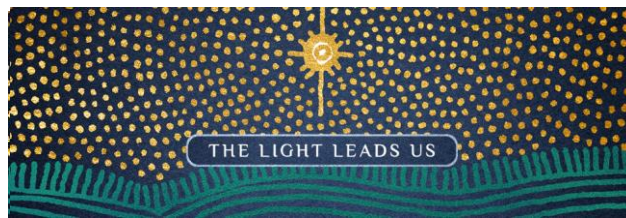


Weekly Message Study Guide

ChristChurch.us/SmallGroups



Date _____ Speaker _____

FROM GRIEF (FEAR) TO JOY | The Light Leads Us | Week 3 | December 13

Luke 2:8-20; Matthew 2:9-11; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 28:20;

These study guides are designed for individual or group study but highly encouraged to be experienced in community with a small group or other friends on the journey with Jesus.

CONTEXT | Today, we look at another chapter of this familiar story. Are we carrying grief or fear into this season? Are we waiting with apprehension? What does God have to say to us?

Returning to last week's opening thought: Presence is given and received. Is that what you're waiting for? The presence of Christ in a new way or giving your presence to others in a better way? Ponder that for a moment before you begin.

- Ask yourself “What am I feeling as I am present to myself and to God today --apprehension, fear, expectation, excitement?”

Read Luke 2:8-20 | Consider this familiar Christmas passage from God's point of view. Sure the shepherds were overwhelmed, fearful, and rightly so. But what was God's intention?

- What “presence” does God show to the shepherds?
- What message is the first thing he says?
- What follows this opening re-assurance? What is God's motivation and intent?

Reflecting on Intent | Our posture in waiting is highly affected by our view of God's intent.

- What does God want for the world, His creation and His people?
- What does God want for you personally? What picture of God comes up for you as you consider these questions?

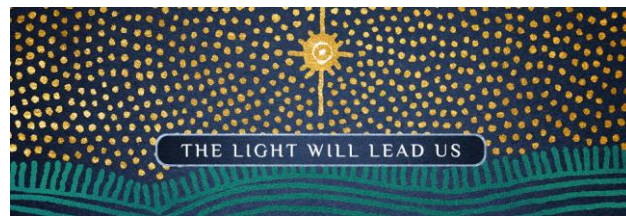
Read Isaiah 9:2 and 61:1,3; Proverbs 13:12; Psalm 147:3; 2 Timothy 1:7 | The message of Luke 2:10 is simple and straightforward. We might dismiss it as a Sunday School lesson—don't fear, I have news of JOY. It is for you, for everyone.

- How do these passages speak to fear and grief?
- Make two columns on a paper or whiteboard. One side is grief and fear and the other is joy. Now divide the passages as phrases into the columns.
- What is God's intent?

In Person: John 5:1-10 | It might be easy to globalize God's intent and say “Wow, I'm glad he's got my back.” Jesus however, in the flesh, makes it clear we have a part. It's not all waiting and watching.

Weekly Message Study Guide

ChristChurch.us/SmallGroups



- What was Jesus' question to the invalid? If Jesus asked you a "do you want..." question, what would it be?
- What was the invalid's response? Do you have a similar response....a reason why you can't be "healed" right now?
- Jesus acts with God's intent, He always does—but the invalid still had to get up and walk. Are you being asked to "get up" right now? Can you start that this week? Where and how do you need help?
- As you consider the response of the Jewish leaders, what are they doing? A miraculous healing of an invalid of 38 years had just taken place—a cause for much JOY. What do they see? Are you missing miracles as you wait?

The Ultimate Intent John 10:10 | As we wait, reflect on this verse. God's intent is to lead us to fullness, joy, relationship with Him.

- Where have you had fullness in the past week? Describe it for the group.
- How will you seek fullness in the coming week? Talk about it as a group, brainstorm. Help each other to discover new pathways to God's FULLNESS for us.
- Close in prayer thanking God for His gracious intent and the fullness He has given us in the past week. Pray that we will see the miracles around us and in us in the coming week. Pray that we will have the courage to walk toward the JOY that He intends for us—that we can "get up, pick up our mat and walk".

PRACTICE OF THE WEEK | What if God's intent, this week, is to be with us—and for us to be with Him—as we wait. This week, every day, seek to be with Jesus. Meditating on John 10:10 or thanking God for blessings or asking Jesus for action on behalf of _____ (you fill in the blank). Our action is simple: slow down, focus, quiet yourself, look to Jesus in your thoughts, be thankful, rest.