

Just You Wait, Part 1: Hope

Discussion Questions

This week we started a new series for Advent. Advent is a season of waiting - with intentionality - for the birth of Jesus. While we wait, God is at work. Each week of Advent has a word that brings focus to our waiting. In this first week, we wait with **hope**.

1. When is it ok to start decorating for Christmas? And how long do you leave your Christmas decorations up?
2. In the video interview with author Tricia Lott Williford, Tricia used three words to describe how God works in us when we are waiting on something we hope for:
 - **Longing** - the separation between us and what we want
 - **Becoming** - the change that takes place in us while we wait
 - **Awakening** - seeing how God was at work, whether or not we got what we were hoping for.

Think back on a time when you were waiting for something. Do these words describe your experience of waiting? How so?

3. Read **Psalm 39:7**. We often use the word “hope” to describe a desired outcome in our circumstances. Biblical hope is rooted in a *person* (God), not merely circumstances. Why is this a key difference in how we understand hope?
4. Have someone in your group read each of the following passages out loud:
 - Isaiah 51:1-5
 - Jeremiah 17:5-8
 - Romans 5:3-5
 - 1 Peter 1:13

How do each of these passages help us to understand biblical hope?

5. It's likely that much of the news you watch this week won't leave you feeling very hopeful. How can you remind yourself of your true hope in those moments?