

Advent – Hope

This is the fourth week of Advent. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Christ child we are taking a moment each week to focus on what his appearance meant here on earth and for eternity.

Each week we have lit a candle signifying that week. The first candle faith, the second for peace, and last week we spoke of joy. You can see we have those candles lit and then we lit the fourth candle for hope.

Jesus gives us hope. In him, we have a future. In him, we have purpose. Jesus is our hope. Everyone needs hope. Without hope we find no purpose or reason for existing.

The prophet Isaiah spoke of the hope that Jesus would bring in Isaiah 52:7-10

(7) How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" (8) Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. (9) Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. (10) The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

Hope is to desire something with confident expectation that it will be fulfilled. Everyone needs hope. We can be confident that when we put our hope in Jesus we will not be disappointed.

Let's read Romans 5:1-2

(1) Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (2) through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

Jesus brings hope. We hope because through him we have been justified through faith in salvation. We can be sure of our salvation with confident expectation when we trust in Jesus.

Putting our hope in Jesus means we have hope in eternity. The Bible tells us that all of creation is anticipating the day of his return.

Let's read Romans 8:18-25

(18) I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. (19) For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. (20) For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope (21) that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. (22) We know



that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. (23) Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. (24) For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? (25) But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

By accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior we have hope of eternal life. We have hope knowing that when we pass from this world we will be brought into the presence of God. What a glorious day that will be!

Let's read about this hope in Revelation 21:3-4

(3) And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. (4) 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

You can have confident expectation that all Jesus has promised will be fulfilled.

We pray that you will discover that in Jesus we have faith, peace, joy, and hope this Christmas season in a whole new way.

May you be encouraged this week to share hope with those around you and to bring hope to the hopeless.

Jesus came so that we may have hope. May his hope shine in your life.

Amen

