

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalm 96

*Let the heavens rejoice & the earth be glad.
(v11)*

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-20

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence & in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives & reigns with you & the Holy Spirit, one God, now & forever. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, & the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors & all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; & he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, & there shall be endless peace for the throne of David & his kingdom. He will establish & uphold it with justice & with righteousness from this time onward & forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. Ultimately, what is this great light? See *Exodus 34:27-35; Matthew 17:1-8; John 1:1-14, 8:12, 9:1-4; 1 Peter 2:9*
2. How do *Matthew 4:12-23 & 11:(20-24) 28-28* connect with *Isaiah* above? See *Isaiah 48:17-18; Mathew 23:1-12; Galatians 5:1*

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. What burdens have you carried through 2021 and how can Jesus break them for you? Write them down and start a prayer log/journal to track your prayers and God's action. Commit to making weekly use of the means of grace (see *Small Catechism: Holy Baptism, Confession/Keys, Holy Communion*). Memorize the Bible verse that pertain to you in the SC: Table of Duties.

SC available <bookofconcord.org>

*subjects=citizens/civilians; servants=employees; master/mistress=supervisors/managers

4. Consider *Exodus 23:5; Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:20-26; Galatians 5:13-14, 6:2; Philippians 2:1-8*. What do they tell us about at least one of God's ways/methods/means for handling his people's everyday life burdens? How are you doing on this measure, both giving and allowing others give to you?

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. Building on #4, which of your neighbors (home/work/school) can you help bear an (inner) burden? How can you be helpful, useful, & practical without "taking over," "fixing," or "giving 'free' advice"? See *Job 2:11-13; Psalm 35:11-17, 38:9-11, 55:8-19; Romans 12:15*
6. Name three neighbors (home/work/school) in need of seeing the great light (v2); commit to praying for them every day this year & for yourself that you are equipped to show & tell them about the light (see #1). See *Mark 8:34-38; John 1:35-51; Acts 2:14-42, 13:38-39; Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 2:1-13, 15:1-11; Ephesians 2; Philemon 1:9; 1 Peter 1; 1 John 1*

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Part 1

Messy modern life burdens us from the inside out;

Jesus breaks "their yoke of burden."

*(Pt 2: Unwrapping the presents makes a mess, Jesus wraps himself in flesh,
in Word & sacrament, & around us making us clean)*

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: For the yoke of their burden, & the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. (v4)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:
to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
who is the Messiah, the Lord. (*Luke 2:10-11*)

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