Pastor Jim Jackson, 11/29/26
The Advent—True Hope Arrives
Romans 8:24, 25

Humans are built to <u>HOPE</u>

As humans can't know or control the future, hope is a gift from God that fuels forward-thinking and energizes action. Without hope, humans despair (Prov. 13:12). Hope, however, requires some distance between desire and delivery. A desire that can be realized immediately does not need hope. *For believers, God often uses increased waiting to test their faith in the One they claim to trust!* Hope in 'chance' is no hope at all but only wishful thinking. Biblical hope isn't an emotional state but a confident expectation that the future will be as God decides it. *While our hope lies in the future, it lies in the hand of the God of the future* (Jer. 29:11)!

Human hope has a <u>FOCUS</u>

Believers can look forward with anticipation to the future because they know the character and power of God. Believers do not have false hope about tomorrow, but trust the God that controls history. *To God, tomorrow is already done.* Believers can have true hope in the future when they focus on God's kingdom priorities first (Matt. 6:33). *God instructs His people to look ahead and have security knowing that focusing on His word brings hope to life* (Ps. 119:105; Rom. 15:4). For believers, hope is a Person, and no plan of men can overthrow His will. He can even turn evil for good (Rom. 8:28). *A life without a focus on Jesus is a focus on failure.*

Human hope has a <u>FINISH</u>

True hope not only needs the *promise* of completion, and the *potential* of completion, but also the *performance* of completion. The hope-filled life is not the control *of* God's will, but total abandonment *to* God's will. The arrival of Jesus is the ultimate example of a hope promised, waited for, and realized (Luke 2:25-32). *Believers can have hope because though they may have deficiencies, the loving character of the God they trust in, does not*. Those who patiently wait for God and don't give up will be rewarded—sometimes in this life, forever in the next (Gal. 6:9). Believers have security knowing God will never leave them and they can get a taste of their hope through God's presence in their life (Job 5:8, 9; Jer. 32:27; Heb. 13:5). *Believers know God's promise they patiently wait for will have an eternal payoff someday* (Phil. 1:6)!