



We All Need a Message of Hope this Christmas

Luke 1:5-25

This morning is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent is a word we hear every year, but it's good to remember what it means. It comes from the Latin *adventus*—a term for the arrival of someone great.

The early church took that word and applied it to Jesus—the true King who came in His incarnation and who will come again. Over time, four themes shaped this season: **hope, faith,**

joy, and love. And even after hundreds of years, we still need every one of them.

Today our focus is hope, and our world - much like the world Jesus entered - is desperate for it. Jesus didn't arrive in a peaceful, "Christmas-card" world. He came into a world marked by political tension, distrust of leaders, financial strain, social inequality, and spiritual weariness. Any of this sound familiar? The hope the world needed then is the same hope we need now: **Jesus Christ.**

Here is one definition of hope:

"Hope is confidence wrapped in patience."

That's the hope God gave to Zechariah and Elizabeth, the hope He offered Israel, and the hope He offers to us.

In verse 5, Luke makes an intentional contrast between Herod, King of Judea, and a priest named Zechariah. Herod represents what is wrong with the world; Zechariah represents the

hope we have in Christ. Zechariah's story shows us three reasons for hope today.

We have hope because God is working in our world!

Zechariah's story reminds us that while the Herods of the world are at work, the greater story is what God is doing! And who does God choose for His work?

A couple beyond their prime, advanced in years, barren, yet faithful!

And through their faithfulness God prepares a people for His coming!

You'd think they were doing something grand for God, but the reality was far simpler.

We have hope because God is working through our worship!

While Herod was building monuments to himself, what were Zechariah and Elizabeth doing? Walking blamelessly. Serving quietly. Worshipping regularly.

God moved because His people were worshipping!

He still works through our worship to prepare our hearts for His coming.

We have hope because God is working with our weaknesses!

Zechariah was blameless, righteous, faithful - but not perfect!

He was weak. He wants proof.

Did he forget that Israel's story was birthed in a barren elderly couple?

In his weakness God still used him - but first God had to silence him!

What if that silence was not punishment, but a preparation?

What if the times we feel silence are God preparation?

As we begin this Advent season, let's remember that God is at work—in our world, through our worship, and even in our

*weaknesses. This season, look for God's work,
lean into His presence, and let Him into your
weaknesses. May the hope of Advent fill us and
lead us to Jesus – Who has come and still
comes, Who is with us, and the One Who will
come again.*

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