Word and verifies how trustworthy it is for our lives today. The background of Isaiah 9 is important to understand to gain the full relevance of that passage.

The nation of Israel had turned its back on God and His Word. They were trusting in the power of human effort alone. In fact many were seeking counsel from the mediums and those who are dead rather than the living God that led them through the Red Sea and Jordan River into their promised land. (Isaiah 8:19-22) Also, King Ahaz, in Isaiah 7, was looking to the King of Assyria for help, rather than relying on the power and Word of God. We are reminded again of how easily we can turn from God and His Word as we become dominated by the influences of this world.

As a result of turning from God and His Word, they are now living in "gloom." (Isaiah 8:22 and Isaiah 9:1) They have misplaced their hope in God with this world and now lost hope completely. But Isaiah preached about the coming Messiah and how He will help remove the "gloom" and offer new hope and "light" to heal and guide their lives. Jesus is that fulfillment.

LifeGroup Discussion:

1. What ways can we misplace our hope today? Or what do some trust in, or hope in, as a resource for life that has proven untrustworthy?
2. Isaiah 9:2, 3 reveals the Messiah's hope. According to these verses, what did Jesus come to do for us? How have you experienced that in your life?
3. In Isaiah 9:4, 5, Jesus, as Messiah, came to remove the burdens in our lives. What are some burdens you carry in your life? How did Jesus promise to help in Matthew 11:28-30? How have you experienced His help? If may be in finances, health, work, school, relationships.
4. Isaiah 9:6 reveals the role and rule of Christ as Messiah. This was a prophecy 700 years before Jesus. Reflect on each of these roles. Which is most attractive to you:
 - Jesus as a child – innocent, humble, trusting in His Father for protection. Read Philippians 2:1-8
 - Jesus as our "government" where He rules in love and compassion.
 - Jesus as Wonderful, Counselor. "Wonderful" can mean "exceptional" or "distinguished" How has He helped counsel and guide your life?
 - Eternal Father – One who helps rule and watch over our lives.
 - Prince of Peace – He brings peace between us and God and each other. Read Romans 5:1; John 16:32, 33. What does Jesus promise for us in these verses?

Next Steps:

1. **Join a LifeGroup to find mutual support in living for our Lord.** LifeGroups are ongoing small group communities that gather together throughout the week to CONNECT in a smaller setting, GROW together in our faith, and REACH out together to our community. calvarylife.org/lifegroups
2. **Attend Celebrate Recovery on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm in S-6 to overcome the hurts, habits and hang-ups in your life.** Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered twelve-step program and a ministry where people who are hurting can experience hope and healing in a Christian community. calvarylife.org/cr
3. **Invite someone to attend a Christmas program or service** at some point in the next month. Use these programs and services as tools for you to share God's grace with others. Learn more in The Quarterly or calvarylife.org/Christmas