



Pastor Derrick Shields “Illuminate: Why We Need The Light” 11/28/2021

Key Verses:

- Genesis 3:1-5

Key Thoughts:

- This is the first Sunday in Advent 2021. You will not find the word Advent in the Bible, but it points toward the scripture. It's an opportunity to point towards the coming of Christ. We observe this in three ways: his past coming, how he came into our lives, and his coming again. We long for the day that Jesus will come and make everything right.
- Advent simply means “coming”. Our series is entitled *Illuminate*. This word means to show the way, display, or light up. So, in a time of the year where Christ can get lost in festivities, celebrations, and gifts, we want to focus on the light of Christ. Because in him, we have hope, joy, peace, and love.
- Hope is a driving force in our life. When it's present, hope can change everything. What or who do we have hope in? Hope in the wrong place is no hope at all.
- In Genesis 3, we find a pretty bleak picture. God is explaining the consequences of the first man and woman's sin. However, in that same situation, there's a glimmer of hope. God didn't leave it there – the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent.

The Gift of the Gospel:

- When sin was introduced, a chasm was created between us and God.
- Sin separates us from God. Hope in the wrong place will eventually separate us from God. (*Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Romans 9:27*)
- We can try to fill the chasm by doing things ourselves – charitable work, church attendance, baptism, prayer. These are good things, but not if we're doing them just to check off the box.
- In life, we like to try to make things happen. But filling this chasm isn't something we can make happen. We needed something bigger than ourselves to fill it (*Romans 5:8, Ephesians 2:8-9*).
- Once we have found Jesus, we can't leave it there, we have to respond to what Jesus has done. We can know about Jesus, but if we don't live as he did, then we're missing something. (*John 1:12, Romans 10:9-10, Romans 9:27*)
- Christ's anticipated arrival offers a response to a problem we have, can affect your life today, and give you hope for tomorrow. In Christ, there is hope.

Discussion Questions:

- Did you observe Advent growing up? If so, what did that look like? If not, what do you think about what you've heard of it so far?
- When was a time in your life that you had your hope in the wrong place?
- What does it mean for you to have your hope in Jesus?