

# Sermon Inspiration

**Need a kick-start to get those creative juices flowing for your Christmas sermon?**

**Our State Representatives reflect on what Isaiah 9:2-7 means to them.**

## John, your NSW State Representative:

In 2018, we heard an incredible story of hope and triumph. The story of the Thai cave rescue. We know the story of the boys' rescue well, of international co-operation and co-ordination. Of technology, and determination, and compassion. But, for the boys, before those stories, and for those 10 days, there was only darkness. A darkness that was suffocating and disorientating. There was no day or night. There was no hope. There was only darkness.

And then.

A light appears. It's only a small light. Only the headlamp of an underwater diver. Barely enough to fill a room, let alone a whole cave. But that light brought so much more. It brought connection to the outside world. It brought communication and provision. Above all, it brought... hope.

Jesus arrived in a dark place. A world which had waited so long to hear from God again that it had twisted and turned the grace gift of the law into a rule book that crushed so many under its weight. And then, into this suffocating darkness... comes a light. Just as Isaiah had promised. Jesus arrived.

And, so, that light continues today. It continues to burn in the hearts of those who nurture it. It shines its light into a dark and broken world. And like the boys trapped and lost in that cave, the light we bear today speaks of a greater truth. It speaks of compassion, and connection, and provision. But most of all it speaks of hope.



**BAPTIST  
WORLD AID  
AUSTRALIA**  
Be love. End poverty.

## ISAIAH 9:2-7

*The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of deep darkness  
a light has dawned.  
You have enlarged the nation  
and increased their joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as people rejoice at the harvest,  
as warriors rejoice  
when dividing the plunder.  
For as in the day of Midian's defeat,  
you have shattered  
the yoke that burdens them,  
the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor.  
Every warrior's boot used in battle  
and every garment rolled in blood  
will be destined for burning,  
will be fuel for the fire.  
For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Of the greatness of his government and peace  
there will be no end.  
He will reign on David's throne  
and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it  
with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and forever.  
The zeal of the LORD Almighty  
will accomplish this.*

## *Cameron*, your NSW State Representative:

In 1989, the Berlin wall came down and the church began to flourish in Eastern Europe.

Concerned about what was happening to Communism, in 1992 the state-run newspaper in China was warning the government to “strangle the baby in the manger”, to avoid a repeat in their country.

It is easy to celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas, but Isaiah 9 pushes us to explore the story further. It pushes us to recognise this baby in the manger changes everything. A baby who is so much more than He first appears. A child to whom all other governments and authorities must bow. Mighty God himself, come into the world.

## *Brent*, your QLD State Representative:

Of all the names Jesus was given, ‘Prince of Peace’ may be the one we find most difficult to imagine. It seems like the world is getting less and less peaceful – violence, oppression, anger, and tension seem rife throughout all facets of our society. In such a context, it’s almost hard to believe that peace could ever be possible.

Indeed, it wouldn’t be possible if humanity were responsible for bringing it about through our own strength, power, or self-discipline (James 4:1). Yet, we know that Christ through His powerful work on the cross, made peace possible for us. Abiding peace, while “made possible” is not actualised yet – in this world we will have trouble. But the hope that Christmas and, therein, Christ the Prince of Peace brings, is based not in an expectation of peace in this world, but in the realisation that Christ has overcome the world through His powerful love.

Christ the Prince of Peace is bringing, and will bring in, the fullness of the Kingdom of God, a kingdom of abiding peace. Until then, at Christmas, we remember with joy that the Prince of Peace has come, and we wait with hopeful expectation for a time when true and abiding peace will be enjoyed forever.

## *Mark*, your South-West State Representative:

Jesus came down from heaven into a messy world that was in need of hope.

Sent into a messy location – a dirty stable, a feeding trough as a crib, surrounded by stinking barn animals. Shepherds and Wise men went searching for Him and found Him in the mess.

Yet in all that mess, Christ the Saviour was born – proclaiming a new day. And the glory of God shone all around, heralding hope, joy, and salvation for all people everywhere.

There is a lot of mess in our world today.

Yet in that mess, we find Jesus breaking through the injustice, darkness, exploitation, and poverty, promising to establish justice and righteousness forever; illuminating people’s lives and providing them with hope as they receive the blessing of education, training, safe community, and nutrition.

As we receive the light of Christ afresh this Christmas, what a wonderful opportunity we have to extend that light and shine it on those stuck in the mess of poverty, abuse, and injustice. Joining God in His redemptive mission, we too can be the hands and feet of Jesus. Shining His light. Being Love. And Ending Poverty.

