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Making and Growing Followers of Jesus

First Sunday of Advent
November 29, 2026

Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ! I pray that you had a life-giving Thanksgiving with loved ones! Advent is here.

Anticipation of Christmas day evokes memories of excitement and joy. Think about when you were a child, you could not wait for that morning to arrive to see the Christmas tree and the gifts under it. The anticipation can be tough. So, we have arrived at the first Sunday of Advent with a sense of hope and grateful anticipation of Christ. As we prepare to celebrate the first Sunday of Advent, we are reminded that Advent is a season of hopeful anticipation, expectant waiting, and spiritual preparation. In a world that often feels hurried, uncertain, and filled with darkness, Advent invites us to slow down, refocus our hearts, and remember the greatest gift ever given: Jesus Christ. The word "*Advent*" means "c*oming*" or "*arrival*." We look back with gratitude to celebrate Christ's first coming in Bethlehem, we welcome His presence in our lives today, and we look forward with anticipation to His glorious return. The First Sunday of Advent is a reminder that our Hope is not found in circumstances, possessions, or the promises of this world, but in the person of Jesus Christ.

In Isaiah 9:1-7, the prophet Isaiah speaks a powerful message of hope to people who were walking through darkness, distress, and uncertainty. Into their gloom, God promised that a great light would shine. Isaiah declares, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given," and proclaims that this coming King would be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Written hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, these words point us directly to Jesus, the promised Messiah. Christ is the light who overcomes darkness, the Savior who lifts our burdens, and the King whose kingdom will be established with justice, righteousness, and everlasting peace. What a beautiful reminder that God does not abandon His people in their darkest moments. He draws near, keeps His promises, and brings hope through His Son.

As we enter this Advent season, may we resist the temptation to become consumed by the busyness, expectations, and distractions of Christmas. Instead, let's intentionally prepare room in our hearts for Christ. Whatever circumstances you may be facing, remember that darkness does not have the final word, discouragement does not have the final word, and even our greatest struggles do not have the final word. Jesus Christ is our hope! May this season deepen our faith, strengthen our trust in God's promises, and encourage us to share the hope of Christ with those around us who need it most. As Isaiah reminds us, "The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this." Let's begin this Advent journey with expectant hearts, confident that the God who promised a Savior has fulfilled His promise in Jesus and will one day make all things new.

See you all this Sunday!

Much love,

Ben Kendrew