

The 1st Sunday of Advent, December 3: HOPE

The First Advent of Christ changed everything. God, in the fullness of time, sent His Son who brought hope, peace, love, and joy to those who believe and put their faith in Jesus Christ. It is in Christ where we find release from our sins and rest from our fears. His coming was not early or late, but at the exact time God intended Him to arrive. Join the angles and rejoice this Advent season, a Savior is born for all people!

Advent is observed using a wreath as a centerpiece, with four candles representing the four weeks leading up to Christmas. Place the four candles in the wreath, one for each Sunday, and a fifth (the Christ candle) in the center which is lit on Christmas day. The four candles are typically red, and the Christ candle is typically white. The light of the candles remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World and those who follow Him will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life (John 8:12).

Light the first candle of the advent wreath as you sit down to dinner. The sermon this week was taken from Galatians 4:4-5. Make time to talk about how our hope in God's promise of redemption. Each night during the week, light the first candle and take some time talk about and memorize Galatians 4:4.

How would you define hope to someone who has none?
How does the birth of a Savior give us hope?
Is God's perfect timing a reason to hope in God? Why or why not?

Family activity:

As a family make two Christmas wreaths out of evergreen pieces. Weave some red holly berries or some red ribbon into the evergreen. Remind yourself of the meaning behind the parts of the wreath. The circle of evergreens gives us hope for two reasons. First, the circle is picture of God's eternal nature, because a circle has no beginning and no end. Secondly, the red parts you add are reminders of the sacrifice Jesus made to pay for our sin. Third, the evergreens are a symbol of eternal life. Hang one wreath where it reminds you of the living hope we have in God. Give the second wreath to a neighbor and explain why the wreath is a reminder of hope.

The 4th Sunday of Advent, December 24: JOY

The First Advent of Christ changed everything. God, in the fullness of time, sent His Son who brought hope, peace, love, and joy to those who believe and put their faith in Jesus Christ. It is in Christ where we find release from our sins and rest from our fears. His coming was not early or late, but at the exact time God meant Him to arrive. Join the angles and rejoice this Advent season, a Savior is born for all people!

Light the first three candles and then the fourth candle on the advent wreath. Use the candles to talk about God's hope, peace, love, and joy. The sermon this week was taken from 1Peter 1:8&9. Make sure to talk about the hope, the peace, the love, and joy we have after we trust in Jesus. Each night during the week, light the four candles and review the previous weeks memory verses, and begin to memorize 1 Peter 1:8.

Make a list of all the things God has done for your family and rejoice because of God's goodness.
How is it possible to rejoice always?
According to 1Peter 1:8&9, what reason do we have to rejoice?

Family activity:

Take a walk after dinner and enjoy the Christmas lights in your neighborhood.

CHRISTMAS DAY, December 25

The First Advent of Christ changed everything. God, in the fullness of time, sent His Son who brought hope, peace, love, and joy to those who believed and put their faith in Jesus Christ. It is in Christ where we find release from our sins and rest from our fears. His coming was not early or late, but at the exact time God meant Him to arrive. Join the angles and rejoice this Advent season, a savior is born for all people!

The waiting is over and Christmas Day has arrived. It is time to celebrate and rejoice as we remember God's perfect timing. Jesus was born in the fullness of time so that we might have a Savior. In our celebration we also look to the future and wait on God's perfect timing for Jesus Christ to come again.

Make room in your Christmas morning celebration to worship our Great God. Later as you sit down to eat with family and friends make sure to light all four candles and the Christ candle in the middle of your Advent Wreath. In the course of conversation try to recall your memory verses from the previous four weeks of Advent.



Time can be a difficult concept to wrap our minds around. There are periods when time moves extremely slow, while at other moments time moves so fast we don't even notice its passage. We use time to measure all sorts of things, such as cookie baking, musical performances, and how many hours of sleep we get. Timing is key in planning the events of life. Picking a time for a Christmas Party for instance can be very frustrating. There is never a perfect time, which allows everyone on your invitation list to attend.

God as the creator of time is both outside of time and outside our world. Yet, at the same time God is at work in time and our world constantly. One of the innumerable occasions God entered our world was when He entered time to be born as a baby. We read in God's word, "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons."

(Galatians 4:4&5) God picked the perfect time in human history to send His Son to earth, to enter the human race as a baby. The actual event was announced to shepherds by an angel, "Fear not for behold I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10&11)

The First Advent of Christ changed everything. In the span of human history Christ's advent was neither late or early, but arrived right when God intended. Two empires in God's sovereignty were used to produce the perfect environment for the advancement of the gospel, which allowed the Apostle Paul to say Christ was born in the fullness of time. The Greek Empire attempted to make the world into everything Greek.

Though their empire eventually failed their influence remained in various ways. Their understanding of logic and reason, their concept of government, and the Greek language were spread across the known world. The Roman Empire which rose up from the rubble of the Greek empire built upon everything Greek. Upon the Greek foundation of logic, reason, and the Greek language, the Romans added a long and stable empire which resulted in a lengthy period of relative peace, known as the Pax Romana. The Romans also added a system of roads which ran the length and breadth of the empire. The Greek and Roman empires made it possible for the gospel to be carried to every part of the known world under a common set of laws, logic, and in Greek which had become the common trade language. God in His sovereign plan brought many things together, creating the perfect environment for the good news of the Gospel to bring great joy to all people.

Advent is a celebration of God's perfect timing. It is a season to rejoice and be happy, because God sent His Son to redeem us from sin and break its grip upon each of us. Advent is the season when we make an effort to slow down the pace of our life and remember God's perfectly timed gift, Jesus Christ our Savior.



The 2nd Sunday of Advent, December 10: PEACE

The First Advent of Christ changed everything. God, in the fullness of time, sent His Son who brought hope, peace, love, and joy to those who believe and put their faith in Jesus Christ. It is in Christ where we find release from our sins and rest from our fears. His coming was not early or late, but at the exact time God meant Him to arrive. Join the angles and rejoice this Advent season, a Savior is born for all people!

Light the first candle and the second candle in the advent wreath as you sit down to dinner. The sermon this week was taken from Hebrews 2:16-18. Make sure to talk about the hope and the peace we have after we trust in Jesus. Each night during the week, light both candles and review the previous weeks memory verse, and begin to memorize Hebrews 2:17.

List three things which rob us of peace. Now, give those things to God in prayer.

How is Jesus a faithful high priest?

Does knowing that Jesus satisfied God's wrath truly give you peace? Why or why not?

Family activity:

Invite some friends to go Christmas Caroling up and down your street, and look for opportunities to talk about the hope and peace we can have in Jesus.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Advent-A four week celebration remembering the time Israel waited for the Messiah to come. It is a time when the church waits to celebrate Christmas Day and Jesus' birth and First Advent. Advent is also the time the church waits and longs for the Second Coming of Jesus.

Circle-The circle is a picture of God's eternal nature, because a circle has no beginning and no end, we are reminded God is always with us.

Green-The color green of the evergreen is a symbol of the eternal life we have in Christ.

Red-The color red is a reminder of the sacrifice Jesus made to pay for our sin.

White-The Christ candle is white to represent His sinless nature and purity.

Wreath-A circle made out of evergreen pieces.



The 3rd Sunday of Advent, December 17: LOVE

The First Advent of Christ changed everything. God, in the fullness of time, sent His Son who brought hope, peace, love, and joy to those who believe and put their faith in Jesus Christ. It is in Christ where we find release from our sins and rest from our fears. His coming was not early or late, but at the exact time God meant Him to arrive. Join the angles and rejoice this Advent season, a Savior is born for all people!

Light the first two candles and then the third candle on the advent wreath. Use the candles to talk about God's hope, peace and love. The sermon this week was taken from 1Timothy 2:3-7. Make sure to talk about the hope, the peace, and the love God extends to us. Each night during the week, light the three candles and review the previous weeks memory verses, and begin to memorize 1Timothy 2:3&4.

How does Romans 5:8 help us understand 1Timothy 2:3-7?

How does a person become saved?

Is it important to understand that Jesus gave Himself as a ransom for you?

Why or why not?

Family activity:

Make Christmas Cards which express God's love for the neighbors on your street.

