

The Hope of Heaven

THE HOPE OF HEAVEN: THE HOPE OF OUR LIVES

ADVENT WREATH

Jesus is the Hope of the World - Light first Candle

Scripture Reading: *"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins," (Matthew 1:21).*

Jesus is the Hope of our Lives - Light second Candle

Scripture Reading: *"Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us'"(Matthew 1:23 NLT).*

Jesus comes into the world not only to save us. This week we learn that He is Immanuel, God is with us! I don't know about you, but whenever I hear the word Immanuel, especially during Christmas time, I think of the popular Christmas Carol - O Come O Come Emanuel! And I remember growing up always wondering why that song just really didn't sound too happy. In regards to music it has a somber and melancholy or moody vibe.

*O come, O come, Immanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.*

Refrain:

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.*

As we dive into this morning's message, my prayer is we begin to get a clearer understanding of why this song is so significant and masterfully composed.

OG QUESTION: *When you think of the Christmas story, what do you think of? What does Christmas mean to you?*

When we picture the Christmas story, our mind may go to a beautiful star in the sky, dazzling white angels, or Magi dressed in fancy clothing. But the actual story of Christmas was anything but beautiful or pleasant. The first three years of Joseph and Mary's lives were, in a word, traumatic. And no surprise, for many people right now, the Christmas season is not necessarily a very joyful time. Actually many families right now in our congregation are experience or have recently experienced great adversity or even at times tragedy. Raise your hand if you ever felt like your world is coming undone and nothing seems to be going right. At time maybe you even felt hopeless.