

Advent 2025

Week 1: Hope

What does it mean to have hope?

We often use the word to simply mean something we *wish* for, something we *desire*. “I hope my team will win.” “I hope I get that job.”

But Christians have a different kind of hope. This hope is more than a wish. It is a certainty of something yet to come.

The Bible tells us that our hope will not disappoint. It is a *living* hope. Our hope is not just a promise. It is a person. *Jesus* is our hope.

This week, we begin the season of Advent—a season of anticipation, a season of hope.

During Advent, we remember what it was like to wait for the coming of the Messiah. And we look ahead to the day when he comes again, the day when all our hope will be made sight.

Before the coming of Jesus, the people of God placed their hope in promises like this one from Isaiah 9:2:

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone.

Even now, on the other side of the Incarnation, we know what it feels like to walk in darkness. We have known suffering and sadness. We have known disappointment and despair.

And there are times when the darkness feels immovable, unrelenting, and invincible.

But *hope* tells a different story.

A great light has come, driving away *all* darkness in its brilliant radiance.

In John 8:12, Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

We carry with us a light that can never be extinguished. In Jesus, we have the light of *life!*

Yes, our world is still filled with darkness, but these are the shrinking shadows left by the rising sun. The days of darkness are numbered.

We look forward to the day when *all* darkness is overcome by the Light of the world.

Reflection

The questions in this Advent Guide are designed to help you meditate on Jesus and anticipate his coming. After each question, press pause and reflect. Then answer by writing in your journal, talking to your family, or discussing with your community group.

1. How is our hope different from the hope of those who don't know Jesus?
2. How has God shown you that he will keep his promises?
3. Take a moment to meditate on Jesus as your hope. Where do you most need his hope right now?

Prayer

As we pray together, let's reset our hope. Let's stop placing our trust in lesser things. Instead, we trust completely in God's unfailing love—revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Light of the world, light of life, we turn to you for hope.

The world around us is dark. We have known suffering and sadness, disappointment and despair. Yet no darkness is greater than your light.

Our hope is in your promise. Your Word will never fail. You do what you say you will do.

And we await the day when darkness is forever overcome by your great light. Jesus, you are our hope!