

**INTRO**

- What was Christmas like for you growing up?
- What is the meaning of your name? How did your parents choose it?
- What is the one thing you love most about the season of Christmas?

The season of Advent (advent meaning ‘coming’) marks a time where we both participate in Jesus first coming, and anticipate his second coming. Advent acknowledges both fulfillment and longing, and living in the tension of the two.

*Qu: can you identify with this tension? Explain.*

**READ**

Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6-7

**REFLECT**

Isaiah incredibly prophesies Jesus birth some 700 years before Jesus was born! Like a modern day birth announcement, he tells us what the name of this promised Child will be and some very unique characteristics.

**IMMANUEL—GOD WITH US**

Isaiah’s promise is that somehow God who is transcendent (above and beyond us as humans), will enter human history and be like us and be with us. In Jesus, this is fulfilled. Jesus became like us and lived with us and therefore, is deeply empathetic to our human condition.

Empathy means the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. While we all have unique human experiences, we share similar internal emotions of anger, joy, guilt, shame, sense of loss etc.

Jesus is Immanuel—God with *you*.

*Qu: what does it mean to you to know that God joined us in our human experience by becoming like us?*

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Every Nation GTA

**WONDERFUL COUNSELOR**

Isaiah goes on to describe in 4 names what Jesus will be like: wonderful counsellor, mighty God, everlasting father, prince of peace.

*Wonderful* meaning extraordinary, incomprehensible (it carries more weight than the way we use it today in normal conversation); *Counselor* meaning a wise King or Leader.

The Child born on that first Christmas is One whose plans, purposes, designs and decrees for us are wonderful.

*Qu: In what way/s can we experience Jesus as a “wonderful counselor”?*

**RESPOND**

- Christmas can be a time where we get caught up in all the excess and materialism of the season. How can we use Advent to focus more on Jesus?
- How can anticipating Jesus second coming be a source of hope for us?
- What was most encouraging/challenging from today’s discussion?
- How will you apply this to your life?

**PRAY**

- pray for one another.
- pray for our city that many would hear the gospel and respond over this Christmas time.

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SG Discussion Guide