

## Introduction

It's Christmas Eve 1818 in the tiny village of Ogledorf, Germany; a blizzard has the village residents stranded and the members of St. Nicolas' Church have just learned that their organ is broken. Clearly there is no way Christmas services will be held without an organ to accompany the herald of Christ's birth. The priest and the organist quickly take to the task of creating a carol that could capture Christmas joy yet be sung without an organ. At midnight, the now treasured song "Silent Night" was born. The simple beauty of the song is that it captures the simple beauty of a life with Christ, peace in the midst of chaos.

## Discussion

1. **Read Isaiah 9.** At this time, God's people were anxious and looking to their neighbors for assistance rather than placing their faith in the Lord. When have you struggled to depend on God and His timing? How did you realign your faith in God's plan?
2. The life of Joseph and Mary was not utopic by any means. She was unmarried and pregnant; he was engaged to a woman carrying a child that was not his. They were refugees with no place to birth the child, and under Herod's law, their unborn child was likely to be killed as an infant. Why didn't God fix all this? Are there situations in our world today that are not peaceful but can be used by God?
3. Oftentimes, "Silent Night" is the last song sung at a Christmas Eve service; we return immediately into a world filled with chaos. How is this similar to the story of Christ's birth? How do you maintain that moment of peace in your heart as you leave Christmas Eve services?

## Think About It

We all have those moments where your pace has become impatient, and you are rushing from place to place. You find yourself depending upon yourself rather than the Lord, and then it hits - something that makes you stop, refocus and breathe. Oftentimes, it is not favorable. A medical diagnosis, a car accident, an unexpected death. It is that moment where God breaks through the chaos to remind us in the midst of all this, He is in control, there is a plan, and He will use this for good.

## Do Something

1. Sometimes in the midst of chaos it is hard to see beyond your own situation. Take time in prayer and in action to reach out to someone in the midst of chaos this holiday season. Be Jesus with skin on, take time to listen and share with them the promises in Isaiah 9.
2. Take a solo walk in nature this week. Listen for God's promptings, and savor the inner peace of spending quiet time with God.