

SMALL GROUPS

Leader Conversation Guide

Main Idea:

Christmas is God's invitation to come **home**—not to a perfect house, but to a perfect Savior. Isaiah prophesied hope into a nation drowning in darkness, fear, and instability. That same hope still shines today. Hope is not the absence of darkness; hope is *God's promise in the darkness*. Jesus stepped into a messy world to bring light, peace, and restoration. This season, we are called to anchor our hope in Christ, welcome Him into every part of our lives, and carry His hope to those around us.

Make It Practical:

- **Hope shines brightest in darkness.** Jesus steps into the darkest parts of our lives with a light that cannot be extinguished.
- **Home is where hope begins.** Jesus came into imperfect, messy situations—He still enters our chaos today with peace and presence.
- **Hope is not a feeling, it's a Person.** Our hope is anchored in who Jesus is: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- **We carry hope to others.** We are called to look for light, speak hope, welcome people in, and be “God with us” through presence and love.

Key Scripture:

Isaiah 9:2 NIV — “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light...”

Isaiah 9:6 NIV — “For to us a child is born... and He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

John 1:5 NIV — “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

John 1:14 NIV — “The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us...”

Psalms 27:1 NIV — “The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear?”

Hebrews 6:19 NIV — “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul...”

Romans 15:13 NIV — “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him...”

Talk About It:

1. What part of this message helped you see hope differently this Christmas season?
2. Where do you personally relate to “walking in darkness” like Israel and Judah in Isaiah’s context?
3. How has God brought light into a dark area of your life in the past?
4. What does it look like for you to “make room” for Jesus in your home and daily life this season?
5. Where do you need to anchor your hope in *Christ* instead of circumstances, emotions, or expectations?
6. Who in your life needs a “hope carrier” right now? How can you bring light into their world this week?
7. Which name of Jesus (Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace) speaks to you most right now—and why?

Prayer:

Father, thank You for sending Jesus—the Light in our darkness and the Hope of our hearts. This Christmas, bring us home to Your peace, Your presence, and Your promises. Help us anchor our hope in who You are, not in what we feel. Fill us with Your joy and peace, and guide us to carry hope to those around us who are hurting or searching. Let Your light shine through our lives this season. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Leader Tips:

- **Set the tone with warmth.** This message is emotional for many people—create a calm, hopeful environment.
- **Invite personal stories.** Christmas memories often open the door to meaningful conversations.
- **Expect mixed emotions.** Some members may feel grief, loneliness, or stress—listen well and respond with compassion.
- **Encourage practical “hope actions.”** Challenge each member to bring light to one person this week.
- **Keep Jesus central.** Guide the group back to the truth that hope is not a feeling—it’s a Savior.