

JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH HOPE

ADVENT - REMEMBER TO ANTICIPATE

BIG TRUTH: JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH HOPE

Psalm 39:7; 62:5; 130:5; Hebrews 10:23-25; Romans 8:25; Galatians 5:5

BIBLE VERSE: 1 PETER 1:3-5

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

BIG IDEAS

- Jesus followers remember the gospel.
- Jesus followers strive for when our salvation is made complete.
- Jesus followers wait well for Christ's appearing by loving and trusting Christ above all else.

BIBLE STORY: PHILIPPIANS 3:12-4:1; 1 PETER 1:3-9

ADVENT

Advent is a special celebration and contemplation of the coming of Jesus Christ that Christians participate in during the Christmas season. Advent literally means "arrival" or "coming". During Advent season, God's people remember and rejoice in Jesus' first coming to save His people from their sins, while at the same time long with anticipation and expectation for His return. Advent centers on Jesus, the saving Son. He alone is the one true King, and He is coming again!

BIG AIMS



Every child should know that...

- Jesus has come and is coming again.
- At Advent, we remember His first coming to anticipate His return.
- We are called to wait faithfully for Jesus.



Every child should feel...

- Longing within their soul for the King.
- Dissatisfied by the things of the world.
- Awe and wonder that the King has come and is coming again.



Every child should strive to...

- Wait with purpose for the return of Christ.
- Memorize the Bible Verse each week.
- Tell someone else about the King who has come and is coming again.



Every child should want...

- Trust Christ in the everyday struggles of life.
- See and seek Jesus more than anything else this Christmas season.
- Tell others who are lost about the good news of the King.

JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT
WITH HOPE**BIBLE VERSE: 1 PETER 1:3-5**

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Jesus followers are born again to a living hope.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..."

- Being born again is not something that we can do to ourselves. Just as we cannot make ourselves be born when we are babies, we cannot make ourselves be born again spiritually. God causes us to be born again, and this is by His mercy.
- Our hope is alive because Jesus is alive. He is a living King who is constantly working in the lives of His people. He is a living King who is coming again one day to gather His people together to reign with Him forever.

Jesus followers are promised an inheritance.

"...to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you ..."

- A promise is only as good as the one who keeps it. If a person makes a promise without any intention to keep it, the promise is only made up of empty words. Or, if a person promises something that they have no control over—such as promising it isn't going to rain, those are only empty words. However, when God makes a promise, it is sure and certain. There is no question of whether or not His Word will come true; therefore, for the Jesus follower, our inheritance is certain.
- Our inheritance in heaven cannot perish, cannot be stained, and cannot fade away. It will never lessen in quality, purity, or amount.

Jesus followers are being guarded for the last days.

"...who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

- The Christian life is not defined by a momentary decision, affirmation, prayer, or profession. The Christian life is defined by a continual obedience to and pursuit of the Lord: a life marked by repentance of sin and trusting in Jesus' finished work on the cross on our behalf.
- This continual pursuit is not accomplished in or by our own power; rather, it is the power of God that keeps His people. Though we will face temptations, trials, and sufferings, God's power enables us to persevere and guards us until the end.

JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH HOPE

BIG IDEA: JESUS FOLLOWERS REMEMBER THE GOSPEL.¹

The gospel is the story of Jesus' perfect life, death in our place, and resurrection so that we could be saved from our sins and made right with God.

- God created the world perfectly.
- God created humans to be perfect and to live with God.
- Humans disobeyed God and brought sin into the world.
- Sin broke God's good creation.
- God sent His Son Jesus to make a way for humans to be bought out of their slavery to their sin and brought back into a right relationship with God.
- Jesus lived perfectly without sinning, He died the death that all sinners deserved to die, and He rose again from the grave, proving that death doesn't have the last word. Jesus is more powerful than death.



Make a comic strip of the gospel story with the children. Ask them questions about what happens in the gospel narrative through creation, fall, redemption, and new creation, and draw them together. For older children, you can break them into small groups and have each group complete a comic strip that they can present to the whole group.

The gospel is the message of hope and salvation for all who believe.

- When we turn from our sin and trust in Jesus who gave His life for us, we can have new life in Christ.
- This is the message that brings us hope. We do not have to live in our sin forever. Death does not have to have the last word in our lives either.
- This is the message that brings us salvation. When we trust in God, He will save us from our sins, and save us to a promised future of life with Him.

The gospel is of first importance in our lives.

- Humans easily get distracted by all kinds of things.
- Humans easily disagree on all kinds of things.
- The gospel being of first importance means that it matters the most. We should take care not to forget it, for it brings life to those who believe in it.

1. 1 Corinthians 15:1-5: Paul reminds the Corinthians of the gospel, because it is the thing that is of first importance for our lives.

JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT
WITH HOPE**BIG IDEA: JESUS FOLLOWERS STRIVE FOR WHEN OUR SALVATION IS COMPLETE.²****We are saved when we repent of our sins and trust in Jesus.**

- We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.
- There is nothing that we can do to earn or deserve our salvation, it is only a gift from God.
- God's kindness leads us to repentance—to turn from our sins.
- God's grace enables us to trust in Jesus and His finished work on the cross for us.
- God's Spirit empowers us to pursue Jesus throughout our whole lives.



Talk about what it means to run the race faithfully, as one who is running for a prize. Play a game of “Simon Says.” In Simon Says, only the ones who do exactly as they are told get to win. Talk about how in the Christian life, even when we sin there is grace and forgiveness for us when we trust in Jesus.

Jesus followers are being saved and will one day be made perfect like Christ.

- Even though the Jesus follower is saved in a moment, they are being sanctified, or made holy, over a whole lifetime.
- In this life, we still struggle with sin.
- In the new creation, we will no longer be tempted by sin; we will be holy as God is holy.

Jesus followers work to be faithful until that day.³

- Our sanctification is a work that God does in us, and He will finish the work that He has started.⁴
- To hope for this does not mean that we sit around with our fingers crossed, hoping that one day it will happen.
- Instead, we work and strive to be obedient and faithful until the end of our lives.
- God has given us everything that we need to live a godly life, and so we work toward this end.⁵

2. Philippians 3:13: *We are called to forget the earthly things that lie behind us and strain forward toward the promises and hope that lie ahead—the promises of Christ's return.*

3. 1 Corinthians 9:24: *Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.*

4. Philippians 1:6: *And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

5. 2 Peter 1:3, 5: *His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness... for this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith.*

JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH HOPE

BIG IDEA: JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WELL FOR CHRIST'S APPEARING BY LOVING AND TRUSTING HIM ABOVE ALL ELSE.

Jesus is better than anything this world has to offer.

- Because Jesus is God, He is perfectly holy, loving, and just.
- Jesus only ever does what is good.
- The world will let us down. It will disappoint us.
- Even the good things in this world will not last forever, and they cannot sustain the weight of our souls.
- Only Jesus is able to satisfy us.



Write the word "TRUST" on the board. Underneath it, write different things that we trust. These can be serious, like trusting that our parents will take care of us. They can also be silly, like trusting that the floor will hold us up or that the Sprite we got at a restaurant will be more than soda water. Talk about how Jesus is the most trustworthy.

Jesus followers love Christ more than anything.

- When we love something, we will think about it and talk about it.
- We will actively pursue the things that we love.
- For the Jesus follower, Christ is the One who we love more than anyone or anything else.
- The things and this people on earth that we love do not have to take away from our love for Christ, rather they can lead us to love Him more because He is the One who has given us every good gift.

Jesus followers trust Christ more than anything.

- Psalm 20 talks about those who trust in chariots and horses, or in their own power and might. These will collapse and fall.⁶
- Those who follow God will trust in Christ over everything else, because He is the only One who will satisfy us and the only One who can never let us down.

6. Psalm 20:7-8: Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. They collapse and fall, but we rise and stand upright.