

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 PASSAGE: 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!

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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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 #1: JESUS FOLLOWERS REMEMBER THE GOSPEL.¹

[THIS]

Romans 1:16 reminds us that the gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, and we are not to be ashamed of it. Philippians 3:12-21 reminds us that Christ Jesus has made us His own. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus has made a way for us to be reconciled to God, and when we are saved, we are given a new calling and a heavenly citizenship, being transformed to be like Jesus. We can be tempted to “move on” from these realities after we are saved, assuming that we already know the gospel and don’t need it anymore. In reality, we never outgrow the gospel. We can only go deeper into it, growing in our understanding of it, our obedience out of it, our sharing of it, and our love for it.

[THEREFORE]

What is the message of the gospel? How would you explain it to someone else if they asked?

The gospel is the good news that Jesus came to save us from our sins that separated us from God. He died to pay the penalty for our sins and He rose again that we could have new life. The gospel always presents an opportunity to respond: either we will reject God and continue to walk in our sin, or we will repent of our sin and trust in Christ.

[THIS]

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul models remembering the gospel by reminding the Corinthian church of it. In verse 2 he says that it is this gospel “by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you.” The gospel is the message of Christ’s death for our sins and his resurrection from the grave (vs 3-4). In the gospel we see the grace of God toward us (vs 10) and find our hope today and for the future (vs 19). Verse 3 tells us that the gospel is of first importance. Yet, too often we relegate the gospel to only be talked about and thought of on Sundays at church. We may be tempted to treat it as important only when we feel like we need it, but to put other things in the place of first importance in our everyday lives. To do this is to misunderstand the gospel, and to put our hope in things that can never truly satisfy us.

[THEREFORE]

Why is the gospel important for our everyday lives?

We often think about the gospel as important for the moment of salvation. We proclaim the good news to those who do not know it, and we respond to it in repentance and faith. However, the gospel is important for all of our lives as Jesus followers. As Romans 1:16 tells us, it is the power of God for us. It is our power, our hope, and our endurance, as we see in 1 Corinthians 15. When we meditate on the gospel, it will lead us to worship God, to confess our sin, and to be thankful for Jesus.

When you aren’t intentional to remember the gospel, what does your mind naturally drift to think about?

Philippians 3:19 warns of those who do not have their focus set forward on our Savior, but are self-centered, having their focus on themselves and on earthly things. It is not enough for us to try hard to not think about earthly things, because we will always naturally drift toward our own sinfulness. We must intentionally cast these thoughts aside and instead purpose to set our focus forward on our Savior.

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 #2: JESUS FOLLOWERS STRIVE FOR WHEN OUR SALVATION IS COMPLETE.²

[THIS]

For the Jesus follower, salvation is a present reality at the moment of repentance of sin and faith in Christ. When God does this work in us, there is nothing that can happen to undo it. However, for the Jesus follower, salvation is also a future promise. In this life, even though the power of sin is broken and we are no longer slaves to it, we still battle our sin and we still live in a world that experiences the effects of sin's corruption. One day, sin will be no more. There will be no more pain, tears, or sorrow. We will no longer fight the temptation to sin, for we will be sanctified—made holy as Christ is holy. Our salvation will be complete and fully revealed.

[THEREFORE]

What is the difference between our past salvation (our conversion), and our future salvation?

God's work in the life of a Jesus follower is continual. At the moment of repentance and faith in Christ, we are saved—we are justified, made right with God. But as Peter says, our salvation is not yet fully revealed. We continually set our hope on Christ, waiting and working for the day that we are delivered from the present age and made to be like Jesus.

[THIS]

We do not wait for our future salvation as if it is something that may or may not happen, like when we hope for good weather on a vacation or hope that we will get to spend time with a friend sometime soon. For the Jesus follower, we hope in something that is sure, a promise that has been made by the One who cannot lie, as Titus 1:2 reminds us. To “set our hope” is a purposeful action. It is not passive. Biblical hoping leads us to work and strive with all diligence until the promise of our completed salvation is fulfilled and realized in our lives, when we are with the Lord in heaven.

[THEREFORE]

How practically do you set your hope on Jesus?

1 Peter 1:13 tells us that we set our hope on the grace of Christ, preparing our minds for action and being sober-minded. We cast off all of the things that slow us down and distract us, and we prepare to run: to pursue and chase after Jesus unhindered. We ensure that there is nothing in our lives that clouds our vision and focus or that numbs us to the beauty of the gospel.

Why is it important that we strive for our hope in Christ?

Our culture tells us lies. One of these is that it often diminishes the value and necessity of hard work. If a relationship is work, if we don't feel happy in it, culture tells us that we should get out. 2 Peter 1:5 tells us that because of the corruption of sinful desire, we ought to make every effort in our faith. We strive for our hope in Christ because Jesus is worthy. 2 Peter 1:8 challenges that the people who do not strive, who do not “make every effort” in their faith are the ones who are blind and have forgotten what Christ has done for them.

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.*

JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH HOPE

BIG IDEA #3: JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WELL FOR CHRIST'S APPEARING BY LOVING AND TRUSTING HIM ABOVE ALL ELSE.³

[THIS]

Jesus followers wait with hope in Christ's supremacy and power. Philippians 3:21 tells us that the power that He has to transform our bodies to be like His is the same power that enables Him to subject all things to Himself. At His name and by His power, every knee will bow before Him. He is over all things. He is supreme. Because of this, we can be assured that He will never fail. He will accomplish His purposes, and He will receive His glory. If Christ is supreme, this means that nothing else has this ultimate authority and power. We do not have this power, earthly rulers do not have this power, and Satan does not have this power. Because of Christ's supremacy, we can trust in Him. There is no being more powerful than He is.

[THEREFORE]

Why can Christ's supremacy often be difficult for us to understand?

We cannot ignore the implications of Christ's supremacy. If Jesus is truly over all things, then He is also over us. He has power over us. He reigns over us. Isaiah 40:12-17 gives us a striking picture of this reality: all of the nations are like a drop from a bucket before Him. It is impossible for us to truly believe that Christ is supreme and yet still to try to trust in our own power.

How does Christ's supremacy help us to trust in Him?

Because He has all power, He is ultimately trustworthy. Nothing can happen that will catch Him by surprise. Nothing can happen that is outside of His sovereign control. He is able to do all that He has promised. He is able to do all that we need: to sustain us, to protect us, and to provide for us. And, there is nothing that the enemy can do to thwart the plans and purposes of God for our lives. We can trust Him because He is able.

[THIS]

Jesus followers wait with hope that Christ is better, and that nothing else will satisfy us. In Philippians 3:13, we are reminded to forget what lies behind and strain forward to what lies ahead. We are able to do this because God has revealed that He is better. Verse 19 gives a picture of those who do not believe this. For them, their god is their belly and they glory in their shame. They are driven by their fleeting passions, they aim to please themselves, and they treat sinful things as if they are not sinful. However, for these people, their end is destruction. As a Jesus follower, we must love Christ more than everything else. We deny ourselves and our sinful desires, and we put our sin to death because we love Christ above all.

[THEREFORE]

What does it look like for us to grow in loving Christ?

Matthew 22:37 tells us that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. This is a picture of our whole lives being devoted to God. John 14:15 tells us that the natural outworking of love for Christ is obedience. When we love Him, we will desire to be faithful to Him in our thoughts and actions. We will desire to live like Him and for His glory and fame.