

READ

Isaiah 9:6
Revelation 22:12-13
Romans 8:14-17

CONSIDER

Over the centuries, Advent calendars have seen a shift in purposes and design. Rarely seen anymore are the practices from the German origins of the 1800s which made use of candles, devotional images, and Scripture passages. After the second world war, these calendars were commercialized into a global product, containing chocolates, toys, or even jewelry. Regardless of the expression, the measure of the passage of time would always be counting down to the arrival of Christmas.

While a tasty treat can sweeten the days, this season and observance is meant to turn our hearts to longing and waiting. While we can often equate Advent to Christmas, we would be losing out a crucial part of our Christian tradition and practice. These four weeks bring about longing and waiting for Jesus. When we embed this attitude into our lives, we share an experience with those in the Old Testament who longed for the promised Christ described in Isaiah 9:6 to arrive and deliver them. Through waiting, we join and identify with those in the New Testament, who long for Jesus' return in order for this new life and reality in Him to be fully realized.

Waiting is not a passive experience, but rather, we continue to trust in Emmanuel, the God who is with us, and working out His purposes and promises. Simultaneously, we seek to reflect His ultimate hope into the world and foster belonging and community. These are at the heart of the Everlasting Father and through this way of life, we will be known as His children.

Pastor Jon Nip

PRAY

Everlasting Father, you are the one who has spiritually adopted us to be your children. We praise you for your grace and mercy to reconcile us back to yourself and we ask for your work to be displayed in our lives. Help us to bring your gospel to those around us, knowing that you are transcendent and bigger than any situation that we face, and that you are intimately present so that we can call you 'Abba, Father'. In the same way in which you have given us belonging in you, help us to foster the same belonging with others. In the name of Jesus Christ I pray, Amen.

DIVING DEEPER

In this season of Advent, how do we learn to wait on God? What changes about our perspective when we shift from “what we wait for” to “who we wait on”?

What does it mean to relate to God as the Alpha & Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End? How does His eternal nature help us find our hope and place in His story?

How do we live out our lives as children of our ‘Abba, Father’ and adopted into His family? How does that impact the way we see ourselves?

Who can we come alongside as the church in experiences of longing, waiting, and anticipating and enter into the lives of others with the hope of the gospel?