#1—The Waiting
Isaiah 7:14; 9:2-7

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Warming Up

1. What are some of the everyday situations where you get frustrated at waiting? Do you have any tips to help make waiting a little easier?

Digging In

2. Pastor Todd said, "All of life, all of history, is one long waiting room, one long line, to experience the one thing we knowingly or unknowingly long for the most: to be with God." What is your reaction to this statement?

     As we wait for "God with us" to be fully realized, for now it is . . .

3. *Light seen (v. 2).* What does it mean to "walk in darkness"? Why is this our natural situation? What evidence of this do you see in our contemporary culture—and in your own life? In what sense is Jesus a "great light"? (See also John 1:1-14 and 8:12.) How has his light dispelled your darkness?

4. *Joy offered (v. 3).* How would you define joy? How is it different than happiness? What things do we often pursue in an attempt to "increase [our] joy"? Where is true joy found? How would you rate your joy quotient at the present time?

5. *Path cleared (v. 4-5).* Pastor Todd suggested that our biggest problem isn't the demonic realm or the evil world system but rather our own flesh—our enemy is mostly of our own making. Thoughts? How does Romans 8:31b speak to this issue?

6. *Life given (v. 6).* Everything we truly need is embodied in the names of Jesus. Unpack how each of the following names meets us at a particular point of need: Wonderful Counselor; Mighty God; Everlasting Father; Prince of Peace; Emmanuel.

7. *Promise kept (v. 7).* What are some of your favourite biblical promises? How would you explain the principle of God's timelessness and the relativity of time? How does this truth relate to the idea that God's promises, which we read as prophecy, are actually history? What practical difference does this make?

Breaking Out

8. What is your biggest takeaway from this week's message? How do these current blessings enable you to wait for the ultimate realization of "God with us"?