

A Season of Waiting

November 29, 2015

Learn

John 1:1-18 (NIV)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

Main Idea

As we enter into the Advent season, we enter into an intentional season of waiting. Looking at the first chapter of John, we see a message written to a people in waiting. God's people had been waiting in exile and in darkness for their promised King for years. Just as they were waiting for God to step in and fulfill His promise, so are we in a time of waiting; a time between when Jesus entered this world to illuminate the way to God and the time when He will reign on this earth again.

John writes to a people that needed answers, purpose, and hope. We can easily find ourselves with that same need, and often, we forget that our answers and purpose can be found in these same words. So, as we wait for Christmas to arrive this year, let us

also reflect on what it meant that Jesus arrived on that day, and what it still means to us, a world still in waiting.

Think...

1. Just like the beginning of Genesis, John 1:1 starts with the words “In the beginning”. Both are the beginnings of an epic story that started before time began. Using “the Word” to refer to Jesus, the passage goes on to answer the questions, who was Jesus? Where was He? And who is He? Looking back at the passage, find the answers to those questions and reflect on why Jesus is referred to as “the Word”.
2. Re-read verse. 5. Notice that it uses present tense. What does “the light” refer to and what is the significance of how this verse is specifically written?
3. What do verses 6-8 say about John’s purpose in life as well as our own?

Discuss...

1. Spend some time thinking about the emotions resulting from vs. 9-11. Though this is a time full of hope and joyful anticipation for us, God willingly walked into this time with this foreknowledge. Can you relate to these feelings?
2. Spend some time discussing verses. 12-13. These are words some of us hear often, but take a moment to sit in these truths and realize the magnitude of the hope we’re offered with the invitation into God’s family.
3. Do you ever think of grace when you think of Advent and Christmas? Read verse 16-17, how does grace fit into the Christmas story?
4. Jesus came to make God known. Verse 18 describes how Jesus is the visible expression of an invisible God. How does this affect you this Advent season? How does this affect those around you?

Next Steps

Spend this Advent season getting to know the one we are all waiting for. The gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are great places to start reading and getting to know Jesus better. Then, spend some time praying about who you can show “the light” to this season. Christmas is a great time to invite those who may not normally be open to talking about Jesus or visiting a church. Remember that you have unique opportunities to point others to God that no one else has! You can find information and tools to invite your friends and family to Christmas at summitconnect.org on our events page or at your campus’ Information Booth on Sunday.