

Jesus, Light in the Darkness

Isaiah 9:1-7 NLT

That time of darkness and despair will not go on forever

- Jesus came at a dark time
 - It's almost a central theme in Advent, the idea of God bringing light out of the darkness
- No matter how dark your life is, there is always hope in Christ
 - 1. God is with you
 - He is watching you and He feels your pain
 - He is here to help you (Isaiah 41:10)
 - 2. God is working in ways you can't see
 - 3. Your eternal future is secure
 - 4. One way or another, it will work out

His government and its peace will never end

- I think the NLT could have translated this better
- The ESV says, "Of the **increase** of his government and of peace there will be no end"
- No matter how dark the world seems to get, God's kingdom is advancing and increasing, and it won't stop

Luke 2:8-21

I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people

- Jesus came so that our joy may be complete (John 15:11)
- How Jesus completes our joy
 - 1. Knowing God in this life
 - 2. The Fruit of the Spirit
 - 3. He makes us part of God's family (Psalm 68:6)
 - 4. Eternal life

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord

- Some people think that the glory of Christmas is that God became a baby; but the big deal isn't that He became a baby, it's that He became human
- Let me briefly explain why I think it's such a big deal that God became human through the birth of Jesus
 - 1. He lowered Himself to our level
 - 2. He wanted to experience what we go through (Hebrews 2:17, 4:15)
 - 3. He remains human, forever

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!

- The KJV translates this slightly differently, it says, "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" so there might be some debate about who all this statement is talking about. But either way the same conclusion can be drawn: God delights in people who aren't perfect

At the end of eight days ... he was circumcised

- Jesus kept the whole law, and because He did, our righteousness isn't based in our obedience
- Just think about what Jesus went through to obtain righteousness for us:
 - 30 years, day in and day out, always obeying, never failed once
 - Tempted in all things like we are
 - He not only never sinned in His heart, but He kept the entire Old Testament Law. He kept to a stricter standard of outward obedience than God requires you and I to hold to today.
 - He was probably tempted by demons more than we are
- Remember, your righteousness before God is not about what you do, it's about what Christ did

John 3:16-17

For God so loved the world

- The Father's choice to His Son wasn't begrudging or unfeeling or detached
 - God sent His Son, because He has SO MUCH love for us that He really, really wanted to. And He was fully aware of how painful it would be

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world

- No matter how bad your sins are, God still wants you to be saved, and none of your sins are enough to keep Him from saving you if you'll just come to Him (1 Timothy 1:15-16)
 - Paul was prideful and self-righteous and a murderer, and none of Paul's sins were enough to keep Jesus from saving him