

JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH ANTICIPATION

ADVENT - REMEMBER TO ANTICIPATE

BIG TRUTH: JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH ANTICIPATION

Revelation 22:20; Galatians 5:5; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Corinthians 3:11-14; James 1:12

BIBLE VERSE: 2 TIMOTHY 4:8

"Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing."

BIG IDEAS

- Jesus is coming again to establish His kingdom.
- Jesus followers wait well for Christ's appearing by holding fast to truth.
- Jesus followers love Christ's appearing over the present age.

BIBLE STORY: 2 TIMOTHY 4:1-8

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.

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BIBLE VERSE: 2 TIMOTHY 4:8

"Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing."

God gives rewards for His faithful followers.

"Henceforth there is laid up for me... not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing."

- The Bible talks often about the rewards that the faithful follower of God will receive in heaven. We are commanded not to seek to store up treasures on this earth, for they will pass away, but rather to store up treasures in heaven.
- We are told to "run the race" of life with purpose and intention— as one who aims to win the prize. These rewards are not immediate, but faithful ones can trust that God's rewards are waiting for them.

The faithful Jesus follower will receive the crown of righteousness.

"...there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness..."

- It is only the righteous one who will enter the kingdom of heaven, and yet we are warned that there is no one who is righteous of their own merit or will. Instead, we believe in Jesus and trust in Him, and His righteousness becomes our own.
- James 1:12 says that the man who is steadfast through trial is blessed and will receive the crown of life. These two pictures show that for the one who is faithful to the end, they will receive eternal life with God by the enduring fruit of their righteousness in Christ.

The Lord is the righteous judge of our faithfulness.

"...which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing."

- We tend to think negatively of judgment. But this verse calls God "the Righteous Judge." He is the one who judges our faithfulness, who measures and establishes justice in our world. He can do this because He is just and righteous. He is holy.
- It can be easy in this life to get distracted. Even if we are a Jesus follower and we believe that Jesus is coming back again, we can get focused on the mundane, the routine, and the everyday things that seem so urgent to us. However, to be faithful is to be diligent to fight the good fight of faith and to finish the race, by the grace of God and in the power of God.

JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH ANTICIPATION

BIG IDEA: JESUS IS COMING AGAIN TO ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM.¹

Jesus is coming again.

- Paul tells Timothy to “preach the Word,” and charges him by Christ’s appearing and His kingdom.
- The reason Timothy is to preach the Word is because Jesus is coming back.
- We do not proclaim a gospel that seeks to make much of ourselves. We proclaim the Word of God to those around us.
- We talk about the things of God because He is coming again and we want others to know Him.



Ask the children what they imagine would be in a perfect kingdom. Help them come up with ideas and draw this kingdom for them to see. Does it have candy trees? Animals you can play with? Swimming pools in every yard? Talk to them about how even the most perfect kingdom that we could imagine pales in comparison to Christ’s kingdom that He will establish when He comes again.

Jesus will establish His kingdom.²

- When Jesus returns, He will build His kingdom that is free from sin and death.
- He will be the rightful ruler over all His creation, including over His people.
- His people will rule with Him.
- His people will worship Him forever.
- When we preach the Word, we proclaim that there is only one true King, and soon He will establish His kingdom that will last forever.

Jesus’ kingdom is not of this world.

- If Jesus’ kingdom is not of this world, then we should not live for this world either.
- We should do what God says is right, not what the world tells us is right.
- We should live to store up treasures in heaven, not treasures on earth.³
- We wait with anticipation for a new kingdom that is better than anything we can see or experience on earth.

1. John 18:36: Jesus tells His disciples that His kingdom is not of this world.

2. In Revelation 5, John sees a vision of the new creation, where the creatures and elders sing, “by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, 10 and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.” Revelation 5:9-10

3. Matthew 6:19-20 19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.”

JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH ANTICIPATION

BIG IDEA: JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WELL FOR CHRIST'S APPEARING BY HOLDING FAST TO TRUTH⁴

The world tells us lies.

- Sometimes, we don't like to hear truth. Instead, we like to hear what makes us feel good. In our sin, we tell ourselves lies. The world around us tells us lies. The enemy tells us lies that will make us feel good.
- The enemy tells us lies that will lead us away from God.
- The enemy tells us lies that will make us doubt God's character and God's Word.⁵

Jesus is the truth.

- Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.
- He is the truth because He is God, and God can never lie.
- God never changes or changes His mind. What He says is true and will always be true.

We should learn, know, believe, and trust in truth.

- We should work hard to learn what is true from God's Word.
- When we know what is true, we will be able to recognize things that are not true.
- When we hear things that are not true, even if they sound good to us, we must make sure that we don't begin to believe them. Instead, we cling to what God's Word tells us is true. This is what it means to hold fast to truth. No matter how tempted we are, we do not let go of truth.
- Because Jesus is the truth, when we hold fast to truth, we are holding fast to Him because He is our Savior.



Play a game of hot potato where you pass a beanbag or similar object back and forth across a circle. Every time that a preschooler drops the beanbag, remind them that they didn't hold fast to it. Our goal as Jesus followers is to hold fast to truth, which is found in God's Word.

4. Proverbs 4:4: "“Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live.” God's Word is truth, and there is life found in it.
5. This has been the enemy's method from the beginning. In Genesis 3, he asked Eve, “Did God really say?” Still today, when he wants to tempt us, he asks, “Did God really say that?” He leads us to doubt that what God has said is true, and He leads us to doubt that God is a good Father.

JESUS FOLLOWERS WAIT WITH ANTICIPATION

BIG IDEA: JESUS FOLLOWERS LOVE CHRIST'S APPEARING OVER THE PRESENT AGE⁶

This world is passing away.

- God created the world perfectly.
- When sin entered the world, everything was broken and corrupted.
- It is because of sin that we experience pain and loss.
- It is because of sin that we experience death.
- Because of sin, one day we will all die, and all of creation will pass away.

A new creation is coming.

- If we were left in our sin, that would be very bad news for us.
- But- Jesus came and made a way for us to be made right with God.
- Not only is there a way in Christ for us to be made right with God, but Jesus is restoring all things to their rightful state. He has promised that He is making all things new.



Play a game where you fill several bags or boxes with different things we love (favorite character stuffy, food, candy, toy, blanket, etc.) and have the kids take turns pulling objects out to show the group. Talk with them about how even though we love many things in this world, there can be nothing that we love more than Jesus.

We long for and live for the new creation, when Christ appears, over anything of this world.

- It can sometimes be hard to trust in things that we cannot see.
- Because of this, it can be easy to get so focused on the world around us that we forget that one day this world will pass away.
- To be a faithful Jesus follower means to live for eternity more than just the present moment.
- Jesus followers love and long for when Jesus returns more than they love anything in this world.

6. 2 Timothy 4:8, 10: Paul contrasts those who have loved Christ's appearing, who will receive the crown of righteousness, with Demas who has deserted him and the ministry because he is in love with the present age.