

## Isaiah 9:1-7

1 But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. 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.

### Summary

Our current sermon series goes through some of the Biblical themes of Christmas, and this week we are looking at joy. God promises that joy will come to the people with the birth of Jesus Christ in Isaiah 9. In the passage, we see that joy is promised in the midst of hopelessness and darkness, and that the ultimate source of joy is the character of God and glorying in the things that God has accomplished for us. We see that the joy that comes at Christmas is different from mere earthly happiness, but something that is far deeper, characterized by freedom from oppression, provision for our needs, and victory over our enemies. Finally, we see that we are in need of all of these things, and that they have been provided for us in the form of the Christ child. The child promised in Isaiah 9 is the true source of joy, because it is through his work that all of the characteristics of true joy are brought about.

### Key Points

1. True joy is more than mere earthly happiness, and can only be truly understood in light of the gift of Christ.

### Questions

1. Instead of pursuing true joy, we sometimes pursue things that make us temporally happy instead. What are some things that we pursue to bring us happiness? Why does this happiness ultimately not satisfy us?
2. True joy is characterized by three things: freedom from oppression, provision for our needs, and victory over our enemies. What things do we need to be set free from? What needs do we have that must be fulfilled? What enemies do we struggle against?
3. How do the titles given to the promised child in verse 6 help us to understand what he will do for us?
4. Are we willing to give up our own pursuit of happiness and embrace the joy that comes with truly knowing salvation through Christ?

### Final Thoughts

The birth of Jesus on the first Christmas brought true joy to the world. As Christ's representatives in this age, how can we work to bring about joy in our own situations and areas of influence?

### RHC Core Values

**Gospel-Centredness** – To have the gospel in the centre of our ministry, and for everything we do to find its root in the gospel.

**Experimental Faith** – To actively seek the modern day work of the Holy Spirit, expecting him to move in our midst in signs and wonders, and to lead us to the will of God.

**Theological Depth** – To pursue a deep and soul satisfying knowledge and understanding of God through the Bible.

**Community on Mission** – To recognise that we are not here for ourselves, but are on a mission to bring the gospel to the world.

**City Renewal** – To see the gospel change every aspect of the city we are living in by doing social justice, integrating our faith and work, and seeing the city renewed culturally, socially and spiritually for the glory of God.