

Christmas at the Movies Advent Devotion –Week 1

Scripture: John 3:2-3 (The Voice)

John: Repent! For the kingdom of heaven is near.

John's proclamation fulfilled a promise made by the *ancient* prophet Isaiah, who had said, "There will be a voice calling from the desert, saying,

Prepare the road for the Eternal One's journey;
repair and straighten out *every mile of* our God's highway."

Theme: Hope

Movie: How the Grinch Stole Christmas

Movie Quote: Cindy Lou Who says, "But the book does say the Cheermeister is the one who deserves a backslap or a toast. And it goes to the soul at Christmas who needs it most. And I believe that soul is the Grinch. And if you're the Whos I hope you are, you will too."

Reflection: The people of Whoville gave up on the Grinch. They became so wrapped up in the consumerism and sparkle of Christmas, that they forgot what Christmas is all about. It takes a little girl to point them back to the right path. She is the only one remembering the true hope of Christmas. She sees how connection and forgiveness can change everything, even in one as cynical and mean-spirited as the Grinch.

She is like John the Baptist. She is a voice crying out in the darkness showing the power of hope to bring transformation. Her willingness to expect the best of her people and her unwillingness to give up on the Grinch changed them all. The Grinch saw the error of his ways (repent for the kingdom is near). The Grinch embraced the hope and his "heart grew three sizes that day."

How can you be a Cindy Lou Who expecting people to share Christmas hope with those who need it most?

How can you be a John the Baptist pointing others to the good news – salvation, forgiveness, hope - of Jesus Christ this Christmas?

How does your heart need to grow like the Grinch this Christmas?

Songs:

Contemporary – Hope of Christmas by Matthew West,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MS8OMR1SYK8>

Traditional – O Holy Night, sung by Josh Groban,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJw-ey1DPRA>

Prayer:

God,

Please help us see others the way Cindy Lou Who saw the Grinch. Let our lives point others to you with the passion of John the Baptist. Open us up to your hope, so our hearts will grow and be transformed this Christmas.

In the hope of Christ Jesus, amen.