

AVELEIGH'S YEAR OF THE BIBLE, SUNDAY DEC. 2, 2018
THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
SERMON: UNWRAPPING THE GIFT OF ADVENT HOPE
TEXT LUKE 21:25-31 P. 1131

Call: Church, prepare to worship! Emmanuel is with us!

Response: A child is coming, a child of wisdom and strength and beauty.

Call: The authority of God will rest upon his shoulders.

Response: He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God.

Call: He will be called the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Response: He is King of Kings and Lord of lords.

Call: Jesus, Jesus is his name!

Response: His is the name before whom every knee will bow.

Call: Every song of praise will be cast as crowns before him.

Response: For Jesus Christ is Emmanuel, God with us. Let us worship!

Prayer of confession

O Holy God of HOPE, we so often place our trust in the things we can see, touch and easily believe. But you did not ask us to believe what is easy. You have asked us to believe what is true! Forgive us, Holy One, when we doubt the ways you work. Forgive us when we find it hard to believe an ancient story. Forgive us when we question how you chose to enter the world, born as one of us. Forgive our lack of faith and belief in ways that seem so impossible to believe. Help us to look in faith, open our hearts, and set aside our doubts that you sent your Son, born of a virgin — the One who has come to set us all free. We offer these prayers in the name of your Son, Emmanuel, God with us. Amen.

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At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." Luke 21:27-28

1. JESUS WAS 100% HUMAN

"So the Word [Jesus] became flesh and lived here on earth among us." John 1:14

"This High Priest of ours [Jesus] understands our weaknesses, for He faced all the same temptations we do, yet He did not sin." Hebrews 4:15

"And you know that Jesus came to take away our sins, for there is no sin in Him." 1 John 3:5

2. JESUS WAS 100% GOD

"In the beginning the Word [Jesus] already existed. He was with God and He was God. He created everything there is. Nothing exists that He didn't make." John 1:1-3

Evidences:

- Miracles (Luke 7:22)
- Eyewitnesses to His perfect life (Matthew 16:13-17)
- Fulfillment of prophecy (Luke 24:44)
- Jesus' own identification/claim (John 10:30)
- Resurrection (Mark 8:31, Acts 17:32)

3. JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY TO HEAVEN

"Jesus told him, 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one can come to the Father except through Me.'" John 14:6

"God isn't late with His promise ... He is restraining Himself on account of you, holding back the End because He doesn't want anyone lost. He's giving everyone space and time to change."
2 Peter 3:9 (The Message)

"There is salvation in no one else! There is no other name in all of heaven for people to call on to save them." Acts 4:12

THREE ACTION STEPS MAKING THESE TRUTHS PERSONAL

1. JESUS IS THE WAY: Action step: Mourn for those without Jesus.

“When He [Jesus] looked over the crowds, His heart broke. So confused and aimless they were, like sheep with no shepherd.” Matthew 9:36 (The Message)

2. JESUS IS THE TRUTH: Action step: Make the pursuit of truth a priority.

“Keep on asking... Keep on looking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened.” Matthew 7:7

“The Jewish leaders surrounded Him and asked, ‘How long are You going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.’ Jesus replied, ‘I have already told you, and you don’t believe Me.’” John 10:24-25

3. JESUS IS THE LIFE: Action step: Move from a religion to a relationship.

“Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.” Philippians 3:8

CONCLUSION: As you move from a religion to a relationship you will discover, the promise of Advent Week ONE; HOPE.

PRAYER *“ May God bless you with His special favor and wonderful peace as you come to know Jesus, our God and Lord, better and better. As we know Jesus better, His divine power gives us everything we need for living a godly life. He has called us to receive His own glory and goodness.” 2 Peter 1:2-3*

FOUR FOR THE ROAD: 1. Will you make an Advent Wreath this afternoon? Why? Why not? 2. What is your understanding of ADVENT? 3. How does your understanding of Advent help you move from religion to a relationship with Christ? 4. How do you talk about Christ to others?