

## # Small Group Guide: The Promise of His Coming

### ## Sermon Overview

This Advent sermon explores God's perfect timing in sending Jesus Christ and the hope we have in both His first and second coming. Through Galatians 4:4-5, we discover that Christ came at the "fullness of time"—when history, language, and hearts were prepared—to redeem us and adopt us as children of God.

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### ## Opening Prayer

Begin your time together by inviting God's presence and asking Him to open hearts and minds to His truth.

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### ## Ice Breaker Question

What is one Christmas tradition your family observes that helps you remember the true meaning of the season?

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### ## Key Scripture

**\*\*Galatians 4:4-5\*\*** — "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons."

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## ## Discussion Questions

### ### Part 1: Understanding the Fullness of Time

1. \*\*The sermon described 400 years of prophetic silence before Christ's birth. How do you think the faithful Israelites maintained hope during those silent centuries? What can we learn from their perseverance?\*\*
2. \*\*God prepared the world historically, linguistically, and politically for Christ's arrival. Share examples from your own life where you can now see God was preparing you for something, even when you didn't realize it at the time.\*\*
3. \*\*The phrase "fullness of time" means God's timing was neither delayed nor premature. How does this truth challenge our impatience when we're waiting on God?\*\*

### ### Part 2: Hope vs. Hope-ing

4. \*\*The sermon distinguished between "Hope-ing" (believing God *can* do it) and "Hope" (confidence God *will* do it at His appointed time). Which one better describes where you are right now? Be honest.\*\*
5. \*\*Read Proverbs 13:12. Have you experienced "hope deferred" that made your heart sick? How does knowing that Christ is our "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13) change your perspective on waiting?\*\*
6. \*\*The sermon stated, "Hope is not an idea; it is a Person." How does personalizing hope in Jesus differ from general optimism or positive thinking?\*\*

### ### Part 3: Redemption and Adoption

7. \*\*The Greek word for redeem (\*exagorazō\*) means "to buy out of slavery." What specific slavery has Christ redeemed you from? (Consider sin patterns, shame, fear, etc.)\*\*

8. \*\*We are not just forgiven—we are adopted as children of God. How should our identity as adopted children affect our daily lives and relationships?\*\*

9. \*\*Christ was "born of woman, born under the law" to fully identify with our weakness. Where do you need to remember that Jesus understands your struggles right now?\*\*

### ### Part 4: Living Between Two Advents

10. \*\*The sermon gave three practical ways to live between Christ's first and second coming:\*\*

- \*\*Wait with worship\*\* (gratitude replaces grumbling)
- \*\*Hope with humility and holiness\*\* (purify ourselves as He is pure)
- \*\*Share with boldness\*\* (proclaim the good news)

\*\*Which of these three areas is most challenging for you personally? Why?\*\*

11. \*\*Where has grumbling replaced gratitude in your life lately? What would it look like to intentionally cultivate worship this Advent season?\*\*

12. \*\*Read 1 John 3:3. What is one specific area of your life where holiness has slipped? What practical step can you take this week to realign with God's standards?\*\*

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## ## Key Takeaways

- God's timing is always perfect—He orchestrates history for His redemptive purposes
- True hope is not wishful thinking but confident trust in the Person of Jesus Christ
- Christ came to redeem us from slavery to sin and adopt us into God's family
- We live between two Advents—celebrating His first coming while anticipating His return
- Our waiting should be marked by worship, holiness, and bold witness

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## ## Practical Applications

### ### This Week's Challenge

Choose one of the following to put into practice:

#### **\*\*Option 1: Worship Over Worry\*\***

Each day this week, write down three things you're grateful for related to Christ's coming. Replace one complaint with a statement of thanksgiving.

#### **\*\*Option 2: Holiness Audit\*\***

Set aside 30 minutes for honest self-examination. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas where compromise has crept in. Confess, repent, and establish one concrete boundary to guard your holiness.

#### **\*\*Option 3: Share the Hope\*\***

Identify one person in your life who seems hopeless or discouraged. Pray for them daily, and before Christmas, find a natural way to share how Jesus has been your hope.

#### **\*\*Option 4: Study the Scarlet Thread\*\***

Read one Old Testament prophecy about the Messiah each day (Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6, Micah 5:2, etc.). Journal how each prophecy was fulfilled in Christ and what it reveals about God's faithfulness.

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#### **## Prayer Prompts**

Close your time together by praying for:

- **\*\*Patience\*\*** — Trust in God's perfect timing in our personal circumstances
- **\*\*Perspective\*\*** — Eyes to see how God is working even in seasons of silence
- **\*\*Purity\*\*** — Strength to live holy lives as we await Christ's return
- **\*\*Proclamation\*\*** — Boldness to share the hope of Jesus with those around us
- **\*\*Praise\*\*** — Grateful hearts that worship rather than grumble

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#### **## Looking Ahead**

#### **\*\*Next Week's Preparation:\*\***

Reflect on this question before your next gathering: "What does it mean to you personally that Jesus is coming again? How does that future hope affect your present reality?"

**\*\*Memory Verse for the Week:\*\***

"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons." — Galatians 4:4-5

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**## Leader's Notes**

- Allow space for vulnerability when discussing personal struggles with hope and holiness
- Be prepared to share your own examples of waiting on God's timing
- If group members are experiencing significant "hope deferred," consider pausing for extended prayer ministry
- Encourage accountability partnerships for the practical applications
- Consider incorporating an Advent wreath or candle lighting as part of your gathering during this season