



# Welcome!

**SERIES: ANCHORS IN ADVENT**  
**Today's Message: What They Say**  
**Dr. Lance D. Watson, Senior Pastor**

**PRAYER:** Gracious God, in this Advent season, we celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ and anticipate his return. We ask you to help us not to give up, but to wait in joyful, confident expectation for you to finish what you have started in us. Give us courage so that the voices of others will never be louder in our ears than your voice. We pray that you would let us know if there is something that you are waiting for us to give up—or to start up—to make ourselves ready for your arrival. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**ICEBREAKER:** Describe a time when somebody said something really positive about you. Describe a time when somebody said something really negative about you. Which one did you remember?

**INTRODUCTION:** To “wait with hope” means to anticipate with joyful, confident expectation. According to the “grace principle,” when the favor of God rests upon you, the power of God is released through you. When God gives you “a promise to claim” as he did Mary, he also gives you “a process to embrace.” In the process, he calls you to “prepare yourself” and “prepare your environment.” Is there something God is waiting for you to give up – or start up – to make yourself ready for his arrival?

**SCRIPTURE:** Read Luke 1:46-49 (God's Word)

## **DISCUSSION:**

1. What stood out in today's message? What's one thing you learned? What questions came to mind as you listened to the message today?
2. Review Luke 1:26-38 as a group. God's Word reveals to us the story of the visitation to Mary from the angel Gabriel and the unexpected joy that came to her when she understood the message he was bringing to her. What words or phrases stand out to you in this passage? What emotions do you think Mary was feeling?
3. *“To the praise of the glory of his grace, by which he made us highly favored (accepted) in the beloved.”* In Ephesians 1:6, we are told that we are all “highly favored” in Jesus Christ. Only twice in the Bible is the phrase “highly favored” used. Once, when Mary was visited by the angel Gabriel. And, again in this verse. When you consider that you are also “highly favored” just as Mary was, please share with the group what being “highly favored” means to you.
4. *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.”* Acts 1:8 (NLT) The “Grace principle” states: when the favor of God rests upon you, the power of God is released through you. Just like Mary, all of God's “highly favored” can wait in joyful, confident expectation for



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this to happen in our lives. How have you experienced this power of God being released in you? Please share with the group how you have seen this happen.

5. Read Colossians 3:5-16 aloud in your group and discuss what speaks to you in this process of preparing ourselves, our hearts, and minds for Christmas. Talk about what you plan to do to "Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart" and prepare yourself during this Advent season.

*"So roll up your sleeves, put your mind in gear, be totally ready to receive the gift that's coming when Jesus arrives. Don't lazily slip back into those old grooves of evil, doing just what you feel like doing. You didn't know any better then; you do now. As obedient children let yourselves be pulled into a way of life shaped by God's life, a life energetic and blazing with holiness." 1 Peter 1:13-16 (Message)*

*"Wait with hope for the Lord. Be strong, and let your heart be courageous. Yes, wait with hope for the Lord." Psalm 27:14 (GW)*

**CHALLENGE:** Pray together Psalm 27:14 and talk about what to "wait with hope" – to anticipate with joyful, confident expectation – means to you in this context.

**SERVE:** In keeping with the verses above, how are you preparing your environment for Christmas? Is there anything you should be giving up to make yourself ready?

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Take this time to share group announcements. Church wide and campus specific announcements can be found at [www.myspbc.org](http://www.myspbc.org). You can also "find, follow and like" our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/myspbc](http://www.facebook.com/myspbc). Turn on your notifications.

**CELEBRATIONS:** Take this time to share praise reports (e.g. answered prayers, birthdays, anniversaries, promotions).

**PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAYER:** Take this time to share prayer requests. Close with prayer.

THE SAINT PAUL'S BAPTIST CHURCH  
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**We Care!**

NOTICE: PLEASE BE PATIENT AS WE GRADUALLY REOPEN OUR CAMPUSES IN THE SAFEST MANNER POSSIBLE. As a small group leader, we depend on you to show members that we care. Here's a list of resources to help you.

FOR PRAYER:

CALL: 804.463.2472

EMAIL: [prayer@myspbc.org](mailto:prayer@myspbc.org).

TO REQUEST A HOSPITAL VISIT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (For Emergencies)

EMAIL: [ecare@myspbc.org](mailto:ecare@myspbc.org).

TO FIND A SUPPORT GROUP:

CALL: 804.643.6177

EMAIL: [Barnabas@myspbc.org](mailto:Barnabas@myspbc.org).

TO CONTACT MY LIFE STAGE PASTOR:

CALL: 804.643.4000 and Press 1 for the Dial By Name Directory

EMAIL:

Imagination (0-10): Vernita Williams: [Vernita.Williams@myspbc.org](mailto:Vernita.Williams@myspbc.org)

SMB (11-19): Martina Jones-Smith: [Martina.Jones-Smith@myspbc.org](mailto:Martina.Jones-Smith@myspbc.org)

Dreamchasers (20-29): Juan Shackelford: [juan.shackelford@myspbc.org](mailto:juan.shackelford@myspbc.org)

Aspire (30-39): Lance Watson, Jr.: [lance.watsonjr@myspbc.org](mailto:lance.watsonjr@myspbc.org)

Fusion (40-49): Michelle Townsend: [michelle.townsend@myspbc.org](mailto:michelle.townsend@myspbc.org)

Encore (50-59): Jamie Duncan: [Jamie.Duncan@myspbc.org](mailto:Jamie.Duncan@myspbc.org)

Prime Time (60-69): Maceo Freeman: [maceo.freeman@myspbc.org](mailto:maceo.freeman@myspbc.org)

Refiners (70+): Roscoe Jones: [roscoe.jones@myspbc.org](mailto:roscoe.jones@myspbc.org)

FOR COUNSELING:

CALL: 804.643.6177

EMAIL: [Barnabas@myspbc.org](mailto:Barnabas@myspbc.org)

TO REQUEST FUNERAL SUPPORT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (Pastor On Call)

EMAIL: [ecare@myspbc.org](mailto:ecare@myspbc.org).

TO REQUEST EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:

CALL: 804.643.4000

EMAIL: [emergencyassistance@myspbc.org](mailto:emergencyassistance@myspbc.org).

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*GPS is a study guide based on the weekend message. The purpose of this guide is to assist small groups in study.  
Previous GPS Guides are available online at [www.myspbc.org](http://www.myspbc.org).*