

A Weary World Rejoices

Week 4 – No More War

Transition: Last week we explored the ground for joy in a weary world. Oppression, bondage, and exile were in Israel's near future, but God gave them hope through the assurance that Immanuel would come one day and break the hold of a greater oppression, bondage, and exile.

Context: Isaiah is speaking to a people familiar with and weary of war. They have experienced wave after wave of war with more on the horizon. But God, through Isaiah gives hope to Israel that one day he will bring an end to all war forever.

Opening Questions:

- Do you have a favorite war movie? Which one, and why is it your favorite?
- Has someone close to you been affected by war? How did it affect them? How has it affected you?

Scripture/Storying: Isaiah 9:5

Discipleship Questions:

- How does verse 5 fit into the overarching message God has for his people in Isaiah 9:1-7?
- What comes to you mind when you hear of war? What are some wars that humans battle that are not on the battlefield? Read 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. How does this passage help you as you face the battles in your mind? What wars are you battling personally? How can this group help you fight your battles?
- Read James 4:1. James says passions at war within people are the reason for quarrels and fights. What passions do you think he's talking about? What passions prompt you to quarrels and fights? What can you do to resist surrendering to these ungodly passions? (See Galatians 5:24 for one suggestion.)
- We have a 24/7 media saturation in our culture. How does continual broadcast about war on multiple platforms affect you? How have you seen it affect those around you?
- Read Ecclesiastes 3:8. When is there a time for war? Why is war necessary for now?
- Burning boots and garments stained with blood, indicated a battle was over. Have you ever celebrated a victory over a certain battle in your life? Share your story and what you learned.
- Read 1 Peter 5:6-11. Peter reveals that Christians have an enemy seeking to destroy them and that sober-mindedness, watchfulness, and resistance are ways to fight this enemy. What disciplines have you put in place to stay sober-minded, watchful, and resistant to the enemy's schemes?
- **Prayer time:** This month we will be taking a hiatus from our typical routine of praying for our ministry partners to focus more specifically on one prayer. For the month of December, we will focus on praying for peace in the Middle East and the birthplace of Christ.