

1. Christ is Coming... The Light of the World

Introduction *by Pastor*

Reading **John 1:4-5**

⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

If you would be able to stand and watch God create this world, imagine what it must have looked like. In a moment, this world would go from being **“formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep,”** to a world full of light as its creator would say: **“Let there be light,” and there was light.** Over the next days, as God continued to create His world, that light would reveal colors of every kind. Have you ever traveled somewhere, and you try to get the *“perfect”* picture? It might be of a sunset or sunrise. It might be of a mountain, an ocean, a waterfall of a fresh white snowfall. Yet, as hard as you may try, a picture doesn’t always capture the beauty of a place. A picture often doesn’t do justice to the sight that is before your eyes. I’m not really sure that we can comprehend just how gorgeous God’s perfect world must have looked to the eyes of Adam and Eve.

Then in a moment it would change. That world would be shadowed in darkness – not the darkness from the sun. It would be shadowed in the darkness of sin. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin cast a shadow over the world. Humanity was left in the shadow of darkness. Sin would now separate mankind from its Lord and Creator for eternity. This world would need light. There was nothing that anyone could do to chase the darkness of sin away.

God would not leave his world in darkness. He would send a Light – a Light that would shine through the darkest of hearts. That Light would be Jesus. Throughout the pages of Scripture, Jesus is called the Light of the world. He is the Light who would rid the world of the darkness of sin.

Advent is a time to focus on this Light. It is a time to look at the darkness of sin, hate and pride that surrounds us and see how the Light of Jesus defeats this darkness. Let’s sing about that coming Light in the words of the hymn that are printed in your service folders.

2. Christ is Coming... As Promised

Introduction *by Pastor*

Reading **Genesis 3:15**

¹⁵ “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

When we place two magnets together with the same poles, they push away from each other. When we place two magnets together with the opposite poles, they attract each other.

Adam and Eve fell into sin when they wanted to be like God. Their sinful actions pushed them away from God just like the magnets. After sinning, they ran and tried to hide from God. They were ashamed and fearful of being in God’s presence. They were forced to leave paradise. We are not any different than what Adam and Eve had become. Our sin pushes us away from God. Our sinful nature doesn’t want Christ to come, because for the sinful heart his coming strikes terror. The almighty God is coming to judge his people. We are guilty. We deserve to die. There is nothing that we can do that can change that.

God, however, did not pull away from Adam and Eve. Instead, he gave them a promise. This conflict between God and Satan would continue for some time. The conflict between good and evil would continue in this world. But this warfare could only end one way – Christ was going to win. Christ would come and crush Satan’s head and destroy his power over

us. Yes, Satan would bruise Jesus on the cross. Yet, the outcome of the war was never in doubt. His resurrection on Easter Sunday proves His victory over sin and Satan.

What happened in the Garden of Eden, what happened in the stable in Bethlehem, what happened on the cross of Calvary is a picture of God's love. That love attracts opposites – sinful people and the holy God. That's what the coming Christ brings to this world in his coming. We hear the anthem of our choir.

3. Christ is Coming... Be Prepared

Introduction *by Pastor*

Reading **Matthew 3:1-3**

^{3:1} In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea ² and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." ³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"

If someone is coming to visit, what do we do? We prepare for their coming by cleaning the house, preparing a meal or a snack, or planning some activities. Our parents or our own experiences have taught us well how to prepare for someone's coming.

But how do we prepare for Christ's coming? We've all been in this kind of situation: a parent or a teacher has just caught us doing something wrong and reminds us: "*Tell Johnny or Suzy that you are sorry.*" And so you mumble those words: "*I'm sorry.*" Is that what it means to be sorry? Repent is a word that we hear again and again, especially as we prepare for Christ's coming in Advent.

Repentance is more than just a simple outward act. It is an attitude of our heart. Yes, we are sorry for our sins. Yes, we trust in Jesus as our Savior. That sorrow and trust then moves us to change our life to follow Jesus. With a changed heart, let us sing about the joy that Christ's coming brings to our hearts.

4. Christ is Coming... Tell Others

Introduction *by Pastor*

Reading **Deuteronomy 18:17-18**

¹⁷ The Lord said to me: "What they say is good. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.

If Facebook existed in Biblical time, I wonder what posts would have looked like. Noah would attach a picture of himself building an ark with the message: *Big flood coming.* Moses' mother would post an anonymous picture of a baby in a basket saying *Please help me.* Moses would post a picture of the Red Sea being parted with the caption: *I can't believe what God just did.* Mary and Joseph would post baby pictures in a stable with Jesus. Shepherds would talk about the night sky being lit up by angels.

Of course, there was not any Facebook. The only social media that existed was the words that were shared with one generation or another, words between family members and co-workers. God would continue to use people to tell others about the Christ that would be coming. Why? Because when this Messiah would come, he would bring a message of salvation to the people of this world. There would be no way that people would remain silent about Jesus and the work he had done for people.

Therefore, we also cannot remain silent about Jesus. What better time to share the good news of salvation than during the season of Advent and Christmas. Christ is coming....let us tell others as we sing the hymn – *Go Tell it on the Mountain*.

5. Christ is Coming... Rejoice!

Introduction *by Pastor*

Reading **Psalm 13:5-6**

⁵ But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. ⁶ I will sing to the Lord, for he has been good to me.

Waiting is hard, isn't it? As you stand in the long line at the mall and the store, you might ask yourself: *Is it worth it?* It doesn't take much to have all the busyness take all the joy out of Christmas. Isn't that what Satan wants?

David, the writer of this Psalm, experienced many trials, temptations and tragedies in his life. He ran for his life from King Saul. His closest friend, Jonathan, was killed in battle. He would attempt to cover adultery and murder. His own Son, Absalom, would try to take his kingdom away from him. All of these, and many more, would bring great sorrow to David. Yet, he could say: **"my heart rejoice in your salvation."**

No matter what may happen in life, we also can rejoice. In this season of Advent, we can focus our thoughts on the source of joy in our lives – Jesus. It is a time that we can take to heart the message of the angels: **"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."** (Luke 2:10) Christ is coming... Let's rejoice. Amen.