



Advent. What is it? The word advent comes from the Greek word *adventus*, which translates as ‘an arrival, or a coming’. So it’s this time of year that we celebrate the time Jesus arrived on earth in the form of a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, as the Light of the world. But if the Light has already come, then why is there still darkness in this world. Well, there will be a second arrival, and in that Day all things will be made new. Right now, we live in the tension between those two arrivals- the First Coming and the Second Coming. This is what we call the “already/not yet” of the Kingdom of God. Let’s explore this idea together as we head into the Christmas season.

Read: Romans 8:18-25

What sticks out to you about this passage?

What does this passage tell us about what happened to the world, and what will happen in the future?

Learn a New Term: Inaugurated Eschatology

“Inaugurated Eschatology is an understanding of Bible prophecy that states the end times began or were inaugurated in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. According to this understanding of eschatology, some aspects of biblical prophecy have already been fulfilled while other parts are not yet fulfilled.” (taken from www.compellingtruth.org)

This is what is called the **“Already/Not Yet”** of God’s Kingdom. Some aspects of the Kingdom of God have broken through in this world because of what Jesus did on the Cross. But the Kingdom will not be fully established on the earth until Jesus returns.

In what ways do you see God’s Kingdom breaking through?

Have there ever been times where it feels like the kingdom of darkness is winning? How can we respond in those times, based on what Paul wrote in Romans 8?

Read: Matthew 24:4-8

How does this passage relate to Romans 8?

What strikes you as interesting about what Jesus is saying here?

Sometimes, it looks like the kingdom of darkness is winning the day, when in truth, God is using all the evil in this world as part of His plan to bring about the redemption of this world. We can have hope as people living in tension between the old world and the new world, because we know Jesus has already won! Everything is only leading to the Day where He will make all things right again.

Apply it:

Where have you been losing the hope you once had in the Kingdom of God?

What are some ways you can rekindle that hope this Advent season?

Is there anyone who God brings to your mind that you need to encourage this month with this hope?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for not leaving us on our own. You came and began something unstoppable. Your Kingdom has come and is still coming. We wait in eager expectation, filled with hope. But where we lack faith, pour out Your grace. Sometimes we lose heart, because it looks like evil is winning. But help us to have hope, for we know that You have truly overcome the world. May all our hope be found in You. In the name of Jesus we pray, amen.