



Connection Group Questions  
November 29, 2020  
*Series: All I Want For Christmas*  
*Message: "The Return of the King"*

*O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence  
~ Isaiah 64:1*

### **Open**

It has been said that the Bible can be summarized in three words:  
**God With Us.**

Perhaps that is why the human heart longs to celebrates Christmas. For Christmas is our celebration of Emmanuel- God With Us. For centuries the church has called the days leading up to Christmas Advent. The word advent actually comes from the Latin "adventus," which simply means "arrival." Advent is the arrival of God in the flesh.

Advent is a season of both celebration and anticipation:

### **CELEBRATION**

In celebration, we remember the fervent prayers of faithful saints of old who longed for the coming of their Messiah to rescue them from Sin. Humanity called upon the name of the Lord, and God answered. He arrived- born in a manger in Bethlehem, living and breathing and walking among us.

### **ANTICIPATION**

So Advent is something that really happened, but Advent will happen again. Jesus is coming back. At His first coming, the future kingdom of God burst into the present with Jesus' incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Our spiritual enemies were disarmed. Yet our world is not what it will be as we await the reign of our good king. We live in the "already but not yet" of Jesus' kingdom.

At Advent, we pray, "your kingdom come." We invite Jesus' arrival, again. Jesus has come; King Jesus will come again! Advent is in this way both Celebration and Anticipation.

Beginning the fourth Sunday before Christmas, leading up to Christmas Eve, we will focus on a different theme of celebration and anticipation—**hope, peace, joy, and love.**

## **Today is all about hope.**

Hope is not optional for healthy humans. We need hope to survive. Without hope, we're stuck in our circumstances and can't see our way out of the darkness. Each of us are putting hope in something- It could be a new relationship status, a new job, something we want to purchase, or someplace we want to be. But true hope is different than this. Biblical hope is not about getting new things. Biblical hope is about a Person (Jesus), and what he offers, salvation.

Read John 1:9-14

***How do the words from John give the foundation for Christian Hope?***

### **Discuss**

Joy began with the declaration of the Christian New Year- we ended the year last week with "Christ the King" Sunday. And we starting the new year with Advent, the beginning of the promised arrival.

***Have you ever thought about the meaning of the Christian calendar, or the Advent season, or who we end with Christ the King and then begin with the birth of the king?***

Joy message, "The Return of the King," painted a very different picture of Christmas than we find in cards and TV specials- the declaration of war.

***How is Christmas the beginning of the battle between Jesus and Satan?***

Joy shared three things that you do when you are the king:

The king CARES for his people.

***How does Jesus care for us? How does Christmas demonstrate this care?***

The king FIGHTS for his people.

What stories from the Bible demonstrate this battle for the souls of men and women?

The king has the final say for his people.

***What does Jesus say about you? What has Jesus promised us in Advent- his first arrival, and promised return?***

### **Apply**

***Discuss the hope of Christmas and the promised return of Jesus. How we we live in this "already, not yet" time?***

***What are your plans for redeeming 2020 and making Christmas a celebration and anticipation of Christian hope?***