

READ

Isaiah 11:1-5

CONSIDER

In one of my earliest years of being in pastoral ministry, I attended 12 funerals in the span of 12 months. In leading up to those funerals, I had the honour and privilege to walk alongside those who were in the last days of their life on earth. Listening to their stories, seeing how their faith sustained them, and hearing their reflections on life and death have left an indelible impact on my life and what it meant to be called to shepherd and care for others.

For many, there was profound hope in Jesus when facing death that I rarely see demonstrated in others. They exhibited a peace that transcended their circumstances and sustained them in moments of longing and sadness. There was richness that was found, not in material possessions, but by their relationships to others and the pursuit of righteousness.

As we enter into Advent, would we remember that our God is one who is present and at work through all the experiences of death to give birth to a new life in Him. From the remnant of Israel, the stump of a nation, a shoot will come up, filled with the Holy Spirit, and bringing about His righteousness for all. In meditating on our passage today, let us be open to seeing how God is changing our way of seeing life and death, calling us to put our full trust in Him, and restoring a people unto Himself. Would His Everlasting Hope draw us closer to Him and transform us to be His light in the world. See you all this Sunday!

Pastor Jon Nip

PRAY

Lord, help us to wait and trust in you in the midst of experiences of endings and loss. Show us how to grieve and lament, while reminding us that you draw us into a deeper life in you through them. God, we ask that you continue to draw us toward living fully by the power of your Spirit at work in us, seeking righteousness and justice for all. Would you be our hope and peace today and every day.

DIVING DEEPER

What experiences have humbled you in your life? How did God minister and draw you into a deeper life in Him through those circumstances?

What might it look like to wait on God to act through periods of darkness and difficulties and let go of our control and drive to fix the problem? What do you believe you can learn from this practice?

How does continuing to wait and long for God's presence and ministry lead us to participate in His work of righteousness and justice in the lives of those around us? As a result, how does this help us to recognize how He is revealing Himself to us?