



## Advent Children's Sermon Series

### Notes for the Preacher:

- Text in bold can be said—or tweaked to sound like you—while the text in regular font is intended to be idea starters or commentary on the passage.
- In each sermon there are several idea starters. You do not necessarily need to use all of them. As you pray and prepare, perhaps you will find several idea starters that stand out to you. Build that section around those starters.
- There is opportunity in these sermons for children to respond to questions. This will help them grasp the concepts better and apply them to life.
- Sermons will be anywhere from 12-20 minutes depending on how many idea starters you choose and the length of stories you share.
- Throughout this Children's Sermon Series, we will reference a salvation method called *Savior, King, and Friend*. It's a method that teaches kids how to love Jesus as Savior, King, and Friend. On the next page is a short description. Review this. Use this in your class to lead your kids into a loving relationship with God.
- Download the *A Thrill of Hope* app. There is a song and video that teaches each week's theme. Play the video at the beginning and/or end of the service to reinforce that week's theme. These songs go along with the children's book, *A Thrill of Hope*. It's a book about Hope, an 8-year-old girl living in Bethlehem and preparing for the guests arriving at her family's inn. There are coloring pages and an Advent calendar to give kids an interactive Advent experience. Encourage parents to read this with their kids.

## THE BASICS

# *Savior—King—Friend*

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### Jesus loves you and wants a relationship with you!

“Not even the highest places or the lowest, or anything else in all creation can separate us. Nothing at all can ever separate us from God’s love. That’s because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done.”

Romans 8:39, NIV

You can ask Jesus into your heart and life!

Being a Christian means you: Love Jesus as your Savior, King, and Friend.

#### Love Jesus as Savior

Jesus saves us from sin: from poor decisions, bad attitudes, hurtful relationships, and a life without hope. He forgives us. He died and rose again for us.

(see 1 John 4:9)

#### Love Jesus as King

Jesus is all powerful. He protects us. He gives us all that we need. He is our good and wise King and we show our love by following him.

(see 1 John 5:3-4)

#### Love Jesus as Friend

Jesus gave us his Holy Spirit and promised to never leave us. He listens to us, helps us grow in wisdom, and never lets us be without a Friend!

(see John 14:26)

What does it take to be a Christian? Is it a special set of words that we have to say? Is it a special set of rules we have to follow? Though the words overflowing from our hearts and the way that we act are certainly indicators of a Christ-filled life, being a Christian is ultimately about a relationship with Jesus!

Loving Jesus as Savior, King, and Friend is a simple way to talk about who he is and the relationship he wants to have with us. Being a Christian means:

- Loving Jesus as our Savior:
  - Jesus is our forgiver and bringer of hope. We’re not stuck in sin because he has given us a way out! We believe people can really change! Jesus came not only to save us from death at the end of our earthly life, he came to save us from poor choices and bad attitudes starting now! Jesus loves us as our Savior, he forgives us, and he can change us from the inside out!
- Loving Jesus as our King:
  - Jesus is the all-powerful King of the world. We trust him as our protector, we look to him as our leader, and we submit to him as the only judge. He spent his time on earth teaching us so that we would know how to live a Christ-like life. We show our love for Jesus by giving him our worship, obeying his commands, and following his example. We live our life like he lived his, love people like he did, and submit to his authority as King of our lives!
- Loving Jesus as our Friend:
  - Jesus did not just save us, command us, and leave us. He sent his Spirit to be with us every day. What a gift! We can invite the Holy Spirit in as our primary influencer, affecting the way we think, act, and treat others. The Holy Spirit is our guide, our counselor, our comforter, and our Friend. Jesus cares about us so much that he’ll never leave us, no matter what!

If you have a kid asking Jesus into their heart and life for the first time, that’s super awesome! Celebrate with them! Make sure they tell their parents! Follow up with them this week. Don’t let them forget the huge decision they made and continue to encourage them as they make discoveries in their relationship with their brand new Savior, King, and Friend!

# *First Sunday of Advent*

**DECEMBER 2, 2018**

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## The Anticipation of HOPE

**Sunday Scripture Reading:** *Luke 21:25-36—Jesus Talks Signs*

**Supplies:** Bible; *A Thrill of Hope* song for this week

### INTRODUCTION

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- Share a personal story of a time when you were excited about a coming event. Place the emphasis on seeing the signs that this event would happen.
  - Examples:
    - We see all the Christmas decorations in the store and we know Christmas Day is coming.
    - You start to get out the luggage and pack the car and you know it's almost vacation time.
- **Today we're going to talk about being ready for something great that will happen. But first we need to get out our detective gear to do some investigating. Let's dive in and find out what Jesus wants to teach us today.**
- Before reading the passage, set the context for your kids.
  - Jesus is an adult and is teaching some of his disciples.
  - This story is one of the last times Jesus teaches his disciples before he dies.

### READ THE SCRIPTURE: Luke 21:25-36

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- Use the New International Reader's Version or another kid-friendly Bible version.
- **As we first hear what Jesus is saying, it seems like Jesus is giving us hints so that we will know for sure when he is coming back. However, as we learn in this passage, Jesus isn't trying to give us all the clues so we can figure out the exact time. Jesus is teaching us something different.**

### SECTION 1: Detective Work

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- **Do you think Jesus was trying to tell his disciples the exact date he would return? It might seem like that, but Jesus was trying to get his disciples (and us) to see the big picture: He will return one day and we need to be ready for that. Instead of focusing on one part of the puzzle, Jesus wants us to focus on what we can do to be ready for his return.**
- While Jesus doesn't give us clear clues for when he will return (i.e., date, time of day, etc.), Jesus clearly says that for those who have not chosen God's ways, their sin will overcome them.
- **This is a scary passage, but Jesus does something that only God can do:**

- Jesus takes what is scary and shows us that if we walk with Jesus, we do not have to be afraid.

## SECTION 2: Signs of Summer and Watching Carefully

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- Read verses 29-30 out loud again.
- In verses 29-30 Jesus explains the signs of summer. Who loves summer? The signs that summer is on the way just makes us happy! Jesus is saying that just like we can see the signs of summer coming and anticipate it, we can anticipate Jesus's return and get ready for it.
- The fact is that Jesus is coming back one day. But we don't know when. What Jesus does tell us, though, is that we need to prepare for his coming.
- In verse 36 Jesus says to keep watch and pray. Jesus is teaching us to continue to grow in our relationship with God so that when Jesus returns, we will be excited and ready.
- Sometimes because of sin, this world can seem sad and unfixable. But both the second coming of Jesus and the birth of Jesus promise us something new! They promise us hope for the future. We hope and get excited for the day when Jesus will come a second time and make all things new.
- It may seem weird that we are talking about Jesus coming again when we are in the midst of celebrating his birth. However, just as the Jews looked forward to a Savior coming to the world, we can look forward to Jesus coming to the world again.
- That can fill us up with hope. He brings new life, joy, happiness, and peace. When he comes, he will make all things new.
- If we understand what Jesus is saying as an encouragement to live for him now and forever, then it helps us to not live in fear about what might or might not happen. Jesus doesn't give us clear clues about the end of the world. However, Jesus *does* give us several things to do in order to be ready for that beautiful day when Jesus comes back.
  - Verse 34 Jesus teaches us that it could be a long time before we get to see Jesus coming from heaven. While you wait, don't get distracted by disobeying God.
  - Instead, allow God to teach you how you should live while you wait in hope/expectation.

## SECTION 3: Be Ready

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- Jesus ends this passage by saying we should do all these things so we will be able to stand in front of Jesus and have him be happy that we have lived for him.
- What are things you can do now to prepare for Jesus's return, so that he will be happy with how you have lived your life? Allow time for kids to think about and share their responses. Add these as needed:
  - Love Jesus as your Savior, your King, and your Friend.
  - Love other people through your prayers, words, and actions.
  - Draw near to God by praying, reading the Bible, and going to church.
  - Fulfill the great commission to go and make disciples of all nations—to the best of your ability. Share Jesus's story with those around you—here and wherever you go.

- Do what Jesus taught by feeding the hungry, welcoming people who are different than you, giving clothes to those who need them, and caring for the sick and elderly.

## CONCLUSION

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- **Jesus did not call us to be detectives who figure out when he will come again. However, Jesus did call us to ask ourselves, “Am I ready to see Jesus?” That isn’t a scary question. Jesus asks us that with excitement! As we begin this Advent season, Jesus starts us off by reminding us that we can be with him now and forever. Are you ready to see Jesus?! I can’t wait to see Jesus!**
- Share a personal testimony of how Jesus is your Savior, King, and Friend. (See the description of *Savior, King, and Friend* on page 2 of this outline.)
- **If you do not know if you are excited to see Jesus, this is a time to think about it. Maybe today would be a day when you say, “Jesus, I want you to be my Savior, my King, and my Friend. Jesus, you are my Savior! You are my King! You are my Friend! And I can’t wait for you to come again. I can’t wait to see you right in front of me!”**
- Show this week’s *A Thrill of Hope* video to reinforce the theme.
- Pray this adapted version of the Wesley Covenant prayer together. Say a line, then have the kids repeat. It might help if you have it on a screen.

Dear God,  
I give myself completely to you.  
You can ask me to do anything you want.  
I will do hard things if they need to be done.  
Whatever it is, I will do it!  
You can give me lots of things to do.  
Or you can give me a few things to do.  
Whether people love me,  
Or whether people think I am silly,  
I freely give you everything I have.  
I will love you with all my heart,  
And all my soul and all my strength,  
And I will love my neighbor as myself.  
I am yours, God, and I know you are mine.  
I pray I always live for you.  
In Jesus’s name, and by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
Amen!

—Adapted Wesley Covenant Prayer