

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. *Enjoy discovering more about Him!*

"ADVENT IS HOPEFUL ANTICIPATION" | LUKE 2: 22-34 | PASTOR BRIAN

WARM-UP QUESTION:

What are examples of when anticipating something makes the event or gift more exciting and fun?

"Biblical Hope"

The prophets of Israel often wrote of hoping in God because of His past faithfulness. Looking back reminded them there was hope for the future. What has God done in the past that is good to remember to give hope?

The apostles pointed to the resurrection of Jesus to explain how they had a "living hope". Their hope was in a person instead of circumstances. What are the benefits of having hope in Jesus instead of circumstances? Challenges?

"Simeon's Hope (Luke 2:22-34)"

Simeon was righteous (good relationship with God) and devout (good habits for God) which led him to hope for God's salvation. What are specific ways to have a good relationship with God and good habits for God?

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Simeon felt free because he saw God provide and reveal His son. He wasn't tied down with burdens from this world. What are burdens that you are holding onto that God wants you to release so you can hope in Him? Pray for God to reveal to you what they are and how to let Him have them.

BONUS ADVENT SCRIPTURES FOR THIS WEEK: HOPEFUL ANTICIPATION

Monday	Psalm 39:7
Tuesday	Hosea 2:15
Wednesday	Isaiah 40: 30-31
Thursday	Romans 5: 3-5
Friday	Hebrews 6: 11-12

Advent is Hopeful Anticipation

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-6 Lar: Fostering Hope, C@R, CAFL, Xmas Eve Services. Sub Teachers.
- B. Slide7 Giving Update: Mercy Projects \$4900. MPD \$3000. Pantry \$4200? 25 lbs of Lip Gloss 4 the outreach to sex workers in LA. Gifts for 500 Foster children in Riv Co.
- C. Slide8 Coffee w/Kelly: Ladies a reminder to listen in to *Coffee w/Kelly*. #88 !!!
- D. Prayer: *the weary world rejoices*. God You are our source of Hope.

II. Slide9 Intro: Advent is Hopeful Anticipation

A. Last Week we talked about Advent being about *Expectant Waiting*.

1. Slide10 To which I will add 1 thing ... *Anna's story*. Lk.2:36-38 NLT *Anna, a prophet, was also there in the Temple. She was the daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher, and she was very old. Her husband died when they had been married only seven years. 37 Then she lived as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple but stayed there day and night, worshiping God with fasting and prayer. 38 She came along just as Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she began praising God. She talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for God to rescue Jerusalem.*

2. Practical things to do for Advent by Dawn Spice (recep)

- a) Turning the *Elf on the Shelf* from a troublemaker into a server, like he's sitting in the mixer bowl w/a note that says, *let's bake cookies for the neighbors*. Read 1 ch of the book of Luke everyday. Make a craft each day to give away to neighbors, Sunday school teachers, friends, etc. Learn the *FULL* lyrics to a classic Christmas Carol everyday. Learn about a different character from the Christmas story everyday. Wrap up books, open & read a different 1 each day. Slowly build a gingerbread nativity scene by adding to it each day. Make traditional advent wreath.

B. Slide11 We've all heard a countdown *10, 9, 8...1*. *Advent is simply a countdown*.

1. **And** we've all watched a movie *a 2nd or 3rd time even though we know the ending* (hopefully not Hallmark movies!). **Why? because** we like the story!
2. **So** we *rehearse* the *1st advent narrative*, the birth of Christ every year.

III. Slide12a **BIBLICAL HOPE**

- A. Can you describe the feeling of *anticipating a future* that is better than the present?
1. We call it **hope** & we all do it. *It is a state of anticipation and it is crucial for healthy human existence.* **And** it is a really important concept in the Bible.
- B. **Hope in the OT** קָוָה (qavah) יָחַל (yachal)
1. There are 2 main Hebrew words translated as **hope**.
 2. **Yachal** which means simply “to wait for.” Like the story of Noah and the ark as the flood waters recede, Noah Had to **yachal/wait** for weeks.
 3. **Qavah** which also meant “to wait”. It's related to the Hebrew word qav which means cord. [When you pull a qav tight, you produce a state of tension until there is a release]. **That's** qavah, *the feeling of tension and expectation while you wait for something to happen.*
 - a) The prophet **Isaiah** depicts **God as a farmer** who plants vines and *qavahs/waits* for good grapes.
 - b) The prophet **Micah** talks about **farmers** who both *qavah* and *yachal* for **morning dew** to give moisture to the land.
 - c) So in biblical Hebrew, **hope** is about **waiting or expectation**.
- C. Slide12b **But waiting for what?**
- D. In the period of Israel's **prophets**, as the nation was sinking into self-destruction, **Isaiah** said, “*at this moment, the Lord is hiding his face from Israel, so I will qavah/wait for him.*” The only **hope** Isaiah had in those dark days was the **hope** for **God Himself**.
- E. You find this all over the book of **psalms** where these words appear over 40x's. [In almost every case, **what people are waiting for is God**]

1. Slide12c In Psalm 130:5 *I wait* (qavah) *for the Lord, my soul waits* (qavah), *and in his word I hope* (yakhal).
2. The prophet **Hosea**, he lived in dark times when Israel was being oppressed by foreign empires. **And he chose hope** when he said, **God will turn this valley of trouble into a door of Hope.** Hos.2:15
3. **So**, it is God's **past faithfulness** that motivates **hope for the future.**
4. **You look forward by looking backward**, trusting in nothing other than **God's character.** Ps.39:7 says, **And now, O Lord, for what do I wait** (qavah)? **My hope** (yakhal) **is in you.**

F. Slide12d **Hope in the NT** ἐλπίς (elpis)

- G. *In the NT*, the earliest followers of Jesus cultivated the similar habit of **hope.**
1. **The empty tomb opened up a new door of hope.**
 2. They use the Greek word *Elipis* to describe this **anticipation.**
 3. **Peter** said that Jesus' resurrection opened up **a living hope** that people can be reborn into new and different kind of humans.
 4. **Paul** said the good news about Jesus **announces the Elipis of glory.** The *Elipis* is based on **a person**, the risen Jesus who has overcome death.

H. Slide13a *Biblical hope* is based on **a Person** which makes it different from optimism

1. **Optimism** is about choosing to see in any situation how circumstances could work out for the best.
2. **But** biblical **Hope** it's not focused on circumstance. **In fact**, hopeful people in the Bible often recognize there's **NO** evidence things *will* get better. **But they choose hope anyway!**
 - a) **Hope keeps your soul alive.** You need **hope** not because you're going to die tonight, **but** to get up tomorrow and **live.**

b) **Slide13b** Optimism is psychological, Hope is theological. Optimism is personal trust in yourself, Hope is personal trust in God. Optimism is what you think **you** can do. Hope is what you think **God** can do. *Rick Warren*

I. **Slide14** Biblical hope **isn't optimism based on the odds**.

1. It is **a choice** to wait for God to bring about a future that is **as surprising as a crucified man ... raising from the dead**.
2. Christian hope **looks back** to the risen Jesus in order to **look forward**. **And so we wait**. That is what the biblical words for Hope are all about.
3. **Hope** = the expectation of what is sure to come.

J. **Slide15a** There was an article written where they *Surveyed 2000 Americans on Hope*

1. It reported that **80%** of the 2000 were **desperate for some good news**.
2. **As humans we have to have something to look forward to**. **But** if that thing can be **taken away from you**, your hope is **misplaced** (if your hope is in your spouse, your boyfriend or girl-f, or in your children, in your finances or career, it is **misplaced**)
3. **Through this 2020 & 2021 we have been shaken**. Our **idols of comfort, idols of safety, idols of health, idols of relationships**, have been **shaken to Slide15b** the core. As one said, **Covid has showed us the shallow graves in which we have buried our idols**.
4. **But** when you have your hope in **something that cannot be taken away from you**, it's a game changer. **Our hope is in a Person**.
 - a) You can have **Hope** because **Jesus** cannot be taken away from you.
Paul opens 1st Tim with, *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus our Hope*.

K. Let's meet an old man named *Simeon*.

IV. **Slide16a SIMEON's HOPE NUNC DIMITTIS (Lk.2:22-35)**

A. Quick over view of **Lk.2:22-24**.

B. **The Temple** was central in Israel's *Worship & Hopes*.

C. 3 Rites/Ceremonies: Circumcision (21). Purification (22a). Presentation (22b-24).

1. We also note this is Mary's *sin offering*. see Lev.12:1-8.
2. **Presentation** (22b-24) - as prescribed in Ex.13:2, 12-15.

D. **Slide16b** Lk.2:25-35

E. **Slide17a** (25) **Simeon** = one who hears & obeys.

1. He was **righteous** (in his attitude toward **God** - past).
2. He was **devout** (in his attitude toward **man** -present).
3. He was **waiting** - (in his attitude toward **Hope** - future).

F. **So why this man?** (3 reasons) 3 x's the passage refers to **the Spirit's** influence on him.

1. **Slide17b** The HS was **upon** him (25). The HS **revealed** things to him (26).
The HS **led** him (*he came in the Spirit*) (27).

G. (28) It was the custom in Jerusalem to bring a small child to a rabbi that he might **bless** the child **& pray** for it. (LKGNT; pg.144)

1. **He took Him up in his arms** – **these are arms of Hope & Faith stretched out**.
a) Here's Jesus resting in the arms of Simeon, and Simeon resting in Jesus Salvation.

H. **Slide18** (29) This section is called Simeon's *Nunc Dimittis* or *now dismiss*.

I. This is a **salvation song**, a **missionary hymn**, a **message of Hope**, a **prophecy of sorrow** to come.

1. I'm ready to be called home now!
a) **What do you want to have happen so that you could say at the end of your life, Lord, now dismiss your servant in peace?**
2. Hopefully **after** we see salvation we are then **ready to fly**.
3. **You're not ready to live, till you're ready to die!**

- J. **Depart in peace** = *to release a prisoner, to untie a ship & set sail, to take down a tent, to untie a beast of burden.*
1. It **frees** believers from the **burdens** of this life & leads us into the **blessings** of the next.
 2. Are you tied to this place? If so, *by what?*
 3. Like a Hot Air Balloon pilot, can you cut another cord loose today?
- K. (30) **Salvation** – not *soteer* (savior), not *soteria* (salvation), but *soterion* (speaking of one fitted to save). Have your eyes seen Salvation?
- L. (34,35) **The fall and rising of many** - when Jesus is preached, He always produces either *a rising or a falling* in every one of His hearers.
1. He is history's **Dividing Ridge**. Neutrality is forever impossible.
*“Rise **unbelievers** from your sins dark depths; Rise **believers** above this world, to the next.”*
- M.(35) **Sword** – a large wide sword. *Signifying extreme anguish.*
1. Mary did feel **“the sword”** in her heart repeatedly as she watched her Son during His ministry, & then stood at **the cross** where He died.
- N. **Do we await Christ's second advent** with as much **excitement & Hopeful Anticipation** as did Simeon his *Ist*?
- O. **Prayer**: Faith means **more than** believing in God; it means *believing God*.
- P. **Keywords**: Hope, cross, death, faith, freedom, God, gospel, Holy Spirit, Jesus, Pete, salvation, second coming.