



BREAKING THE ICE

What is your favorite Christmas song and why?

What is the one gift you are really wanting for Christmas this year?

MAIN CONTENT

This week Pastor Kevin started our Christmas series called, “A Thrill of Hope: A Weary World Can Rejoice.” The message Sunday started with a beautiful story about singing Christmas carols at the Tennessee Prison for Women. A prison filled with women who all need the hope Jesus because of their past decisions that had taken them to the prison.

1. Describe a time where you have really needed the hope of Jesus.

When we think of the words of the Christmas Carol “O Holy Night” there’s a line that says, A thrill of hope, a weary world rejoices. Pastor Kevin makes the comparison from that line in the Christmas carol to our current reality right now. We are living in a time where we are weary and we need the hope of Jesus to help us make it through.

2. How are you doing right now, really? Are you weary, hopeful, tired, joyful?

Read Matt 11:28

Jesus’ yoke is light, It’s not heavy like the expectations others put on you. We can come to Him tired, weary, even crawling and barely making it. When we are weary Jesus will teach us how to rest and rejoice in Him.

Some of us are weary of waiting right now. We’re all waiting for something right now. Waiting for a diagnosis, for a relationship to change, for a job, for a healing, for COVID to be over, for direction or for a loved one to come to Christ.

3. What are you currently waiting for?

Advent is a season of waiting. It's a season where we are waiting for the arrival of Christ. The people of Israel were promised a savior and they waited over 400 years for Jesus arrival. But the good news is, Jesus came. He came to us to save us and give us worth.

As we wait, Jesus waits with us.

When our hearts are waiting for something we need to **look up** to the one who created us. It's easy for us to focus on ourselves but when we physically look up to the sky, we see so much more that God has created. He is all powerful and all knowing. When we look up to Him and ask Him how we need to know Him more, He reveals things to us to help us in our waiting.

4. How has God revealed himself to you when you have asked to know Him more? If you haven't asked to know Him more what has kept you from asking?

When we are weary in our waiting we need to **look in**. Waiting is not God's punishment to you, it's Him fulfilling His purpose for you. What God does in our waiting is just as important than what we are waiting for. When we wait, God is building our character, patience, trust, intimacy and dependance on Him.

5. Where have you seen growth in yourself during a period of waiting?

God wants us to grow in our waiting. When we are weary in our waiting we need to **look out**. When we look out, we become aware of our temptations and shortcuts. It's easy for us to take a shortcut, to speed up the waiting process. But those shortcuts are the things that can keep us from the hope, growth and promises God has for us while we wait.

6. Where have you tried to take things into your own hands while waiting for something to happen? What was the result of trusting in your shortcut instead of waiting and trusting God?

Read Isaiah 40:29

When we are weary and we've taken things into our own hands, God still urges us to come back to Him. He will give us the strength that we need to keep going, strength to keep drawing near to Him, strength to parent, strength to lead, strength to pray, strength to work, strength to find a job, strength to be a friend to those who are wearing you out, strength to bring peace to your family.

7. Where have you experienced God's strength in your life?

In our season of waiting we need to **look around**. God is moving, we may just not be aware of where. When we are waiting, we are actively waiting, looking around to see where He is moving and how He is moving. When we see where He is moving, it gives us hope that He is still here and He will move in the midst of our weariness and waiting.

CLOSING PRAYER

God thank you for sending Jesus to us. As we wait to celebrate His birth, will you do work in our hearts. Where we are weary, will you give us peace that you see us, you hear our cries and you will always be near. Help us to know you more, be aware of the things that take us away from you and where we can see you moving in our lives and the lives of the ones we love. In Jesus name, Amen.

ACTION STEP

This week

- + Look Up: ask God how do you want me to know you most right now?
- + Look In: ask God where do you want to grow me most right now?
- + Look Out: ask God where am I being tempted most right now?
- + Look Around: ask God where are you moving most right now?

Be present. Pay attention. Because He is Immanuel and he is Salvation. He is with you. He is working.