



THE COMING

King

GOOD NEWS FOR THE LEAST

Advent Study Guide
Isaiah 9: 2-7
December 1, 2019

For the last few weeks in our congregation we have been looking into one key element of discipleship — *sharing our faith*.

This discussion has been rooted in our *Markan sermon series*: for instance, in Mark 5 we heard Jesus' call that the man healed of demon possession go back to his hometown to share the story of God's healing; in Mark 6 we reflected on Jesus' commission to go into the homes of others with the message of his restoration; later in Mark 6 we reflected upon Jesus' command that we bring our five loaves and two fish to go into the neighbourhood to serve by his economy of multiplication.

These passages we have supplemented with our *Growth classes* "Sharing Our Faith." The first class, a panel discussion, highlighted themes such as witness involving *with-ness*, and structuring our lives to be in communities. Today's second class, based on the book *I Once Was Lost*, focused on the crossing of key thresholds on the postmodern path to faith.

So then we arrive in our *Advent season*, speaking of the birth of Jesus as the coming of a king and kingdom — a king and a kingdom that particularly are good news for the least, for those who usually come last in society.

And as we grow in understanding this good news for the marginalized, we should consider how sharing this Advent message propels us out into the community to share our lives and faith. As such, *our Advent series study guides pair short reflection on the sermon with the Alpha "Life Shared" small-group video series on sharing our faith.*

*May the joy of Advent be the joy of your neighbourhood,
as good news for the least becomes good news for all!*

- 2 *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness on them has light shone.*
- 3 *You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.*
- 4 *For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.*
- 5 *For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.*
- 6 *For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*
- 7 *Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.*

Sermon Reflection Questions:

Reflect: How are you in need this week of Jesus as Wonderful Counselor?

Discuss: How are justice and Advent connected?

Discuss: How does the coming of our king impact our understanding of justice?

Singing with Sunday's Advent Liturgy:

*Come, Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.*

*Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.
By Thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne*

Notes:

Out of our advent liturgy —
in the hope that good news for the least becomes good news for all —
we now turn to the Alpha “Life Shared” small-group video series.

This video-based discussion series is designed for church small groups who want to take time to think about how they could share their faith with friends, colleagues and neighbours.

Discuss: Before watching the video, discuss: What feelings or thoughts come up for you around the general idea of sharing your faith?

Watch: Now watch the 15 minute video. Copy and paste the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqGt75C-C8c> (Or, visit the website to sign up and download materials and links for free: lifesharedseries.com)

Discuss: After watching the video, discuss: What stood out to you from what the pastor shared in the video? What inspired and challenged you?

Study: Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.

What do these verses tell us about evangelism?

Discuss the following:

Have you ever had a moment in conversation where you felt like you stepped into what God was already up to?

What prevents you from slowing down and noticing God and people more?

Why do you think our culture has such a negative perception of the word “evangelism?”

What excites you about sharing your faith?

What makes you nervous about sharing your faith?

Can you share a time when you were inspired by radical hospitality?

How can we practice the art of hospitality more frequently and effectively in our context?

Take a moment to write down the names of three people in your life who don't yet know Jesus and spend some time praying for them.

