

# Life Application Notes

## The Arrival of Joy – Joy in the darkness

Speaker: Si Munsie

Scripture: Isaiah 9:2&6 (1 John 1:5-9)

### Introduction for leaders

Isaiah 9 is written around 700 years before the birth of Jesus – God’s plan throughout history has been for the pivotal moment to revolve around Jesus Christ, his birth, life, death and resurrection. Pointing people in your group to him this Christmas isn’t a cliché, it’s the only chance we have for true joy and life.

OR

Si shared his favourite Christmas song is ‘Christmas Lights’ by Coldplay – what’s your favourite Christmas song?

### *Opening up:*

Quick-fire questions to different people on your zoom call. What \_ brings you joy? (place, song, food, drink, item of clothing, person, film, Christmas tradition + any other category you can think of!) Find a Christmassy prize to deliver to the person with the quickest thinking!

### *Digging in:*

Si shared on Sunday that darkness is simply an absence of light – despite this being a time of getting ready for Christmas it can also be a hard time for many, especially recently with lockdown. **How do you find this time of year?**

Isaiah 9:1&2 talk of gloom, distress & darkness – **what are some of the ways that people face darkness a) externally and b) internally?**

Si shared that when we try and create our own light we end up hot, bothered and burnt out whereas when we come to Jesus we see that He is our (Isaiah 9:6) Wonderful Counsellor, Everlasting Father, Mighty God, Prince of Peace.

One of the trends in ways to improve our health is to make healthy swaps e.g. taking the stairs instead of the lift, having a piece of fruit instead of a biscuit etc. **What are some healthy swaps you can make to stop trying to be our own source of light and let Jesus be the true light in our lives?** (Link back to some of the places where people find they face areas of darkness, not just settling for being in darkness...either Jesus is Lord of all or not at all!)

**How you relate to Jesus being the four names we see given to him in Isaiah 6? Is there one that you have known to be true in your life more than another?**

### *Practical steps*

Jesus invites us to follow him, not just as a phrase but to truly follow him. The Israelites were given a pillar of fire & cloud to follow in the wilderness – the reality being that if they didn’t *actually* follow it they had no chance...**what does it mean for us to actually follow Jesus in real life? How can we encourage each other in our walk as we follow Jesus?**