

OFFERING TRUE HOPE TO THE WORLD AT CHRISTMAS

When we engage with the world, when we find ourselves needing to defend our Christian commitment, one of the most powerful truths that we can offer our objectors is true hope. We can speak to them of an existence and a life that is only what it should be when it points beyond itself to the life of one who is the life and who is our only true hope.

We can show them, through our biblical lenses, what life looks like, not only here and now, but with a far-sighted view to the end of time. We can give them good reasons for the hope within us. We can point them to the only true hope — in Jesus Christ.

-- Scott Oliphint

Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

(1 Peter 1:13)

THE RESPONSIVE READING
TITUS 2:11-14

LEADER: *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,*

CONGREGATION: **Training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,**

LEADER: *Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,*

CONGREGATION: **Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.**

THE CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER TIME
ADVENT HOPE

PRAYER RESPONSE
THE GOSPEL SONG

Holy God, in love became
Perfect Man to bear my blame
On the cross He took my sin
By His grace I live again

THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

THE OFFERTORY
JUBILANT HOLIDAY • ECBC ORCHESTRA

CONGREGATIONAL GREETINGS

LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING
VIDEO CHALLENGE

THE MORNING SERMON
CONRAD "BUSTER" BROWN, SENIOR PASTOR

PASTORAL PRAYER

TIME OF RESPONSE
JOY TO THE WORLD VERSE 1

Joy to the world the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare Him room
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and heaven and nature sing!

THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

HOLD FAST TO YOUR HOPE
JOHN PIPER

So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. (Hebrews 6:17-18)

Why does the writer of Hebrews encourage us to hold fast to our hope? If the final enjoyment of our hope was obtained and irrevocably secured by the blood of Jesus, then why does God tell us to hold fast?

The answer is this:

- What Christ bought for us when he died was not the freedom from having to hold fast, but the enabling power to hold fast.
- What he bought was not the nullification of our wills as though we didn't have to hold fast, but the empowering transformation of our wills so that we want to hold fast.
- What he bought was not the canceling of the commandment to hold fast, but the fulfillment of the commandment to hold fast.
- What he bought was not the end of exhortation, but the triumph of exhortation.

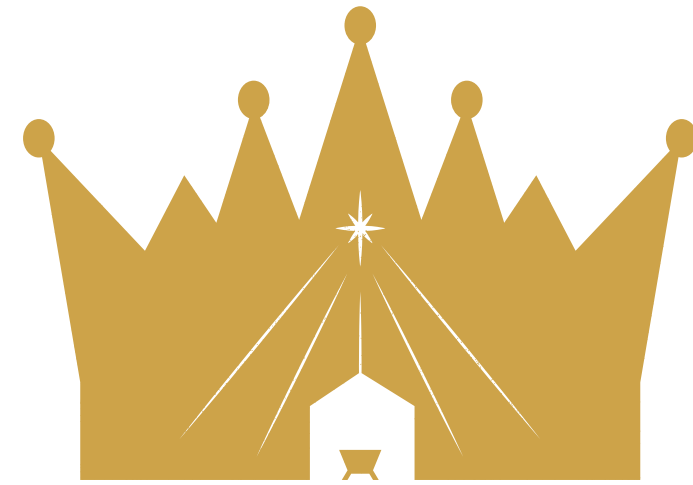
He died so that you would do exactly what Paul did in Philippians 3:12, "I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own." It is not foolishness, it is the gospel, to tell a sinner to do what Christ alone can enable him to do; namely, hope in God.

So, I exhort you with all my heart: Reach out and take hold of that for which you have been taken hold of by Christ. Hold it fast with all your might — which is his might. His blood-bought gift of your obedience.



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Equipping people to pursue Jesus Christ passionately as they impact the culture.
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ADVENT 2017
at East Cooper Baptist

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WORSHIPGUIDE

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.
Romans 15:13



EAST COOPER BAPTIST CHURCH

The Church in Corporate Worship | DECEMBER 3, 2017

Please use the following prayer to prepare your hearts for worship:

Advent at East Cooper 9:00 and 10:45 am Sanctuary Services

The season of Advent means there is something on the horizon the likes of which we have never seen before.

What is possible is to not see it, to miss it, to turn just as it brushes past you.

And you begin to grasp what it was you missed, like Moses in the cleft of the rock, watching God's [back] fade in the distance.

So stay. Sit. Linger. Tarry. Ponder. Wait. Behold. Wonder.

There will be time enough for running. For rushing. For worrying. For pushing. For now, stay. Wait. Something is on the horizon.

HOPE IS ON THE WAY

O GOD OF HOPE, as we enter this Advent season -- help me not to lose my wonder at the HOPE that advent brings.

For Wonder is at the root of praise.

Wonder is at the heart of Christmas, and not for one day only but for each waking day.

At the heart of Christ's incarnation is the truth that God makes extraordinary things happen in ordinary places, that heaven and earth holy and earthly, God and human are intertwined.

Don't let me lose my wonder.

Let me know hope.

Amen.

REFLECTION

THOUGHTS FOR WORSHIP PREPARATION

I still can hardly believe it. I, with shriveled, bent fingers, atrophied muscles, gnarled knees, and no feeling from the shoulders down, will one day have a new body, light, bright, enclosed in righteousness—powerful and dazzling.

Can you imagine the hope this gives someone spinal cord injured like me? Or someone who is cerebral palsied, brain-injured, or who has multiple sclerosis?

Imagine the hope this gives someone who is manic-depressive.

No other religion, no other philosophy promises new bodies, hearts, and minds. Only in the Gospel of Christ do hurting people find such incredible hope.

Joni Eareckson Tada

God redeemed us in His Son so that he might love us and delight in us even as he loves and delights in his eternal Son. Adoption is God's act of making room within his triune love for prodigals who are without hope, and providing them with homes in this world and the world to come.

Dan Cruver

To wait on God means to pause and soberly consider our own inadequacy and the Lord's all-sufficiency, and to seek counsel and help from the Lord, and to hope in Him (Psalm 33:20-22; Isaiah 8:17). ... The folly of not waiting for God is that we forfeit the blessing of having God work for us. The evil of not waiting on God is that we oppose God's will to exalt Himself in mercy.

John Piper

O Christ, our hope, our heart's desire, Redemption's only spring, Creator of the world art Thou, Its Savior and its King.

Latin Hymn - c. 8th Century

ADVENT

The word Advent means "coming" or "arrival."

The focus of the entire season is the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Christ in his First Advent, and the anticipation of the return of Christ the King in his Second Advent.

Thus, Advent is far more than simply marking a 2,000 year old event in history.

It is celebrating a truth about God, the revelation of God in Christ whereby all of creation might be reconciled to God. That is a process in which we now participate, and the consummation of which we anticipate.

In this double focus on past and future, Advent also symbolizes the spiritual journey of individuals and a congregation, as they affirm that Christ has come, that He is present in the world today, and that He will come again in power.

That acknowledgment provides a basis for Kingdom ethics, for holy living arising from a profound sense that we live "between the times" and are called to be faithful stewards of what is entrusted to us as God's people.

So, as the church celebrates God's in-breaking into history in the Incarnation, and anticipates a future consummation to that history for which "all creation is groaning awaiting its redemption," it also confesses its own responsibility as a people commissioned to "love the Lord your God with all your heart" and to "love your neighbor as yourself."

ADVENT PRELUDE

ELENA CRUDGE, ORGANIST

MORNING WELCOME

AND ANNOUNCEMENTS VIDEO

RISE SHINE, YOU PEOPLE

ADVENT HYMN

Rise, shine, you peo - ple! Christ the Lord has en - tered
See how he sends the pow'rs of e - vil reel - ing;
Tell how the Fa - ther sent his Son to save us.
Come, cel - e - brate; your ban - ners high un - furl - ing,

Our hu - man sto - ry; God in him is cen - tered.
He brings us free - dom, light and life and heal - ing.
Tell of the Son, who life and free - dom gave us.
Your songs and prayers a - gainst the dark - ness hurl - ing.

He comes to us, by death and sin sur - round - ed,
All men and wo - men, who by guilt are driv - en,
Tell how the Spir - it calls from ev - 'ry na - tion
To all the world go out and tell the sto - ry

With grace un - bound - ed.
Now are for - giv - en.
His new cre - a - tion.
Of Je - sus' glo - ry.

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

THE CANDLE OF HOPE

THE ADVENT ANTHEM

THOU WHO WAS RICH

*Thou Who wast rich beyond all splendor
All for love's sake becamest poor
Thrones for a manger didst surrender
Sapphire paved courts for stable floor
Thou Who wast rich beyond all splendor
All for love's sake becamest poor*

*Thou Who art love beyond all praising
All for love's sake becamest man
Stooping so low, but sinners raising
Heav'nwards by Thine eternal plan
Thou Who are God beyond all praising
All for love's sake becamest man*

*Thou Who are love beyond all telling
Savior and King we worship Thee
Emmanuel within us dwelling
Make us what Thou would have us be
Thou Who art love beyond all telling
Savior and King we worship Thee
We worship Thee*

HOPE

The word "hope" in ordinary English vocabulary is generally distinguished from certainty.

We would say, "I don't know what's going to happen, but I hope it happens."

When you read the word "hope" in the Bible (like in 1 Peter 1:13—"set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ"), hope is not wishful thinking. It's not "I don't know if it's going to happen, but I hope it happens." That's absolutely not what is meant by Christian hope.

Christian hope is when God has promised that something is going to happen and you put your trust in that promise.

Christian hope is a confidence that something will come to pass because God has promised it will come to pass.

Biblical hope is not finger-crossing. It is a confident expectation of good things to come. Hebrews calls it the "full assurance of hope"

John Piper

COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS

HYFRYDOL

1. Come, Thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy
2. Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, Born a child, and

peo - ple free; From our fears and sins re - lease us;
yet a King, Born to reign in us for - ev - er,

Let us find our rest in Thee. Is - rael's strength and con - so -
Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring. By Thine own e - ter - nal

la - tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art; Dear de - sire of
spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone; By Thine all - suf -

ev - 'ry na - tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
fi - cient mer - it, Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

CORNERSTONE

HILLSONG MUSIC

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly trust in Jesus' Name

**Christ alone, Cornerstone,
Weak made strong in the Saviour's love
Through the storm, He is Lord, Lord of all**

When darkness seems to hide His face
I rest on His unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil
My anchor holds within the veil

When He shall come with trumpet sound
Oh may I then in Him be found
Dressed in His righteousness alone
Faultless to stand before the throne