

Bible Studies for Life: December 1

Looking Forward to Christmas • Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Sydney Charlton



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As we prepare for Christmas, planning gatherings with family and friends, shopping for the perfect gifts, and decking the

halls to our hearts' content, we must pause to consider the true significance of this holiday season. Jesus Christ came to earth – fully God and fully human – to offer salvation to the world. Through Christ, we are given the gift of hope, for here on earth and for eternal life in Heaven.

We don't merely have to wonder if God will come through on our behalf in various circumstances; we have a "know so" type of hope because the foundation of our hope is steadfast and sure. We have sure hope because Jesus came to us!

Jesus' coming is the reason we celebrate Christmas! And He is the reason we have hope.

Isaiah 40:1-2

God is the perfect Father, the only One able to completely meet the needs of His children. When a newborn baby awakens in the wee hours of the night, a parent scoops the child into their arms and hushes their cries with whispers of, "Shhh, shhh, shhh. I am right here!" Through weary, sleep-deprived eyes, parents stumble through their homes to find a comfortable place to soothe their child back to sleep. God is not like us. He is able to usher us into a place of comfort because He doesn't need to search for what already belongs to Him.

God comforts His people in their distress in a manner that directs our attention to His holiness. The Hope of Heaven came to earth to redeem mankind back to Himself. What a gift!

Isaiah 40:3-5

Christ's followers each have unique gifts and abilities, but every Christian has the same calling to make much of Jesus and to proclaim His goodness. Salvation is found in Jesus Christ alone! When we declare this truth, we join with saints who have gone before us who also knew that we will one day see the glory of God in full.

God has placed you in your workplace, your community, and your family for the purpose of preparing for Christ's second coming. This holiday season will offer you numerous opportunities to have Kingdom conversations around the table with individuals you may not see often. Will you be so bold as to do so? Will you allow the goodness and faithfulness of God in your life to be the topic of conversation to prompt others to consider the same in their own lives?

Isaiah 40:9-11

How can we celebrate this Christmas season with turmoil and adversity so prevalent in our fallen world? Because for the believer, the brokenness surrounding us causes us to long for something more. Something holy and set apart. Something good. We can cling to the hope that is ours in Christ because we know this is not our home (Hebrews 13:14, NLT). God rules with might, and He gently shepherds His people and guides them to safe places.

Perhaps you have been dreading this holiday season. This year may have been full of great heartache and hardship. Even still, the hope we have in Christ prompts us to shift our perspective. Rather than dread, choose to delight in the King of kings this Christmas.

Through Christ's coming humbly as an infant, living a sinless life we could not live, and dying a death He didn't deserve, hope has been made available to all who will receive Him as Lord and Savior. God didn't leave us alone in our sin. Instead, He came to us, and because He did so we know hope in full!

Charlton is the OneHope Missions Assistant at Crossgates Baptist Church, Brandon.