

HOPE

1st Sunday of Advent

December 03, 2023

*“Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.”
(Proverbs 13:12)*

1. Our only **hope** of salvation is God’s **promise** of a Savior
 - Genesis 3:15 the seed of the woman (Jesus) will crush the head of the serpent (satan)
 - Genesis 12:1-3 “the LORD will make you . . . bless you”
 - Exodus 14:13-14 “the LORD will **fight** for you”
 - 1 Samuel 17:47 “for the **battle** is the LORD’S”
2. God’s promise of a Savior is clear, the **timing** is fuzzy
3. A sick heart is **understandable** when hope is deferred.
4. *A longing fulfilled is a tree of life* sounds like Jesus’ 1st coming
 - Water of Life to anyone who is **thirsty** (John 4)
 - Bread of Life to anyone who is **hungry** (John 6)
 - Light of Life to anyone who is in **darkness** (John 8)
 - Door of Life to anyone who wants to come in (John 10)
 - Resurrection Life to anyone who is hopeless (John 11)
 - Way of Life to anyone who is **lost** (John 14)
 - Vine of Life to anyone who is **withered** (John 15)
5. On this side of Christmas, we **hope** for Jesus’ second coming!

*“while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing
of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ
(Titus 2:13)*

On Your Own (better with others)

- 1) READ this paragraph. Do you like Advent? Why or why not?

“Advent is one of the greatest and most mysterious seasons of the Christian calendar. Advent celebrates the incarnation, the mind-blowing reality of the God of the universe becoming a man: living, breathing, walking on earth as we do. But even as it celebrates Christ’s arrival on earth and his rescue of it, Advent also looks patiently to the future return of Christ to bring all wrongs to right, once and for all. Advent accepts the tension of the already and the not yet. It welcomes waiting.” <https://ccca.biola.edu/advent/>
- 2) When hope is a long, drawn out affair, people grow sick and tired of waiting for something, for anything, to happen. Have you experienced that in your own life? Tell someone about it.
- 3) READ Lamentations 3:21 – 26. What is the connection between hope and waiting?
- 4) READ Romans 15:4. What is the connection between reading the Bible and hope?
- 5) Which do you think is more difficult . . . waiting in hope for Jesus’ first coming, or waiting in hope for His second coming?
- 6) There are many different reasons why some people choose to walk away from their faith, but one common reason is they’ve lost hope in the promises of God.

Pray for someone you know who’s lost hope in God’s promises.