



We Await His Coming Bible Study

[Please provide: musical accompaniment; Bibles, hymnals, and copies of the Bible study for attendees.]

Introduction

It seems Christmas arrives faster each year. Decorations appear in the stores and shopping malls before Halloween. The message to prepare for the “perfect holiday season” is everywhere. We spend so much time and energy decorating, planning menus, and choosing the perfect gifts for everyone and little time preparing our hearts and minds for the coming of the Christ Child.

1. What part of Christmas preparation do you find the most stressful?

2. What activities do you enjoy the most?

3. How do you keep your focus on Christ during your preparations for Christmas?

Getting into the Word

One way to keep the focus of your Christmas celebration on Christ is to observe Advent. The word Advent is from the Latin word *adventus*, which means coming. Advent is a time of preparation and waiting. The use of Advent candles started in Germany, before the Reformation, and have been widely used in Lutheran churches in America for over 100 years. Traditionally, three purple candles and one pink candle were used. Purple is the color of royalty, and the pink candle was used to signify joy. Today many churches use blue candles instead of purple, signifying hope.

Many of the Old Testament lessons read during the Advent season are prophecies about the coming Messiah.

Read the following verses and record the phrases you notice pointing to Jesus as the coming Messiah.

4. Isaiah 11:1-10

5. Isaiah 7:10-14

6. Jeremiah 33:14-16

These verses talk about an earthly descendant of King David, “a root of Jesse.” Jesus was of the family of David. This lineage was the reason He was born in Bethlehem. Joseph and Mary had traveled to Bethlehem to be registered under decree of Caesar Augustus because they were *of the house and lineage of David* (Luke 2:4).

Matthew carefully records the family genealogy that shows Jesus was a descendant of David. Read Matthew 1:1-16.

At the time of Jesus’ birth the Jews were an oppressed nation longing for an earthly Messiah, a king who would overthrow the Roman rulers.

7. What was God’s plan? Read Galatians 4:4. _____

The Jews were looking for a king, not a lowly child born in a stable. Even the wise men were looking for a king. They went to Herod’s palace to find the king.

Read Matthew 2:1-12. Share your impressions with a partner.

Second Coming

We know the story; we know the prophecies were fulfilled. We know how the story ends. Our Christmas celebrations remind us of Christ’s coming to earth as a baby to be with us – Immanuel – God with us. Our Advent preparation reminds us that He will come again. We are not surprised by Christ coming at Christmas time.

Have you ever watched a sporting event where you already knew the outcome? This often happens during the Olympics when results are announced as they happen in a remote location, but are televised later. You watch to see how the events unfold even though you know the outcome will not change.

We know Christ is coming back. Read Acts 1:6-11.

What we don’t know is when. Just as those who waited for the Messiah to come the first time, we wait, not knowing when that day will come.

Read Matthew 24:36-44.

What has God commanded us to do while we wait? Read the following passages.

8. John 13:34 _____

9. 1 Timothy 6:18 _____

10. Matthew 28:19-20 _____

Final Thoughts

As you prepare for Christmas, keep your heart ready for Christ's Second Coming. During the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season, continue to show God's love to the world around you. Speak kind words to your fellow shoppers and to the store clerks. Be ready to share the Christmas story – the story of a loving God who sent His Son to be our Savior. Don't let the busyness of life keep you from reading the Bible and praying.

Are you ready for Christmas? More importantly, are you ready for the day when Christ will come again?

Closing

Close your study by singing "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" LSB 338, LW 22.

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank You for sending Your Son to be our Savior, born as a lowly child in a stable. Help us to share Your love with those around us during the Advent/Christmas season. Strengthen us to remain vigilant and productive as we await that day when He will come again. Amen.

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