

WAITING FOR JESUS

Jesus is Our Hope – Isaiah 7; Matthew 1 November 30th, 2025

OPENING DISCUSSION:

Q: What are your favorite things to do as you wait for Christmas Day?

Q: Do you think there is a difference between wishing for something to happen and being certain it will happen? Explain.

Q: What do you think *hope* is?

For many of us, waiting for Christmas is exciting because we know what we're waiting for. We know Jesus is already born, and we get to celebrate Him! Over the next few weeks, we're going to explore what it was like for people in the Bible as they waited. They didn't always know specifically what they were waiting for, but still, they waited in hope!

JESUS IS OUR HOPE.

ACTIVITY FOR RETENTION: *This is the first Sunday with this verse.*

Hebrews 11:1 CSB "Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen."

Hope is a confident expectation that God will do what He said He will do. Hope is more than wishful thinking—it's being certain that God will come through. When Jesus is our hope, we can put our faith in Him and know with confidence that what God says is what will be!

OPENING PRAYER: *Thank God for his presence, asking the Holy Spirit to teach us about Jesus.*

Hand out Bibles.

Today's story comes from the book of Isaiah, which is part of the prophetic books in the Old Testament, and in the Gospel of Matthew in the New Testament.

READ SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 7:10-14; Matthew 1:18-24 CSB (*explain words as necessary*)

Then...

WATCH VIDEO: "Hope" on USB (~5 min.)

DISCUSSION: *Draw out ONE BIG IDEA through questions...*

- **According to the world, how is the word hope usually used? What do you think it means to hope in God? How are these ideas the same? How are they different?** (*The world often uses hope to mean wishful thinking. To hope in God is being certain that God will come through. Hope in God means we can be confident and expect that God will do what He said He will do.*)
- **What was happening to God's people during the time of Isaiah? What was happening to God's people 700 years later when Jesus came as a baby? What similarities do you notice between these times?** (*During Isaiah's time, God's people were at risk of being attacked by their enemies. 700 years later they were ruled by the Roman Empire. During both times, they were living under threat.*)
- **Why might God have chosen those times to remind God's people to have hope?**
- **Think about the world we live in today. How is this time different from the times of Isaiah and of Jesus' birth? How is this time similar?**

- **Throughout history, God reminds people during hard times that Jesus is their hope. Think of someone in your life in need of hope. How can you share the hope of Jesus with him or her?** (*Brainstorm together simple ways to share hope with others, such as making a handmade card, inviting someone to sit with you at lunch, etc.*)

THE TRUTH: JESUS IS OUR HOPE

SO WHAT: The Bible is the big story of God loving His people. Even when God's people disobeyed Him, He still loved them, cared for them, and promised them a hopeful future. God's Son, Jesus, is the fulfillment of these promises—*He is the hope God promised!* **Even when we experience difficult times or are scared and uncertain about the future, JESUS IS OUR HOPE.**

PRAY: *Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Encourage kids to pray for someone they know who is sad or going through a hard time. They can ask Jesus to bring hope and encouragement to that person. Remind kids that God hears all our prayers, those we pray out loud and those we pray in our hearts!*

CLOSING ACTIVITY: O HOLY NIGHT POSTER

Christmas is a season of waiting. For hundreds of years, people have sung Christmas carols to remember that Jesus is their hope. Jesus is the One God's people waited for, but we know He has already come. We can wait joyfully in this season because we know that when we put our hope in Jesus, our hope is certain!

One Christmas carol that talks about hope is "O Holy Night." It describes the night Jesus was born and the hope His birth brought to God's people.

Close your eyes as I read some of the lyrics to you: "*O holy night! The stars are brightly shining. It is the night of our dear Savior's birth ... A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices.*"

I'm curious: Are you filled with hope and excitement for Christmas? Or are you feeling weary, discouraged, or sad?

Allow kids time to think and wonder quietly.

The words from "O Holy Night" are written on this poster. Show kids the poster. As the music plays, spend time quietly thinking about what it means that Jesus is your hope. You can write or draw your thoughts on the poster. You might want to illustrate certain words from the song, such as "weary world," "hope," or "Savior's birth." You may want to draw or write a thank you to God for always keeping His promises and for sending Immanuel, Jesus, our hope!