

# JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH JOY

**ADVENT - REMEMBER TO ANTICIPATE**

## **BIG TRUTH: JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH JOY**

Revelation 19:7; 1 Peter 1:8-9; 4:13; Zechariah 9:9; John 3:29; 17:13

## **BIBLE VERSE: LUKE 2:10-11**

*“And the angel said to them, ‘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.’”*

## **BIG IDEAS**

- Jesus’ birth brought good news of great joy for all people.
- Jesus followers can rejoice that Jesus is coming again.
- Jesus followers wait well for Christ’s appearing by glorifying God.

## **BIBLE PASSAGE: LUKE 2:1-14**

## **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!

## **SERIES AIMS**



### **Every student 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 student 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 student 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 student 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.

## **GUIDES AND WORKOUTS**

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week’s Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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### The coming of the King is good news.

*"And the angel said to them, 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy..."*

- Before Jesus came to the earth, there was no way for people to be reconciled to God. Sin separated man from God, causing a great chasm that could only be eliminated by a perfect sacrifice. The people looked forward to the coming of the Messiah because it meant salvation for them.
- When Jesus came to the earth, born as a baby in a manger, the angels rejoiced and brought the good news to shepherds who were nearby. The angels' declaration that Jesus' birth was good news was true for all people, not just the shepherds. Jesus' coming meant that salvation was coming to God's people.

### The King brings joy to His people.

*"...Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."*

- When Jesus was born, the people who had longed for and waited for His coming rejoiced. His birth brought joy to God's people because they knew He was their Savior. They felt joy that they were no longer without hope of being reconciled to God.
- The King's second coming brings joy to His people because it means He will return and make all things new again. When the King returns again, He will bring with Him a new heaven and earth and sin will no longer reign on the earth. This is great news to God's people who long for the King to reign on earth as He does in Heaven.

### The King brings new life.

*"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."*

- The announcement of Jesus' birth meant that there would be a way for people to have their sins forgiven. His birth meant that God had sent the Savior to the world to redeem His people. People had longed for this and waited for this salvation to come and now it had.
- Today, God's people look back and rejoice that the King came, and they look forward to His return when sin no longer rules this earth. The King's first coming meant that sin was defeated and His second coming ushers in eternal life free from death, sorrow, and sin.

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## BIG IDEA #1: JESUS' BIRTH BROUGHT GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY FOR ALL PEOPLE.<sup>1</sup>

### [ THIS ]

Since the beginning, God had been promising a Savior. In Genesis 3:15, in the Garden after Adam and Eve had sinned and brought sin and death into the world, God promised that one day the offspring of the woman would crush the serpent. God promised to David that his reign would be forever. God promised His people through the prophet Isaiah that those who had once dwelt in darkness would one day see a great light. All of these prophecies and promises had been building for thousands of years, as God's people imperfectly trusted and unfaithfully waited for God's promise to be fulfilled. Then, after God had spoken through the last Old Testament prophet, there was 400 years of silence. God's people only had His previous promises to hold on to, hoping and trusting that one day they would be fulfilled.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**What promises of God can you be tempted to doubt that He will keep?**

As humans, we keep our promises imperfectly. We promise things when we don't really mean them, and we promise things that we don't have any control over. But this is not true of God. Even though the enemy will always cause us to doubt the promises of God, we can trust God's promises because we can trust His character. Titus 1:2 reminds us that God never lies.

### [ THIS ]

Jesus' birth was announced first to shepherds. Not kings or the rich, but ordinary men working in the fields. He was the promise fulfilled for all people, and His arrival was good news of great joy. The word "gospel" literally means "good news." Jesus came, born of a virgin, as the promised offspring of the woman that would crush the serpent's head. He came to live the perfect life that we could not live, to be a sacrifice for our sins. He came to seek and to save those who are lost. His coming is good news!

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Do you believe that the gospel is good news? How can you guard against it becoming dull to you?**

Hebrews 5:11 warns against those who become "dull of hearing." When we are sluggish and apathetic towards the gospel, we will no longer see and marvel at its beauty. We should continually return to the gospel, letting it soak into our minds and hearts as we consider Jesus who came to save us in our desperate state of sin. When we meditate on God and His Word, we guard against apathy in our Christian walk.

**How can you share with someone else about the joy that Jesus brings?**

When we think about Christmas, we often think about time with family, good food, and presents. All of those things are good, and we should enjoy them. However, they are not where our ultimate hope can lie because these things will not last forever. The happiness that they bring will fade. Jesus brings lasting and full joy (John 15:11).

1. Luke 2:10: When the angel of the Lord appeared, he said, "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."

# JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH JOY

## BIG IDEA #2: JESUS FOLLOWERS CAN REJOICE THAT JESUS IS COMING AGAIN.<sup>2</sup>

### [ THIS ]

Our joy in Christ's return is a present reality. Now, we rejoice at the promise. We rejoice that we are made for eternal life, to walk and to reign with God. We rejoice that one day, God will make all things new. Though today, we still suffer pain, sin, and death, God has promised that one day, He will wipe every tear from our eyes and mourning, pain, and crying will be no more, as Revelation 21:1-5 tells us. We can rejoice in suffering because we know that suffering will not be forever. We can hold fast to the promise of Christ's return. He is our hope, and we can rejoice in Him.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**What brings you the most sorrow in this life? How can the promise of Jesus' return bring you joy in the midst of your pain?**

In John 16:33, Jesus promises us that in this world, we will have trouble. Yet, He tells us to take heart, reminding us of the reality that He has overcome the world. Philippians 4:10-13 is another good picture of this. We can rejoice in our trials because our circumstances are not defining. We can be content in any situation, whether we are brought low or whether we abound, because it is the Lord who gives us strength.

**How can we pursue joy in Christ's return when it sometimes can feel so far away?**

Waiting can be hard. We easily get impatient or distracted. However, God has given us the gifts of His Spirit, His Word, and His people to help us in our waiting. We can pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us rejoice in Jesus' reign in our hearts today, and remember that Jesus is coming again. We can read, study, meditate on, and memorize Scripture that reminds us of the promises that we have already received in Christ and those that we will receive. And we can rejoice with His people, spurring one another on and reminding each other of Jesus who is our hope.

### [ THIS ]

Our joy in Christ's return is a present reality, but it is also a future promise. On the day when Jesus comes again, we will rejoice not at the promise, but at its fulfillment. Revelation 19:7 reveals that we will one day proclaim, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready." One day, we will rejoice that Christ has returned. In the meantime, the Bride of Christ, the Church, is getting ready, actively waiting with joy and longing for the day when God's promises are fulfilled.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Are you ready for Christ's return? How should the Church be preparing herself?**

Revelation 19:8 says that for the bride of Christ, it has been granted for us to clothe ourselves with fine linen, which is the righteous deeds of the saints. We make ourselves ready for Christ's return when we strive to live holy and godly lives, unstained by sin and the corruption of the world. We make ourselves ready when we pursue doing righteous deeds.

2. Revelation 19:7 gives a picture of when we will worship after Jesus comes, saying, "Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready."

# JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH JOY

## BIG IDEA #3: JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WELL FOR CHRIST'S APPEARING BY GLORIFYING GOD.<sup>3</sup>

### [ THIS ]

When Jesus was born, He was not just a baby in a manger. He was Immanuel, God with us, the Holy One incarnate. He was our Savior who had appeared, God's promise to His people fulfilled. The heavenly host praised God when he appeared, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" After the shepherds saw Jesus, they went away "glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen." Glorifying God means to give him the honor and praise that He is due. This is the only possible reaction when we encounter the living God. We cannot stand before Him tall and proud as if we have anything to offer. Instead, we fall on our face before Him and give Him honor, praise, and glory.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### What does it mean to give God glory?

To give God glory is to give Him praise and honor. We give glory to many things throughout our day. We may be tempted to give glory to creation when we see its beauty, or to give glory to someone else when they do something that we like. We also are tempted to seek out our own glory because we like it when people praise us. We should be intentional throughout our days to glorify God alone, for He alone is worthy.

#### How can you give God glory in your everyday life?

As we go throughout our days, we can remember that God is over all things. Romans 1:25 warns against becoming those who have worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator. We can give Him glory when we talk about Him with others, when we share examples of how He has been good, kind, and faithful in our lives.

### [ THIS ]

Just as the heavenly host and the shepherds glorified God when they saw Jesus, we glorify Him in our waiting. Psalm 50:23 says that we glorify the Lord when we offer sacrifices of thanksgiving to Him; that is, when we are thankful for all things that we have received from the Lord. Acts 11:18 gives a picture of the church glorifying God because the Gentiles have also received repentance that leads to life. We glorify God when we praise Him because someone else has come to know Him as their Lord and Savior. Matthew 5:16 says that we ought to let our lights shine before others, so that they might see our good works and give glory to our Father who is in heaven. When we live faithful and obedient lives, we are not the focus; God is. This is how we are able to glorify Him in our waiting, by living for Him so that others might see Him.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### What is the relationship between our waiting with joy and glorifying God?

Waiting with joy and glorifying God both have God at the center of them. We will not wait with joy if we are focused on ourselves and the temporal things of this world. We will also not glorify God if we are focused only on ourselves and our selfish and sinful passions. When we keep our gaze fixed on Jesus, the founder and finisher of our faith, we will be able to run with endurance the race set before us (Hebrews 12:1-2). We will wait with joy for His return and bring Him glory.

3. In Luke 2:14 and 20, we see that the heavenly host and the shepherds glorified God when they had seen that Jesus had come.