

3 Reasons for Hope This Advent Season

Read Time: 3 Minutes 6 Seconds

I didn't grow up celebrating Advent. When I was little, we put up a tree, got presents and had a Christmas Eve service.

It seemed to me that most grown-ups were stressed over Christmas and thankful when it was all over. It wasn't until much later, as an adult, that I discovered the beauty of Advent.

The word Advent comes from the Latin word *adventus*, and technically means "coming." Throughout church history, Advent became a season of expectancy and waiting. The church celebrated the coming of Jesus, born to a virgin in Bethlehem, while expectantly waiting for Christ's second coming.

Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas and is usually celebrated with the lighting of a candle. Each week of Advent correlates with a theme. The first week of Advent celebrates hope; the second, preparation or waiting; the third, joy; and the fourth, love and adoration.

As we look at the news this past week, including a mass shooting at a bar, rising numbers of children in the hospital due to RSV, flu and COVID, our hearts cry out for Jesus to come. Yet, we are reminded through Advent that we have hope.

Light a candle this week and remember all the reasons you have hope as a believer.

3 Reasons for Hope

1. Because Jesus offers unfailing love. At times we can look around us at all the hate in the world and wonder, "Whatever happened to love?" Jesus came as the perfect expression of

God's love for humanity. Born to a peasant woman, the Son of God became an infant, growing up with all the challenges of being human and then suffering the torture of the cross all because God loved us.

As we enter this Advent season, delight in God's perfect love. Sit for a few quiet moments and simply ponder the fact that God is completely and categorically in love with you. He knows everything about you and continually pursues you. We put our hope in Him because His love is unfailing (Ps. 33:22).

2. Because He promises strength for each new day. The prophet Isaiah, years before the Messiah was born, promised, "Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint," (Isa. 40:31). You can trust His promise; He provides strength for whatever you will face tomorrow.

During this first week of Advent, praise Him that He gives strength to the weary. You can be filled with hope each new morning.

3. Because He is and will forever be victorious. It can be so easy at times to feel as though evil is winning. However, Jesus is victorious. Think through some of His names this week and you will surely find hope:

- As the Light of the World, He is victorious over darkness.
- As the Resurrection and the Life, He is victorious over death.
- As the Lion of Judah, He is victorious over evil.
- As the Lamb of God, He is victorious over the penalty for sin.
- As the Vine, He is victorious over our unfruitfulness.
- As the one who is Immanuel, He is victorious over our loneliness.

- As the King of kings and the Lord of lords, He is victorious over all and will reign forever.

Friend, through this first week of Advent, remember you can have hope because Jesus offers unfailing love, promises strength for each day and is victorious over all.

Lord Jesus, as I look forward to all that your incarnation means, fill my soul with renewed hope this week. May my eyes be fixed on the wonder of your love, the majesty of your strength, and the grandeur of your victory.

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Becky Harling, a bestselling author, is a popular speaker at conferences, retreats and other events. She is the author of 11 books, including "The Extraordinary Power of Praise." Becky is a certified coach with the John Maxwell Team and offers parent coaching. Becky and her husband, Steve, have traveled and ministered in over 70 countries around the world. She is the parent of four grown married kids and Mimi to 14 grandchildren. Connect with Becky at , , Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.