

Connect Guide: Week 1 Home for Christmas

Isaiah 7:14 • Micah 5:2 • Isaiah 9:6

OPENING THOUGHT

Before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, before the shepherds saw angels, before the Magi followed a star—God had already spoken. Long before the manger, the prophets declared that God Himself would come near.

The Christmas story didn't begin in Luke 2 or Matthew 1. It began centuries earlier with promises pointing forward to a very specific Savior.

This week, your group will see:

- God **planned** Christmas.
- God **promised** Christmas.
- And God **performed** Christmas.

Passage

Isaiah 7:14

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”

Micah 5:2

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah... out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”

Isaiah 9:6

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given... And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

God Makes Promises Long Before We See Them

1. *What stands out to you about how early these prophecies were given—700+ years before Jesus?*
2. *Why do you think God chose to reveal His plan so far in advance?*
3. *How does knowing God fulfills old promises increase your trust in Him today?*

The Virgin Birth — Isaiah 7:14

1. *What does the miracle of the virgin birth reveal about the supernatural nature of Jesus' arrival?*
2. *How does the name **Immanuel (God with us)** shape your understanding of Christmas?*
3. *Where in your life do you need to experience "God with us" right now?*

The Bethlehem Prophecy — Micah 5:2

1. *Why do you think God chose Bethlehem—small, overlooked, ordinary—as the birthplace of the Messiah?*
2. *What does this teach us about the way God often works?*
3. *Where in your life do you feel "small" or "overlooked"—and how might God use that place?*

The Titles of Jesus — Isaiah 9:6

Read the four names again:

- **Wonderful Counselor** – Wisdom beyond human understanding
 - **Mighty God** – Power to save
 - **Everlasting Father** – Caring, faithful protector
 - **Prince of Peace** – Bringer of wholeness and restoration
1. *Which title of Jesus means the most to you right now? Why?*
 2. *Where do you need Jesus to be your "Prince of Peace" this season?*
 3. *How has Jesus been a Wonderful Counselor or Mighty God in your life lately?*

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Personal Application

- *Which prophecy encourages you most personally? How so?*

- *Where do you need to trust God's promises even though you haven't seen the fulfillment yet?*

Relational Application

- *Who in your life needs to hear that God keeps His promises? How can you encourage them this week?*
- *Which prophecy about Jesus could you share with someone who is spiritually curious or struggling?*

Spiritual Practices for the Week

Choose **one**:

- Reflect daily on one title from Isaiah 9:6.
- Pray specifically for God to show you an area where He is working "underneath the surface."
- Memorize one prophecy from this week's passage.

GROUP PRAYER

- Thank God for being a Promise-Maker and Promise-Keeper.
- Pray that Jesus would be your Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.
- Pray for faith to trust God in places where answers or clarity haven't come yet.
- Pray that people far from God would experience "Immanuel" this Christmas season.