

**Main Idea:** Jesus is God's Grace Gift of Hope. We should give hope away.

### Hope is the Premier Grace Gift at Christmas

The world's 3 monotheistic religions (Judaism, Islam, and Christianity) believe in one God. All of them believe that humankind is in trouble and needs to be saved somehow. And most think that at least one judgment awaits us—a judgment based on what we do with our time on earth. But only Christianity teaches that **Jesus Christ is the key that unlocks all the doors essential to our past, our present, and our future – He was God's Grace Gift of Hope.**

### Israel in Isaiah's Day

800 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, an entire nation needed hope. They needed Christmas. Living in captivity, ruled by the Assyrians, Israel longed for a Redeemer – a Savior – their Messiah. Isaiah 8 tells of their despair. God would use the Assyrians to judge His people and bring them back. Chapter 9 promises hope. Messiah is coming. Christmas teaches us at least 3 things about hope.

- 1. Hope for Tomorrow is more Powerful than Happiness Today (9:2).** What could be more powerful to someone in darkness than light? These people would never see the coming Messiah. They would never meet Jesus face to face, but the hope of His coming was just as powerful.
- 2. With God, Tomorrow is as Secure as Yesterday (v.4).** The coming Jesus would be a victory like Gideon's overwhelming victory over the Midianites – no less miraculous and providing even more reason to hope. God speaks of the coming “light” with the **certainty of past tense**. The *hope* that came with the *light* marks the downfall of Israel's enemies – as though it had already occurred. That's because with God, tomorrow is as secure as yesterday.
- 3. Our Hope is the Grace Gift worth Sharing (v.6).** The **despair** of ch.8 was replaced by **hope** in ch.9. The **hope** of vv.1-5 is revealed as **The Son – the Child, the Messiah, the Savior**. And we now know (2800 years later) that this prophetic reference spoke of **Jesus Christ**.

### Sharing the Hope

Give grace gifts throughout the year to people around you – those thoughtful, invaluable, eternal gifts that really matter. Begin with hope. Live it. Walk in it. Put it on display in your life for everyone to see. Your Father has given this Grace Gift to you; give it back to someone who's hurting this holiday season.

### Family Night Big idea – Read Isaiah 9:1-7

You want your children to know that Jesus was God's greatest gift to us. Without Jesus, we have no real hope.

**Elementary School** – Ask, “What happens to the darkness when you turn on the light? How does light make you feel? What are the names of Jesus in v.6? Name something you are hoping Jesus will help you do.”

**Middle/ High School** – Ask, “How would you define ‘hope’? What hope do you find in Jesus? How is hope for tomorrow better than happiness today? In what ways is Jesus our hope?”

**Prayer** “Father, thank You for the hope we have in Jesus. Help us share hope with others. Amen.”

#### Velocity (Middle and High School Students)

**Velocity:** Ski Trip Meeting January 6<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

**Gravity:** No Gravity Today

#### Today's Songs

*Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

*The First Noel*

*Joy to the World*

#### Kenya Correspondence

You can now correspond with the student you sponsored. There is a mailbox in the hallway for your letters, cards, and pictures. Everything needs to be flat and 11x14 or smaller. We will send to Kenya monthly.

#### KidsJAM Parent's Night Out

Drop off kids for a Movie Night this Wednesday from 6-8pm.

Kids are welcome to wear their pajamas and bring their sleeping bags.

#### Christmas Eve Service

Next Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> in both services. Kids sit with parents in the auditorium. Nursery and Beginners will be open.

#### Office Remodel

We are going to remodel Velocity and the Church Office beginning in January. If you can help move furniture, we need you on January 4<sup>th</sup> at 9am. Thank you!