



# GROUPS AT CROSS POINT

## BREAKING THE ICE

What is one of your favorite memories of Christmas as a child?

Have you ever celebrated Advent? If so, what's your favorite part?

## MAIN CONTENT

This week we are starting the series Advent. Advent is the seasonal countdown to Christmas. It includes the 4 Sundays leading up to Christmas, and it's based on the time period of waiting for Christ's arrival.

1. What's one thing you have waited for that involved a long, anticipated wait? Was the wait worth it?

Advent is a season of waiting. We are waiting for the arrival of Jesus and for Christmas to come. There's so much anticipation built around waiting for Christmas – the tree, the presents, the parties, the time spent with family and friends. But sometimes Christmas can remind of us the other things we are waiting for: a relationship to be healed, a new job, purpose, an answer to prayer.

2. Is there something you are waiting for right now? What is it? What has been easy or hard about waiting for this?

When we look through the Bible, we see where there was a lot of waiting. Abraham waited 24 years for Sarah to have a baby. Isaac waited 40 years for a wife. David waited 17 years to be king. There was a 400 year wait between the prophecies of Jesus being born to his actual birth. We have a hard enough time waiting for a text to be answered, so can you imagine waiting multiple years (double-digit years) for something you wanted?



For years, Jesus was on His way while the world waited. Then, when He showed up, it wasn't like everyone





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expected. The Messiah was an infant and didn't look like what most people had hoped for.

3. After a season of waiting, has God ever answered your prayer in a way you didn't expect or in a way that surprised you? How did the situation unfold in your life?

In the season of waiting, we need to remember that we are an important part of God's plan. Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and David were all a part of God's plan. In the Scriptures, we see where they weren't perfect and where they made mistakes, but God still used them as a part of His plan as the lineage of the Messiah, Jesus. Even with our mistakes, we are still a part of God's plan.

4. Where do you see yourself as a part of God's plan?

We are a part of God's plan, but God's plan is bigger than us. We may not see what He is doing all the time. We may not see what He has planned, but He has a plan. The Maker of the universe knows all things, even the number of hairs on your head. His plan is so much bigger than we can imagine.

Abraham waited for a child, and God told Abraham his descendants would be as many stars are in the sky. God knew Abraham would have a long history of descendants, but Abraham had to wait for them. Abraham had to learn to wait, and trust God that He would fulfill the promises God made. If God gave Abraham what he wanted when he wanted it, Abraham would have never learned to trust God. Abraham wouldn't have placed his hope in Him.

We put our hope and trust in Him when we get to know Him. We get to know Him by spending time with Him in Scripture, prayer and stopping by to listen for His voice.

5. What keeps you from praying, reading the Bible and listening to hear from God?

Read Proverbs 3:5-6 and Jeremiah 29:11.

God has a plan, but we have to trust Him. Waiting for Him means trusting He has a plan. If He gave us the whole plan at once, we wouldn't need Him. We would go on our way doing whatever we could working on the plan to get it done. God wants us to trust Him, not a plan.

6. Do you tend to trust in the plan you have for your life, or do you ask God for His plan and trust in Him? How has this worked or not worked in your life?





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When we wait on God, we surrender our plans to Him. A really good example of this is found in Matthew 1:18-25 in the story of Joseph. Go ahead and read the story of Joseph and Mary.

Joseph had a plan to marry the virgin Mary, but then came to find out she was pregnant with the Messiah. Can you imagine how he felt? In that moment, Joseph could have chosen to live out his plan or God's plan. Joseph surrendered his plan and chose to live God's.

7. Where have you surrendered your plan and given it to God? If you haven't, what keeps you from it?

Even while we are waiting, God is working. While the world waited for a Savior, God was working. While we wait for a diagnosis, God is working in you to trust Him. While we wait for a relationship restoration, God wants to restore and work on your relationship with Him. He is always working in the waiting. When we take the time to pray and seek Him in the waiting, we will see His plan for us unfold, and it will be better than our own plan.

8. Are you in a time of waiting? What are you waiting on right now? Have you surrendered it to God?

## CLOSING PRAYER

God, You know every hurt, sorrow, pain, joy and instance going on in our lives. We want to hear You and follow Your plan for our lives, not our own. Give us the strength to wait for You and to trust in Your plan. Help us wait for You and let Your Holy Spirit guide us. Reveal to us the hope we can have in You, and give us the grace to continue doing Your work. In Jesus' name, amen.

## ACTION STEP

Sign up for the Advent reading plan at [hereadstruth.com](http://hereadstruth.com) or [shereadstruth.com](http://shereadstruth.com). Keep each other accountable to what you are reading and how you are spending time with God over the next few weeks of the Advent season. Spend time praying for your group members and encouraging each other in the season of waiting.

Go to [www.crosspoint.tv/local](http://www.crosspoint.tv/local) to sign up for a project.