



Are You Ready?

Devotions from  
ADVENT to EPIPHANY 2023

*Are You Ready?*

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## Preface

# Are You Ready?

*"If the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."*  
– Luke 12:39-40

Have you ever wondered why the liturgical colour during Advent is purple instead of the more "festive" colours of red, green or white? Historically, the Advent season was not a festive holiday season of feasting and merry-making. Rather, it was a season of penance, preparation, prayer and fasting – like a mini-Lent during which people prepared their hearts to be ready for Christmas, which marked the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christmas carols were not sung and parties not held until Christmas Day itself, and thereafter for 12 days until Epiphany.

Despite all the prophecies and signs given to people in the first century, most of them were still unprepared for the first coming of the Messiah. Each year, as we celebrate Christmas, we are reminded that it is not only a time to look back and remember with joy Jesus' first coming, but also a time to look forward, with anticipation, His second coming as prophesied in the Word of God.

The question for us is not when He will come again, but rather, this: When He comes again, will we be ready?

This devotional is from Advent to Epiphany, because it's about us being ready for our Lord when He comes again. Advent is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming", while Epiphany is from the Greek word *epipháneia*, which means "appearance or manifestation", usually of something or someone divine. Advent starts on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, while Epiphany is always celebrated 12 days after Christmas, on 6 January each year.

The Scripture passages in this devotional, which come from the Lectionary, tell us not just about the birth of Christ and His humanity, but also reveal to us His divinity and identity as the Son of God. It is upon this understanding of who Jesus is, that our faith is founded upon, shaped and formed.

The devotional reflections have been contributed by different people from various services in St Andrew's Cathedral, both clergy and laity.

The involvement of writers from all walks of life gives us a sense of unity across the church, for every person has something to offer. And their reflections on the assigned Advent passages, revolving around the theme of "Are you ready?", give us a sense of the common journey of faith that we are all taking. The Christian journey is not one to be undertaken alone but in a community of faith: We discover and live out our faith as a community of believers, and it is through this community that God shapes our faith.

Do read through the daily Lectionary Scripture passages prayerfully and meditatively before reading the devotional article. Together with the devotional article highlighting one or two aspects of the Scripture passage for the day, some reflection questions have been provided for you to reflect on how you can apply it. You may also use the prayer at the end to guide your time with the Lord.

As we journey together over the next few weeks from Advent to Epiphany, may we make space in our lives for the Holy Spirit to speak to us and to shape our hearts and our lives, so that we may be prepared and ready when Jesus comes again.

**Rev'd Alvin Toh**  
*Priest, St Andrew's Cathedral*



In Advent, we wait expectantly to celebrate the coming of the Christ Child and the full coming of God's Kingdom of peace. Isaiah 64:1-2b.

## Advent

The Christian Year begins with the Advent season which starts four Sundays before December 25 and ends on Christmas Eve. There are two themes to this season, both reflected by the term "advent" which means "coming." First, this season is a period to prepare for the celebration of the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas), as we recall the first time that Christ came to us. Second, it is a time to reflect and prepare for Christ's Second Coming at the end of time.

During this season, we remember the long years of waiting by the people of Israel for the Messiah, the messages of hope in the prophets and how Mary and Joseph were faithful to God's plan. Although historically observed penitentially as a "fast", modern lectionary points more towards eschatological themes, thus making Advent a time of hope and expectation.

Christmas is the great celebration of the gift of Jesus to the world. Isaiah 52:7



The colour of Advent is Purple which is symbolic of penitence and fasting as well as royalty - to welcome the Advent of the King. Purple is also the colour of suffering used during Lent and Holy Week. This points to an important connection between Jesus' birth and death. The nativity, the incarnation, cannot be separated from the crucifixion.

## Christmas & Epiphany

Christmas is our celebration of the birth of Jesus, the promised Messiah while Epiphany celebrates the early manifestation of Jesus, from his birth to the beginning of his public ministry.

The season of Epiphany recalls the events that manifest the divinity of Jesus and we are called to respond to Christ in faith. The gospel readings begin with the Visit of the Magi on the day of Epiphany and the following Sundays celebrate events such as the Baptism of Jesus, the Wedding at Cana and the Calling of the Disciples.

The liturgical colour of the season of Christmas is White, symbolising purity and joy.

6 devotions from **Advent to Epiphany**: "Are You Ready?"

## Acknowledgements

The publisher would like first and foremost to give glory to God for enabling this devotional to be put together and published for the edification of the saints and the building up of the Church of Christ.

We also wish to record our grateful thanks to the following for all the help rendered:

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ADVENT ONE

SUN 3 DEC  
2023

## The Coming of The Son of Man

Mark 13:24-37; Isaiah 64:1-9

### Sermon Reflection:

In light of the sermon preached at the services this weekend, how has the Lord spoken to you?

Is there something you would like to give thanks for? Is there something you have learnt about God that changes the way you relate with Him or with others? Is there something you need to do in response to the sermon?



Take a moment to observe what has been captured in the painting that depicts a scene in the Gospel text for this weekend. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you through what you see in the painting.

1. What part of the painting stands out to you? How does this painting make you feel? Why?
2. Take a closer look at the peripheral details – what else do you observe? What do you think God wants you to see and to learn from what you have observed?
3. Do you see yourself in this picture? Can you relate with someone/ something depicted here? How do you think God wants you to respond?



The Second Coming of Jesus (Source: <https://theraccolta.tumblr.com/archive>)



MON  
**4**  
DEC  
2023

Rev'd Canon  
Dr Lewis Lew

## WHEN HUMILITY AND FAITH MOVE MOUNTAINS

Scripture:  
**Matthew 8:5-11;**  
**Isaiah 2:1-5**

### Devotional Thought:

"Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed" (Matthew 8:8).

These words demonstrated the extraordinary humility and faith of the centurion who asked Jesus to heal his servant, who was gravely ill. He trusted Jesus to have the authority to heal his servant even without His physical presence. His humility and faith went beyond what most people at that time could comprehend, and perhaps even now.

The centurion's humility was indeed extraordinary. Despite being a powerful and influential figure, he did not rely on his position and authority. Instead, he humbled himself before Jesus, recognising the Lord's sovereign authority and power. The centurion's humility demonstrates how we need to acknowledge our spiritual impoverishment and our need for God's grace. Humility is a crucial attribute that we should possess when approaching our Lord.

The centurion's faith, too, was exemplary. He believed that even a mere word from Jesus could heal his servant. It demonstrated a faith so unwavering that it surpassed the need for visible signs. The centurion's trust in the Lord is a call for us to cultivate a similar depth of faith. Often, we look to and ask for tangible evidences before we are even willing to exercise our faith in the Lord. We can learn from the centurion's faith that transcended these demands, and affirm that Christ's authority and power surpass all earthly limitations.

Our Lord's response to the centurion is profound: "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith" (Matthew 8:10). In Jesus' statement, we can see the universality of our Christian faith and

that the Gospel is not confined to those of a certain social status, ethnicity, or background. Although the centurion was a Gentile, Christ's saving power was accessible to all who approached Him with humility and belief. As John 3:15 tells us, "Whoever believes in him may have eternal life."

The humility and faith of the centurion serves as a challenge and an encouragement for us today. It reminds us to recognise our utter dependence on the Lord and to acknowledge His sovereignty and power. When we trust our Lord with an unwavering faith, great miracles can happen, mountains can be moved, sickness can be healed, and brokenness can be mended. May we never underestimate the power of our humble faith, for our God is mighty and able to do immeasurably more than we can imagine.

### Reflection:

1. In what ways can the centurion's faith be an example for us to trust in Jesus even when circumstances seem impossible? How does the centurion's approach of Jesus reveal a profound understanding of God?

### Prayer:

Dear Lord, grant me humility to acknowledge Your power and sovereignty over my life. Strengthen my faith, so that doubts will fade in Your presence. May I follow Your path with unwavering conviction for the rest of my life. Amen.



T U E  
**5**  
DEC  
2023

A/Prof Joseph Thambiah

## ARE WE READY FOR THE RETURN TO PARADISE?

Scripture:  
Isaiah 11:1-10;  
Luke 10:21-24

### Devotional Thought:

During the period of the prophet Isaiah's ministry, the 10 northern tribes were conquered and taken into captivity by the Assyrians around 722BC and, subsequently, lost to history. The southern kingdom would be conquered and exiled to Babylon some 140 years later, around 586BC.

The kingdom of Israel which had reached its heights under David now appeared to be just a bare, withered tree stump, missing its trunk and top, and looking as though the stump would never bear any fruit any more.

And yet, Isaiah was given this vision of a tender shoot coming forth from this apparently dead stump. This was a clear reference to the coming Messiah, who would be born after the house of David had been dormant for 600 years.

This Branch was not just barely alive, but full of life, full of the Spirit of God, and full of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and a fear of the Lord; a Branch that would eventually bear much fruit. This Branch would herald the beginning of a new and glorious kingdom under a righteous, faithful and merciful king, and usher in a time of peace, harmony and joy. It was a picture of heaven, a picture of paradise. It was a picture of a kingdom that is and is to come.

Deep in the consciousness of every Christian is the understanding that there was once a true paradise on Earth, created by God with loving care for His most precious created beings to dwell in. While we were never there in the Garden of Eden, there exists a common yearning to return to paradise, to a time of innocence, a time of peace, and a time

of harmony. We may search for such a paradise on earth, but the reality is that the true Paradise awaits the faithful believer. It will become a reality when Jesus returns to judge the earth, establish His Kingdom, and usher in a time of peace and joy, a time when the wolf may dwell with the lamb.

Are we ready for the *parousia*, for the return of the King? Have we kept our lamps full of oil? Are we ready for Paradise? How are we to live as faithful disciples in the knowledge of His impending return? Instead of looking downwards, then, let us all turn our gaze up heavenwards "to the hills", from whence our help comes (Psalm 121:1-2).

### Reflection:

1. What does it mean for us to lift up our eyes "to the hills"? How can we share the message of hope this Advent with at least one other person?

### Prayer:

Lord Jesus, I await Your coming! I look towards the day when I will see You face to face. Give me a heart, Lord, that looks for Your coming on a daily basis. Give me the right words, through Your Spirit, to share this message of hope and peace with everyone I meet. And so, I declare: Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.





WED  
**6**  
DEC  
2023

James Tan

## IN THE WORLD, BUT NOT OF THE WORLD

Scripture:

Isaiah 25:6-10a;

Matthew 15:29-37

### Devotional Thought:

Christmas is a time when the streets and malls are lit up by Christmas celebrations, when the restaurant menus are filled with must-haves such as roast turkey and log cakes. It is a same time when everyone celebrates – not just Christians.

There is nothing wrong with that, of course. After all, Christmas is a time of celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. But it was against this backdrop, that I heard a sermon by a Cathedral pastor that echoed in my head. He had quoted from a report by humanitarian organisations, which estimated that one person dies of hunger every four seconds.

Many of us may have come across similar reports. But in a developed country such as Singapore, where many people are largely affluent and the minority of poor are somewhat cared for, such news can be quickly forgotten.

Yet, the hard truth is that many continue to lead desperate lives in the world today.

Hunger is just one of the many dimensions. Around the world, people are suffering from injustice, persecution, evil, lawlessness, violence, and the effects of climate changes. And there appears to be no light at the end of the tunnel.

Where can they find hope?

Isaiah 25:6-10 reminds us that when Jesus comes again, the best food will be prepared for all people, the veil covering all nations will be destroyed, and tears will be wiped away from all faces (vv. 6-8). And all will declare “this is the LORD” (v. 9).

Is this real? Will this actually happen?

Well, Matthew 15:29-37 tells us about what Jesus did in one episode while He was on earth. He had been teaching and healing multitudes on a mountainside, and the crowds who had been with Him for three days had nothing to eat. He asked the disciples to feed the people, saying, “I have compassion on the crowd because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. And I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way” (v. 32). We know what Jesus did next – He exercised His divine power and fed many thousands through the miraculous multiplication of seven loaves and a few fish.

This is the same Lord whom Isaiah said is coming again for all people!

### Reflection:

1. What actions, besides prayer, can we take up to love the physically and spiritually needy?
2. How is your intimacy with God? Is there anything you need to do to be more ready to meet Him?

### Prayer:

Lord, take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Your love. Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for You. I offer myself as a resource, to kindle hope and share the gospel. Amen.



THU  
7  
DEC  
2023

## THE EVERLASTING ROCK

Scripture:

Isaiah 26:1-6;  
Matthew 7:21,  
24-27

### Devotional Thought:

Isaiah 26:1-6 contain a song that describes a perfect city that is strong and unshakeable even when all other cities are cast to the dust. It's a city where those who dwell in it shall find perfect peace and security; where the proud and the oppressors will be brought low to the ground, and the poor and needy will no longer be oppressed. It's a city that will be built on earth not by any mortal beings, but by Jesus upon His second coming and millennial reign on earth.

This is the city of God! This is the perfect city that I want to bring my family to, not just for a holiday but to reside there for good! I suspect that this may also be the desire of many people around the world today, especially those who are living under oppression or in poverty.

But when will this become a reality? When can we be free from all oppression and dwell in this perfect city? When will Jesus return? Only God knows; we can only wait with eager anticipation.

However, the peace and security that we long to experience in this perfect city can be experienced right now, in the Lord. If you take a closer look at Isaiah 26:1-6, you will notice that the Lord is the one who provides perfect security to the people, not the walls and bulwarks (v.1).

He is the one who keeps the people in perfect peace, not the city (v.3). He is the one who makes the city strong and perfect, because He is the everlasting rock (v.4), the firm foundation. Therefore, those who keep their minds on the Lord and put their trust in Him will begin to experience His perfect peace and security even as they face all the challenges

and uncertainties of life today while awaiting the perfect city of God to come.

The same invitation can be found in Matthew 7:21, 24-27. Let us build our lives on nothing else but Christ the rock, because He is the only foundation that guarantees perfect peace and security until the end, regardless of the surrounding circumstances. Christ is our everlasting rock on whom we can depend, no matter what.

### Reflection:

1. In which aspects of your life do you need to place your trust in the Lord today? What practical steps can you take to keep your mind on the Lord each day?

### Prayer:

O Lord our God, grant us to trust in your overshadowing wings. Protect us beneath them and bear us up. You will carry us as little children, even to our grey-headed age you will carry us still.

When you are our strong security, that is strength indeed. But when our security is in ourselves, that is but weakness. Our good abides ever in your keeping, but in diverting our steps from you we have grown perverse. Let us turn back to you at last, Lord, that we be not overturned.

Unspoiled, our good abides with you, for you are yourself our good. We need not fear to find no home again because we have fallen away from it; while we are absent our home falls not to ruins, for our home is your eternity. Amen.

(Augustine of Hippo, The Confessions of St. Augustine)



F R I  
**8**  
DEC  
2023

Keith Chua

## JESUS HEALS

Scripture:

Isaiah 29:17-24;

Matthew 9:27-31

## Devotional Thought:

During the years of renewal in Singapore from the 1970s to the 1990s, I heard many testimonies of divine healing at evangelistic services, healing services, and prayer and praise services. In many instances, we witnessed instant healing; in others, people who had yet to experience healing continued to believe, and on occasion, those who went back to their doctor for follow up X-rays were told that their tumour or growth had “disappeared”.

These were amazing days: Many turned to Christ as the Holy Spirit moved in mighty ways, people prayed for both physical and inner healing, relationships were healed and restored, hurts were dealt with through spiritual healing, and families were made whole again. Many couldn't wait to tell their family and friends that Jesus is Lord and Saviour.

As I reflect on these renewal years, I've asked myself how I have been serving the Lord since the year 2000. At the Cathedral, we experienced the miracle of the Cathedral New Sanctuary, which was an answer to fervent prayer; it was a watershed point, as it doubled our built-up space. More recently, we were blessed with both the permission to build the Pavilion and a generous gift to fund the construction. Looking back at how the Pavilion came into use during COVID-19 and the current delay in the Nave restoration, I can see how timely this has been. God is all-knowing! Praise the Lord!

While we cannot turn back the hands of time, all of us can make a commitment to make every day from today count. May the Lord forgive us where we have failed to move in accordance with His perfect plan, and help us to serve Him with all our heart and with all our strength.

As Psalm 139:23-24 says: “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!”

Isaiah 29:18 speaks of spiritual as well as physical deafness and blindness. Sin has prevented the world from having a perfect relationship with God as He intended. Sin prevents us from seeing and hearing from the one and only true God. All of us need to pray for family, friends, neighbours, fellow students or work colleagues, and anyone the Lord brings to mind – and to be ready to share the Good News at any time.

Matthew 9:27-31 records Jesus healing two blind men. They received physical and spiritual healing through faith. We know this because they became witnesses (v. 31). Faith is fundamental in both our spiritual walk and serving the Lord. Jesus has assured us that faith can move mountains.

As we enter this season of celebrating the birth of our Lord and Saviour, may we be ready to recommit ourselves to serving Him wholeheartedly, for the days are short and the return of the Messiah is imminent.

## Reflection:

1. Is the Lord asking you to serve Him in new and deeper ways? Ask Him to continue to equip you to serve Him better and to respond as the Holy Spirit speaks to you.

## Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for bringing me into the Cathedral community. I praise and thank You for blessing our Cathedral with the wonderful facilities to worship and serve You. Build up my faith so that I will proclaim without hesitation that in You, all things are possible. Amen.



SAT  
9  
DEC  
2023

Anonymous

## HE KNOWS OUR FRAME

Scripture:  
Isaiah 30:19-21,  
23-26; Matthew  
9:35-10:1, 6-8

### Devotional Thought:

Our family recently welcomed a new baby. Our firstborn was thrilled, but a couple of months in, she began to realise that her little brother would turn her world upside down.

One evening, while she was building a tower out of blocks in her room, her brother toddled over and, with one swift flap of his chubby arms, her carefully-built masterpiece came crashing down. Understandably upset and perhaps worn down by a day of trying her best to be a “good sister”, she swung at her brother, hitting him in the face, before proceeding to scream and wail at the top of her lungs, throwing her toys across the room.

Shocked by her violent outburst, I was about to respond harshly to her lack of self-control when I paused, and realised how hurt and helpless she must have felt. Here was a little 4-year old, just trying to find her way in this big world. My heart filled with compassion for her, and I pulled her in close. We sat sobbing for a while before we began to try to make sense of the situation and make amends.

I saw myself in my daughter that day: bruised by the brokenness of this world; helpless against my own weaknesses, selfishness and sin; failing even in my best efforts – a flailing mess on my own.

But, in that moment, I also caught a glimpse of the Lord’s compassion for us. Matthew 9:36 says: “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”

Psalm 103:14 says that God knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust. He knows we are selfish, weak and rebellious. And He knows that we are helpless on our own. In His mercy and great love, He has compassion on us; He is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (v. 8), showering us with goodness we do not deserve and giving us a promised Hope that will save us from ourselves. He not only comforts us in our affliction and adversity, but also provides us with a Teacher to patiently guide and show us the way at every turn.

Isaiah paints a picture of the abounding, generous and patient love that God has for His people, and the promised bright hope that we share. I am deeply comforted to know that in all my sin, my weakness and my failure, my God looks upon me with compassion and draws me close.

### Reflection:

1. What areas of your life, be it sin or affliction, have you been struggling with on your own? Cry out to the Lord today and tell Him how much you need Him.
2. Do you know someone who needs to experience the compassion and loving kindness that God has shown you? It could be a partner, a child, a parent or a friend. Pray for them and ask God for an opportunity to demonstrate His love and compassion to them during this season of Advent.

### Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father,

You know my frame, my innermost being; You know that I am dust. Thank You for loving me with an everlasting love. Please forgive me for all the times when I’ve tried to live on my own terms and in my own strength. Thank You that in Your mercy and kindness, You look upon me with compassion and patiently guide me each time I fall. Please help me to show the same compassion to those around me, bringing Your loving kindness and the hope of Christ to my family, neighbours and friends. Amen.



**ADVENT TWO**  
**SUN 10 DEC**  
**2023**

## Prepare the Way of the Lord

Mark 1:1-8; Isaiah 40:1-11

### Sermon Reflection:

In light of the sermon preached at the services this weekend, how has the Lord spoken to you?

Is there something you would like to give thanks for? Is there something you have learnt about God that changes the way you relate with Him or with others? Is there something you need to do in response to the sermon?



Take a moment to observe what has been captured in the painting that depicts a scene in the Gospel text for this weekend. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you through what you see in the painting.

1. What part of the painting stands out to you? How does this painting make you feel? Why?
2. Take a closer look at the peripheral details – what else do you observe? What do you think God wants you to see and to learn from what you have observed?
3. Do you see yourself in this picture? Can you relate with someone/ something depicted here? How do you think God wants you to respond?



The Baptism of Christ by Sassoferrato © The National Gallery, London



MON  
**11**  
DEC  
2023

Rev'd Andrew Yap

## THE RANSOMED SHALL REJOICE

*Scripture:*  
**Isaiah 35;**  
**Luke 5:17-26**

### Devotional Thought:

By far, my favourite season of the year is Advent, because of the waiting, the anticipation and the yearning for the coming of Messiah. This mood is beautifully captured in the haunting melody of the Advent hymn, "O come, O come, Emmanuel". The first stanza brings to mind Isaiah 35:

*O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Isaiah 35 expresses the desire of a captive people for God to rescue them. Israel then was living in exile due to their disobedience. They had lost everything – their temple, their homes and their sovereignty. Their suffering was expressed in their weak hands, feeble knees and anxious hearts; it was as if they had been rendered blind, deaf, lame and mute. Their hopeless situation was akin to being trapped in a desert and thirsting in the burning sands (vv. 3-7).

However, their dire situation will be utterly transformed when God comes to save and ransom Israel (v. 4). The desolate and dry places will become paradise. Weak hands will be strengthened, the anxious will no longer fear, the blind will see, deaf ears will be opened, the lame will leap and the mute will sing. Waters will break forth from the wilderness and the burning sands will become a pool. There will be everlasting joy and singing as creation joins men in praise of God (vv. 1-2, 10).

Today, we find ourselves caught up in Israel's epic narrative of promise, obedience, judgement and redemption.

Every day, we may wander from God's "highway of holiness" (v. 8) and onto the ways of the world, the flesh and the devil (Ephesians 2:2-3). And so we confess that we have sinned against God and against our fellow men. Each time, when Jesus says to us, "Your sins are forgiven you" (Luke 5:23), it is like waters breaking forth from the wilderness (Isaiah 35:6), for we need water in our parched souls, to strengthen our weak knees and to renew our faltering faith. Indeed, we "rise and walk" (Luke 5:23) again each day, because of Him who has come to ransom us.

### Reflection:

1. What areas in your life are you parched, dry and in need of God's water to bring refreshment, life and transformation?

### Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank You that Your promises and faithfulness to us are everlasting. During this Advent, may You be present anew and afresh in our hearts. We pray this in the name of our Emmanuel, Jesus Christ. Amen.





T U E  
**12**  
DEC  
2023

Robin Tan

## ANXIETIES OF THE SECOND COMING

Scripture:

Isaiah 40:1-11;

Matthew 18:12-14

### Devotional Thought:

The Bible provides glimpses of the second coming of Jesus. He will come in glory, in the clouds surrounded by armies of heaven, to judge the living and the dead and to rule the earth. The Bible is silent on how we, humanity, will respond to His coming.

Those who are faithful to other gods when they see Jesus coming in grandeur, will they beat their chests, bow down and call Jesus "Lord, Lord"? Will the rulers and tyrants of this world repent and abdicate quietly, knowing that the true authority has arrived? Will the children of lawlessness reject their false doctrines and turn toward Jesus to cry for mercy? Will it be too late for them?

How about those of us who are pre-destined, baptised in Jesus' name but fall short of God's standards? Who had never quite truly loved our neighbours but showed, at best, indifference? Us, whose minds are still being renewed by the Holy Spirit, works in progress when He arrives? We, who fall hopelessly into the vicious cycle of confessing our sins and then committing the very same sins the next day and repenting again?

Will we run to embrace Jesus to see if He fits into the Jesus of our imagination? Or, will we dread meeting Him face to face, anticipating that the conversation we will likely have be unlike our prayers, where we get to pick the topic and ask all the questions? Will we be anxious about Him confronting us armed with absolute holiness and an unfailing memory of what we have done, whereas ours is, at best, selective? How can we defend ourselves against godly perfection and where can we hide? Will Jesus

search for us by name? Will He gather the holy and those who fall short, like me, to His bosom?

I found the answers when I gazed into the face of my 18-month-old granddaughter, engulfed by love. There is absolutely no wrong she can do which I cannot forgive. I will go to the ends of the world to bring her back to me.

God is love. Unlike us, He is perfect love and doesn't fall in and out of love. He has an unlimited propensity to forgive and will go to the ends of the universe to bring us back to Him.

Fear not, for those who are saved will be safe on that day when Jesus comes heralded, with love in His heart.

### Reflection:

1. Are you anxious about Jesus' second coming? Are you living your life according to His purpose for you? Be patient and remember that in all things, including the second coming, God works for the good of those who love Him and have been called according to His purpose.

### Prayer:

Lord, let us not be anxious about anything, including the second coming of Your Son. Our trust is in You, our Lord, and in Your kindness, Your forgiveness and Your unlimited love for us. We will wait patiently for You to act. Keep us in Your purpose and in our faith. Amen.



WED  
**13**  
DEC  
2023

Ivan Tan

## REST AND RENEWED STRENGTH WITH CHRIST

Scripture:  
**Isaiah 40:25-31;**  
**Matthew 11:28-30**

### Devotional Thought:

I remember the time when I was in the midst of a trying period at work and was on the brink of being burnt out. Having been through seemingly worse situations in the past, I wondered why this was so difficult to handle.

Looking back on that time, it's clear to me now that God's intervention was required, and there was nothing I could do to change anything. However, because I was in a situation where it seemed I could do something about it, I had started to rely on my own strength instead of waiting on God.

This can happen to us in any situation. In areas such as work, school, and caregiving, we often inadvertently place additional stress on ourselves. This stress can be fuelled by societal expectations. But why do we take on the yoke of society instead of Christ's?

Perhaps it is because of this: Instead of influencing others for Christ, we become influenced by what we are told is "normal" in a society that is filled by worries, stressors, demands and desires.

Individually, these worries may seem too minute for us to bring them to God; or, we may think that we have the means and capabilities to deal with them on our own. But, over time they all add up, and by the time we realise how much they weigh on us, we may be near the point of burning out.

In contrast, we are promised in Matthew 11:28-30 that Jesus will give us rest, and that our burdens will no longer wear us down when we submit ourselves to live for and learn from Jesus, who will guide us to live our lives according to what He has

planned and created us for. We can then continue in the journey of our lives with renewed strength and purpose. We can also take heart that none of our troubles are hidden from God, and His understanding is beyond what we can expect.

We can turn to God and find our rest, for He is ready to meet our needs. The question is: Are we ready to let go of our worries and trust Him?

### Reflection:

1. Which areas of your life are you holding on to? What is keeping you from trusting God with it? How can today's Scripture passage remind you to rely on God?

### Prayer:

Dear God, thank You for reminding me how much You care for us and assuring us that we may find rest and renewed strength in You. Illuminate the areas in my life which I have allowed to weigh me down, and help me to learn to let go and let You lead me forth. Even though the journey ahead will still have its challenges, I know that I can face them with renewed strength from You, until I have completed the journey You have planned for me. Amen.



THU  
**14**  
DEC  
2023

Ds Ti Lian Swan

## HOPE TRIUMPHS OVER FEAR

Scripture:

Isaiah 41:13-20  
Matthew 11:11-15

### Devotional Thought:

A businessman suffered heavy financial losses and had to sell his properties to keep his business running. When his son asked why he did not just shut the ailing business down, his father replied that while life could push them down with its many challenges, hope would help them overcome any challenges.

When the son asked how hope could help them, the father took him to a big well and asked him to jump in. The son said he could not swim, but his father pushed him in. The son struggled to keep afloat. After about five minutes, when the boy gave up and was about to drown, the father pulled him out.

The next day, the father took his son to the same well and asked him to jump in. At first the son hesitated, but jumped. Again, he struggled to keep afloat – but this time, he pushed harder and kept going. After 15 minutes, the father pulled him out. “Why were you pushing harder than yesterday?” the father asked. The son replied: “Yesterday, when you pushed me into the well, I feared that I would drown. But today, I knew that you would save me if I was about to drown.”

In their time of exile, the Jews were struggling to “keep afloat” in a pagan, foreign land. God addressed their fears and their loss of hope by assuring them of His divine deliverance. Like the son in the story who believed his father would save him, the Jews could put their hope in God to save them from “drowning” at the hands of their enemies.

We, too, are exiles on earth, longing for our heavenly home. We continue to struggle against

sin, and there will be times when we face daunting situations that evoke fear in us, challenge our faith and even cause us to lose hope.

Christ’s first coming, in fulfilment of biblical prophecy, saved us from sin and its dreadful consequences. His second coming, which is similarly prophesied, will bring our salvation to its full consummation. Let us hold fast to the certain hope of Christ’s second coming; Satan will then finally be defeated, and we will be completely delivered from the dominion of sin and all the troubles of this sin-stained world.

Like the son in the story, let us push harder because “The days we are living in between Christ’s first and second coming are not meant for our disillusionment but are ordained for a harvest of souls and for the Bride of Christ to become pure and spotless” (Jeremiah Johnson).

Let hope triumph over fear.

### Reflection:

1. Are you looking forward to the second coming of Christ? Why or why not?
2. How are you living in preparation for Christ’s second coming?
3. How can hope triumph over fear in your life?

### Prayer:

Heavenly Father, please keep me anchored in the blessed hope of Christ’s second coming, that I may, even in very challenging times, live courageously for Christ in holiness and righteousness, as His Bride prepared and eagerly waiting for the return of her Bridegroom. Amen.



F R I  
**15**  
DEC  
2023

Andrew Goh

## GOD HAS OUR BEST INTERESTS AT HEART

Scripture:

Isaiah 48:17-19;  
Matthew 11:16-19

### Devotional Thought:

In Isaiah 48:17-19, the prophet was addressing the exiled Israelites with words of hope. God was getting ready to free them from bondage in Babylon, but He also wanted them to learn where they had gone wrong. During the time of their captivity, the Israelites did not have peace in their lives because they had chosen to disobey His commands.

It wasn't as if they didn't know. The Israelites had God's commandments through the Mosaic covenant (Exodus 19) that was made with their forefathers in the desert after being delivered out of Egypt. They also had God's promises through the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 22:17, which they would have recognized with those words mentioned in v19: "your offspring would have been like the sand, and your descendants like its grains". Despite having this heritage as well as the commands of God to guide them, they did not give attention to it nor follow God's words to them.

God teaches us what is best for us and directs us in the way we should go. If we obey His commands, we will have peace like a river which flows perpetually, our righteousness will be like waves of the sea, and our names will never be blotted out or destroyed before God. What a blessed assurance!

As we reflect on this passage, may we remember that God has our best interests at heart, but we must obey His commands. God wants to show us things to come and directs our paths. So, we must, with trust and obedience, seek His leading and guidance in our lives, especially in making difficult decisions. God knows what is best for us.

I remember that I once had to make a difficult decision in my career. I had to decide whether I should continue with my full-time job or leave so that I would have more time to serve God. I hesitated, as the job was paying well and I was comfortable working there. After I sought the Lord earnestly in prayer, He led me to leave the job and guided me to start serving Him in various ministries. What a joy it has been! I find more peace at heart in serving Him.

### Reflection:

1. Have you ever had to make a difficult decision? How did you handle it, and what happened? How did seeking God for guidance make a difference?

### Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for always having our best interests at heart. Teach us to obey You and Your Word, and to seek to do Your will. We know that You want to show us the things to come and direct our paths. Amen.



S A T  
**16**  
DEC  
2023

Anonymous

## RECOGNISING OUR SAVIOUR

Scripture:

**2 Kings 2:9-12;**

**Matthew 17:10-13**

### Devotional Thought:

The Jews rightly believed that the prophet Elijah must re-appear before their promised saviour, the Messiah, would finally arrive and usher in the “day of the LORD”. This day was prophesied in Malachi, when judgment is meted out and eternal rewards are given.

Many, however, did not see John the Baptist’s ministry as a fulfilment of Elijah’s return. Even Jesus’ disciples did not make that connection.

Jesus, however, made explicit the connection between Elijah and John the Baptist’s ministry. He went on to say that just as “they” did not recognise John but imprisoned and killed him, “they” also would not recognise Jesus, and would treat Him with great contempt.

Who Jesus was referring to by “they” seemed vague, perhaps intentionally. It seemed to point, during His time, to those who denied His divinity, especially among His people. Their disbelief would eventually lead to His crucifixion.

The irony and tragedy of Jesus’ death at the hands of the people He came to save, by a method of torture and execution from a foreign power reserved for the lowest members of society, cannot be overstated. But it is precisely through His death, that all who trust in Him as their Lord and Saviour are saved, that is, brought into an eternal and loving communion with God. All things are possible with God.

But while the saving work of the cross has been done, how many people have refused to recognise Jesus as their Saviour? How willing are we to acknowledge His divinity and His sovereignty over our lives? Our beliefs direct our actions. If our actions are not consistent with our professed beliefs, then our beliefs are not as airtight as we assume.

### Reflection:

1. If we trust in Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, how should we spend our time; what thoughts should occupy our minds; and how should we conduct ourselves in our personal and professional lives?

### Prayer:

Father, in this time of Advent, inspire us to spend quality time reflecting on Scripture, praying for ourselves, our loved ones, and the world to recognise and proclaim that Your Son Jesus is Lord of our lives and of all creation. Align our hearts and minds to this reality and direct our lives according to Your holy will. Amen.



ADVENT THREE  
**SUN 17 DEC**  
2023

## The Witness of Christ

John 1:6-8, 19-28;  
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

### Sermon Reflection:

In light of the sermon preached at the services this weekend, how has the Lord spoken to you?

Is there something you would like to give thanks for? Is there something you have learnt about God that changes the way you relate with Him or with others? Is there something you need to do in response to the sermon?



Take a moment to observe what has been captured in the painting that depicts a scene in the Gospel text for this weekend. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you through what you see in the painting.

1. What part of the painting stands out to you? How does this painting make you feel? Why?
2. Take a closer look at the peripheral details – what else do you observe? What do you think God wants you to see and to learn from what you have observed?
3. Do you see yourself in this picture? Can you relate with someone/ something depicted here? How do you think God wants you to respond?



The Preaching of John the Baptist by Pieter Lastman (Collections, Mauritshuis, The Hague)





MON  
**18**  
DEC  
2023

Rev'd Alvin Toh

## EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

Scripture:

**Jeremiah 23:5-8;**  
**Matthew 1:18-24**

### Devotional Thought:

Have you ever been in a situation when you had thought that you had it all figured out, but someone threw a spanner into the works, and everything changed?

This was the case for Mary. When she, a descendent of king David from the tribe of Judah, was betrothed to Joseph, who was also of the kingly line of David and Solomon, it seemed like a perfect match of two individuals with strong backgrounds. It was a marriage made in heaven!

It turned out, however, that God had higher plans for them.

God called them both to do something out of the ordinary, in response to the His extraordinary work through the Holy Spirit. God often does the most unexpected things in the most unconventional ways at the most unpredictable times.

The question for us, then, is not what God will do, but rather: How will we respond to what God does? We can react with fear of the unknown, or respond with faith in the One who knows all things. It has been said that "the will of God will never take you to where the grace of God cannot keep you".

God intervened in my life in an unexpected way when I was in National Service.

While I was in Basic Military Training, I tripped over a plank just inches off the ground, fell, and fractured an elbow. This dashed my dream of becoming an officer, as I was deployed to a clerical role.

During this time, however, I grew deeper in my

faith in God and in His Word. That gave me the foundation to respond with faith when I received God's call to full-time ministry in my university days. I still have two broken pieces of bone in my elbow to remind me of how it all started!

When the unexpected happens in our lives and it disrupts all our dreams and plans, we can throw up our hands in frustration and hang our heads with despair. Or, we can turn our eyes towards heaven to see where the hands of our sovereign God are leading us... because it is there that we will find His all-sufficient grace for all things.

### Reflection:

1. How often have we lived in fear of the many things that can go wrong in my our lives, instead of trusting our future to the sovereign God who has good plans for us?
2. Think about some unexpected things that have happened to you in recent days. What do you think God might be saying to you through them? How do you think God wants you to respond in those situations?

### Prayer:

Almighty and sovereign God, help me to trust You in all things, especially during times when things don't happen the way I expect them to. I know that when the unexpected happens, You are never far away. Keep my eyes focused on You and what You are doing, and enable me to hear what the Spirit is saying to me through it. Amen.



TUE  
**19**  
DEC  
2023

Doris De Souza

## WITH GOD, ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

Scripture:  
Judges 13:2-7,  
24-25;  
Luke 1:5-25

### Devotional Thought:

It seemed impossible for Manoah and his wife to have a child, for his wife was barren (Judges 13:2). But God removed her barrenness, and gave them joy in their newborn son, Samson.

It seemed impossible for Elizabeth to conceive. Both were “advanced in years” (Luke 1:27) and long past the season for childbirth. But God delivered them from their disgrace and blessed them with John the Baptist (Luke 1:25).

It seemed impossible for our teenage daughter to enter her secondary school of choice, for her grades fell far short of the school’s entry requirements. But God made a way, and she is now happily settled in the school, surrounded by godly friends and teachers.

It seemed impossible for my husband and I to find joy again after the passing of our beloved son, Nathanael. There were many years of darkness and emptiness in our lives. We felt cursed, and wondered if we could ever hold our heads up high or live to testify for God again. But God brought us out of darkness and into the fullness of life. We found new joy in serving Him and enjoying His heritage for us, in our three beautiful daughters.

No matter what circumstances you are going through today, whether it is a work situation, finding your identity in your silver years, relationship issues with friends or family, suffering something that seems to be unfair, going through a life-threatening condition or financial instability, know that you have a God who is able to turn water into wine, barrenness into fullness, despair into hope, disgrace into dignity, disappointment into joy, and death into life.

Absolutely nothing is impossible for God. He did not promise a bed of roses, but He promised that He would always be with us. He can transform any situation that we are in.

Are you ready to submit your situation to God?

And if God has made all things good in your life, are you ready to share your story to witness for Him?

### Reflection:

1. What is one “impossible” thing that God has done for you or for someone you know?
2. How could sharing this story be a blessing to others in this season?

### Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for watching over me through the good times and the “impossible” times. Please use me and my circumstances to tell others about Your goodness in my life. Amen.



WED  
**20**  
DEC  
2023

Kenneth Ernest

## LET IT BE TO ME ACCORDING TO THY WORD

Scripture:  
Isaiah 7:10-14;  
Luke 1:26-38

### Devotional Thought:

In about a week's time, we will celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some 2,000 years ago, this was announced to Mary by the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:26-38). Just a teenager at that time, Mary lived in a poor home. When Gabriel appeared to her with the news that she would be the mother of the Messiah, she was deeply overwhelmed.

Mary was then a virgin, and chose to keep chaste in holy fear of the Lord despite the circumstances. Wise beyond her years, she understood that as she had been betrothed to Joseph, being pregnant would bring shame, hurt and betrayal to many people. How was she supposed to explain to her family – and more importantly, her husband-to-be, Joseph – that she was to be with child? In the small traditional town of Nazareth, she would suffer ridicule and contempt for being pregnant and unmarried. Yet she was still willing to be used as an instrument to bear the Son of the Most High God.

When Mary asked the angel how she could be pregnant when she had yet to have a sexual relationship with a man, the angel explained that the Holy Spirit of the Most High would overshadow her (Luke 1:35). He also confirmed it with the example of her relative Elizabeth, who was six months pregnant despite being barren. This truly displayed the supernatural power of God. With the Most High, nothing was impossible.

With such an assurance, Mary answered: "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38)

Mary's courageous response shows us faith and humility. She was willing to be a vessel despite her

age and circumstances. When we sing "The Magnificat: The Song of Mary" in our weekly traditional services, we are reminded of how God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble.

Mary was chosen instead of others who might have been considered more "worthy" because they were born into richer families or were well-positioned. God is more interested in those whose hearts bear an attitude of a servant, than those who feel they are worthy.

This Christmas, may we remember this young teenager whose obedience led the way for the world to meet the Saviour, the precious Lamb of God, who would take away the sin of the world.

### Reflection:

1. As you reflect on the year that has passed, ask yourself: Have you attributed your successes to your own strength and cleverness? Ask the Lord for an extra portion of humility and submission.
2. Is there an area in your life in which God is calling you to put your complete faith in Him? Will you put yourself in a place of complete surrender and say, like Mary, "I am the Lord's servant, let it be to me according to your word"?

### Prayer:

Father, forgive me for my pride, and grant me an attitude of servanthood in every facet of my life. Help me to be humble before You and others around me. In this season of Advent, may my speech, my actions and my whole life be used as a vessel for your glory. May all I do and all I am be according to Your word. Amen.



THU  
**21**  
DEC  
2023

Rev'd Soon Soo Kee

## BORN TO BE A BLESSING

Scripture:

**Zephaniah 3:14-18;**  
**Luke 1:39-45**

### Devotional Thought:

When my wife found that she was expecting early in our marriage, she cried. She was shedding tears not of joy but of apprehension, for she felt she was not ready to be a mother yet.

Our daughter was conceived and born according to God's plan. She was a beautiful baby whom many adored because she looked like a doll, with her bright eyes and thick, wavy hair. With joy, we saw her grow up. God has blessed her much, and she is also a blessing to others. Truly she was a child whose time had come in God's timing.

When Mary found that she was chosen to bear a child, she must have been very excited and ready for the great honour as the Lord's servant. She could not wait to visit Elizabeth, her cousin, whom she was told would also bear a child. The encounter was a joy not only for Mary and Elizabeth, but also for Elizabeth's unborn baby, who "leaped in her womb" (Luke 1:41). Elizabeth's baby would become John the Baptist, the forerunner of Mary's child, Jesus Christ.

Both Mary and Elizabeth had good reasons to be joyful, not just for the blessing they received in conceiving, but also being a part of God's plan of salvation. Elizabeth was therefore able to proclaim about Mary: "Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord" (Luke 1:45).

All of us are born for a purpose, according to God's plan and timing. When we seek God's plan for our lives, they will be filled with meaning and purpose. Our lives will also be a blessing to others when we live out God's will for us.

Can we not have the same joy as Mary and Elizabeth as we ponder over what God's plan is in our lives? How can we be a blessing to others as we submit to God's purpose?

### Reflection:

1. Are you ready to have God's purpose and plan fulfilled in your life? What challenges do you face in making God's plan and purpose your focus? Will you trust God to work out His will in your life?

### Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank You for our lives on earth, as they are not only a testimony of Your blessing but also a mandate for us to be a blessing to others. May we fulfil Your purpose for our lives, to Your praise and glory through Jesus Christ. Amen.



F R I  
**22**  
DEC  
2023

Melina Chua

## ARE YOU READY FOR A MIRACLE?

Scripture:

**1 Samuel 1:24-28;**  
**Luke 1:46-56**

### Devotional Thought:

As my head hit the wall at the bottom of the staircase, and just before I saw stars and blackness, I asked the Lord calmly, “Lord, is this it?”

Apparently not! Friends who heard about my accident – falling down from the top of the staircase – remarked that I could have died from such a fall. It was a miracle that I survived.

#### Three women. Three miracles. Three sons.

In 1 Samuel 1:24-28 and Luke 1:46-56, we read about three women for whom it seemed all but impossible to have a child. The Lord had closed Hannah’s womb (1 Samuel 1:6), Elizabeth was barren and advanced in years (Luke 1:7), and Mary was still a virgin (Luke 1:27).

Yet, all three conceived and gave birth to sons who changed the world, both in the times they lived in, and forever.

Hannah’s son Samuel, whose name means “asked of God”, lived in the temple from childhood after Hannah vowed to give him to God in answer to her pleading for a child (1 Samuel 1:11). He became a priest, prophet, judge and king-maker, a messenger of God at a time when visions and words from God were scarce.

Elizabeth’s son John became “the voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord’” (Luke 3:4). What a great honour and responsibility!

And Mary’s son Jesus, became “the Son of the Most High... and of his kingdom there will be no end” (Luke 1:32-33). No greater position or promise could have been bestowed on a man.

In their wildest dreams, could any of these mothers have imagined such a future for their sons? Did their hearts tremble at the prospect that their sons would leave their side and the comforts of home, destined for a life of sacrifice, rejection and suffering in the service of their Master? Oh, the heartache it must have cost them! “A sword will pierce through your own soul,” Simeon told Mary (Luke 2:35). But Hannah, Elizabeth and Mary were no ordinary women. They were women of God, who had great faith in the God of the impossible. They were ready to receive from God a miracle. And when God gave them a miracle, they were filled with praise and humility, conscious of their humble estate and the impossibility of their situation.

Mary, for example, burst into song when told that she would conceive a child: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my saviour.” (Luke 1:46-47) For one so young and innocent, she divinely recognised God’s plan for salvation and eternity. No wonder the angel Gabriel addressed her as “O favoured one, the Lord is with you.” (Luke 1:28)

All three women returned to God what they received from Him. They also surrendered themselves to whatever outcome the miracles brought in their lives.

Miracles are about praying, expecting, receiving, worshipping, and returning. “For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you.” (1 Chronicles 29:14)

### Reflection:

1. What great things are you expecting from God? Are you ready for them?

### Prayer:

Almighty God, You are the God of all things impossible. We await Your blessings with preparedness and expectant hearts. May we honour You with what You give. In our Saviour’s name we pray. Amen.



S A T  
**23**  
DEC  
2023

Dr Gilbert Tan

## GOD'S PURPOSE AND PRESENCE IN OUR LIVES

Scripture:  
Malachi 3:1-18;  
Luke 1:57-66

### Devotional Thought:

The Lord has blessed Singapore abundantly for many years. However, when we focus on our blessings and not on the Lord who blesses us, we will lose perspective of God's purpose and presence in our lives. It will cause us to conform to the patterns of this world, in which the pursuit of happiness – especially in money, sex and power – become the most important thing.

Malachi 3 reminds me that God's purpose for our lives is holiness. And Psalms 16:11 tells us that we experience "the fullness of joy" – that is, true happiness – when we are in the presence of God. We must consecrate ourselves and be holy to enter His presence and enjoy a right relationship with Him (Leviticus 11:44-35; Hebrews 12:14).

Malachi 3:1 speaks of the Lord coming suddenly to His temple "as a refiner and purifier of silver" (v. 3). In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, our bodies are also described as temples of the Holy Spirit. Together, they remind me that our Lord will come to refine and purify us, to make us holy by removing all impurities from our hearts and lives. The refining and purification process will be painful, however. As Malachi 3:2 warns us: "Who can endure the day of his coming and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap."

When the Lord comes, He will testify against sorcery, adultery, perjury, oppression (against workers, widows and orphans) and injustice towards sojourners (Malachi 3:5). These are sinful behaviours that the world engages in. In modern times, sorcery has evolved into a wide range of beliefs and practices, such as new age spirituality

and artificial-intelligence fortune telling. Let's beware and not fall prey to these new forms of sorcery.

God also expects us to be faithful to our spouse and truth. Let's guard ourselves against temptations to be unfaithful in relationships and to bear false witness. In Singapore, we have many single mothers and disadvantaged children in our midst. What can we do to help? Likewise, there are migrant workers and domestic helpers that are being exploited by their employers. Do we stand up for them?

### Reflection:

1. Are you enjoying a right relationship with God in this season? What is preventing you from being holy before God?

### Prayer:

Lord, help us not to lose perspective of Your purpose and presence in our lives. Help us to understand that You desire us to be holy so that we can enjoy true happiness in Your presence. Amen.





**SAT 23 DEC 2023**  
**The Birth of Christ Foretold**  
**Luke 1:26-38; 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16**

*Christmas Eve*

**SUN 24 DEC 2023**  
**The Birth of Christ**  
**Luke 2:1-14; Isaiah 9:2-7**

*Christmas Day*

**MON 25 DEC 2023**  
**The Identity of Christ Revealed:**  
**The Shepherds**  
**Luke 2:15-21; Titus 2:11-14**

*Sermon Reflection:*

In light of the sermon preached at the services this weekend, how has the Lord spoken to you?

Is there something you would like to give thanks for? Is there something you have learnt about God that changes the way you relate with Him or with others? Is there something you need to do in response to the sermon?

Take a moment to observe what has been captured in the painting that depicts a scene in the Gospel text for this weekend. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you through what you see in the painting.

1. What part of the painting stands out to you? How does this painting make you feel? Why?
2. Take a closer look at the peripheral details – what else do you observe? What do you think God wants you to see and to learn from what you have observed?
3. Do you see yourself in this picture? Can you relate with someone/ something depicted here? How do you think God wants you to respond?



The Adoration of the Magi / Monforte Altarpiece by Hugo van der Goes (Collections, Berlin State Museum)



TUE  
**26**  
DEC  
2023

Joseph Yong

## GOING BEYOND RELIGIOSITY

Scripture:

Galatians 2:16b-20;

Matthew 10:17-22

## Devotional Thought:

Galatians 2:16-20 underscores that we are saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus and not by our own human efforts. No matter what we do, we can never achieve holiness before God and ultimate victory in life on our own efforts.

I grew up as a very dutiful and religious boy, cleaning the family altar and also offering joss sticks to various household gods. After my mother converted to Roman Catholicism, I started attending the Novena Church religiously without fail for the next twenty-six years unless I was out of town.

Despite all my religiosity, a deep-seated fear gripped me. When driving I feared having accidents. When I see a dog, I would freeze fearing that it would jump on me. When I was home, I wanted to go out and when I was out, I wanted to go home. Life was unbearable. I thought of suicide but I also feared death and did not have the courage to end my life. I sank into depression. Using my human efforts, I tried many ways to overcome my illness. I tried meditation. I tried crystal healing. I even dabbled with the occult but to no avail.

Eventually, the Lord led me to the Cathedral where, for the first time in my life, I acknowledged the inadequacy of my self-sufficiency as I went forward to the altar for prayer. No amount of religiosity and devotion to the gods of this world could help me. God spoke to me through the pastor, who said, "Good man, whenever you have fear, it is not from God, it is from His enemy. All you have to do is to love your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength and that is enough because our God is a good God." As he spoke, the

Holy Spirit manifested. I felt a cool air blew into me from my head through my body and down to my feet.

After that, it seemed as if the world had changed. The flowers were so beautiful and colourful. The leaves were so green and bright. The sky was clear and the sun was glorious. Everybody I met along the road smiled at me. There was unspeakable joy in my heart. What happened to the fear that had tormented me for months and drove me to the brink of death? It had just gone away! Praise be to God.

That started my walk with God and I have never look back. My response to God's grace and mercy is to obey and do the "good works, which God prepared beforehand." (Ephesians 2:10) I came to Christ at the age of 48 and felt that there was much for me to catch up. But I now no longer rely on my own strength but on the Holy Spirit who guides us in all truth.

May the Lord lead you to know the depth of his love for you so that you will never look back, but live to do the works which God has prepared beforehand for you.

## Reflection:

1. How have you responded to the grace and mercy that God has showered upon you? In what ways are you living your life for Christ, instead of for yourself and in your own strength?

## Prayer:

Thank you Heavenly Father for all that You have done in my life. I pray for more opportunities to do the work that You have given me to do. All praise and glory to You. Amen.



WED  
**27**  
DEC  
2023

Teoh Teik Hoe

## SPREADING THE MESSAGE OF JOY

Scripture:  
**1 John 1:1-10;**  
**John 21:19b-25**

### Devotional Thought:

"What about him?" is a question that I often ask myself.

The constant curiosity about other people's lives, and the desire to compare, were behaviours I learnt in my youth. When I was working, some of my friends and I would compare what we had as we pursued the same rewards. While I would be happy for them if they attained better positions and were more successful than I was, I would also feel a certain degree of envy. Often, my envious nature dictated how I viewed my own life.

John 21:19-23, about Jesus Christ's command to Peter, "You, follow me," has helped me reflect on what I expect in my walk with God. While we know that following Jesus Christ will bring us true and lasting joy, no matter what happens to us or the circumstances we find ourselves in, it reminds us that in our lifelong walk with Jesus, it is not within our purview to compare our fate with that of others.

We live in a broken and fallen world, and so, until Jesus returns, we will always experience tension between joy and envy. The culture of the world tempts us to focus on what we do not have, and this leads us to envy others. Over time, this can have a detrimental effect on us and, if not addressed, may lead to sorrow, resentment or bitterness. As God holds absolute authority over our lives, we can trust Him to provide us with all our needs. And we can always turn to the Holy Spirit to steer us towards focusing on the message of joy rather than envy.

In this Advent, may we spread joy to others, not envy.

### Reflection:

1. How can we let joy be a part of our day-to-day life? What are some ways to bring the joy of Jesus Christ to others, in moments of envy or sorrow?

### Prayer:

Father, even though we know that following Your Son Jesus has its challenges, we can receive true and lasting joy in being His disciples. May we be guided to become an instrument of joy so that we can glorify You, O Lord. Amen.



THU  
**28**  
DEC  
2023

Rev'd Moses Israeli

## GOD IS WITH THE WEAK

Scripture:

**1 Corinthians**

**1:26-29;**

**Matthew 2:13-18**

### Devotional Thought:

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Redeemer, Matthew 2:13-18 invites us to enter into the rich paradox of celebrating Christmas in the context of Herod's slaughter of all male children who were two years old or under in Bethlehem. As we read about "Rachel weeping for her children (v.18)", the world we live in is one immersed in sorrows and evil.

Wars are continuing, refugees are fleeing some horror in their homelands, powerful people are oppressing the vulnerable, the poor are being exploited, and death continues to stalk the unsuspecting.

It is into this reality of the madness of want and evil, that God himself enters into the history and comes to meet us where we are "to give life to show the way".

The focus of pain and sorrow of the weak is a strong way to proclaim the Gospel. The image of salvation in the midst of cruelty is crucial. The deliverance of the Son of God from death by Herod's massacre of the children illustrates that God gives not only a means for responding to evil but also a reason. And the reason is: God's creation is holy and intended for good.

Christians do not worship a god who is here to simply fix problems. Rather we worship the God who knows our suffering, who comforts those who suffers, and who comes to the frightened, the sick, the lame, the leprous, the poor, the outcast, the outsiders, the hungry, the prostitutes, the weak of the world. He is present wherever there are tears.

Even though we do not understand why everyone is not saved from others' evil deeds (such as the children killed by Herod). Matthew tells us that God has indeed come into our midst. God has chosen to be with the weak and He invites us to be for the weak, to be with the weak, and to be the weak. Will you be with God?

### Reflection:

1. If God is with the weak, what area of your life are you willing to submit yourself to God to be for the weak, to be with the weak, and to be the weak? What actions will you be taking for God?

### Prayer:

Almighty and everliving God, in Your tender love for the human race You sent Your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take on Him our nature and to suffer death on the cross, giving us the example of His great humility. Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of His suffering and also share in His resurrection. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

(The Gregorian Sacramentary)



F R I  
**29**  
DEC  
2023

Dr Joshua Tan

## KNOWING GOD

Scripture:  
**1 John 2:3-11;**  
**Luke 2:22-35**

### Devotional Thought:

There is a big difference between knowing God and knowing about Him. An interest in theology, knowledge about God and the capacity to think clearly and talk well on Christian themes, is not at all the same thing as knowing Him.

Those who know their God, as Christian author J.I. Packer so aptly summarised, have great energy for God, great thoughts of God, great boldness for God and great contentment in God. Such characteristics were illustrated by Daniel and his friends when they defied the command of Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar to bow down to the idol he made.

John explains simply what a good example of knowing God looks like: To know Him is to understand His nature, to be transformed by His grace in our hearts, and to imitate Christ in all that we do and say.

Knowing God is a lifelong process. It is one marked by personal and corporate spiritual disciplines – of unhurried personal prayer, of faithful reading of the Scriptures, and of worshipping together in community.

God assures us in Jeremiah 29:13 that we will find Him when we seek Him with all our heart. We keep His commandments, not in a slavish way in fear of being struck down by lightning, but in a reverent way, like how a child seeks to please his parents.

John persuades us that love is essential. We can do all the right things, believe the correct truths, but still not love our fellow brethren. The first two are often easier than the last, as we know from personal experience, having been hurt by others –

especially fellow Christians. These wounds often take a long time to heal. Yet this love for our brethren is to underpin the Christian life. It is a love we experience and therefore extend to others.

May we live as Christ lived, and learn the art of attending to things temporal with a mind on things eternal.

### Reflection:

1. Do we truly know God, or do we just know a lot about Him?
2. Is there someone in your life whom you need to reconcile with?

### Prayer:

Dear God, help me to keep desiring You, to be always humble and accepting of Your will. May my life reflect Your love and grace to those around me, that they may know You as the one true God. Amen.





S A T  
**30**  
DEC  
2023

Karen Chua

## GOD VERSUS THE WORLD

Scripture:  
**1 John 2:12-17;**  
**Luke 2:36-40**

### Devotional Thought:

Many years ago, I made a decision to leave a well-paying job to serve in a deanery overseas.

In the months leading to that decision, my heart beat excitedly as I prepared for a mission trip there. As I sensed God's leading, the thought of serving overseas full-time stirred my heart. It did not take me long to seek God further and to consult my pastor. God confirmed that this was indeed what He has called me to do in this season.

However, leaving a career – just after a promotion – was not easily understood by many outside the church, including my non-Christian family members. They could not understand why I had to give it all up. Why couldn't I stay in Singapore to practise my faith, and still keep my job? To them, a good-paying job was a natural and practical thing to pursue.

In 1 John 2:15-17, the Apostle John urges us not to love the world or the things in the world. Worldliness is not just about outward behaviour; it is also internal and begins in the heart. It consists of the lust of the flesh (our flesh), the lust of the eyes (materialism), and the boastful pride of life (social status). These were used by the serpent when tempting Eve, and the devil when tempting Jesus in the wilderness.

While we are to pursue excellence in all that we do, it can also lead to us being blessed with worldly success which satisfies our flesh. So we have to keep examining our heart's true desire: Are we seeking to pursue the world and its riches, or the eternal kingdom that our Creator has promised us if we abide in Him?

Is it possible to pursue God and the world at the same time? Matthew 6:24-26 reminds us that: "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

The world looks at the outward riches, but God looks at our heart. The world will pass away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever and share in the victory of Jesus Christ over sin and death through His resurrection.

### Reflection:

1. What does it mean to abide in Christ? How can we continually love, trust, obey and receive all that God is for us in Christ?
2. What worldly pursuits do you need to surrender?

### Prayer:

Heavenly Father, just as Your Son Jesus Christ has defeated sin and death, grant us Your grace and power to overcome our fleshly desires for the world and to surrender our needs to You. Help us to seek first Your kingdom, and to trust that everything that we need will be given to us. Amen.

**SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS**

**SUN 31 DEC 2023**

## The Identity of Christ Revealed: Simeon and Anna

**Luke 2:22-40; Galatians 4:4-7**

### Sermon Reflection:

In light of the sermon preached at the services this weekend, how has the Lord spoken to you?

Is there something you would like to give thanks for? Is there something you have learnt about God that changes the way you relate with Him or with others? Is there something you need to do in response to the sermon?



Take a moment to observe what has been captured in the painting that depicts a scene in the Gospel text for this weekend. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you through what you see in the painting.

1. What part of the painting stands out to you? How does this painting make you feel? Why?
2. Take a closer look at the peripheral details – what else do you observe? What do you think God wants you to see and to learn from what you have observed?
3. Do you see yourself in this picture? Can you relate with someone/ something depicted here? How do you think God wants you to respond?



Presentation of Jesus by Ludovico Carracci © Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, on loan with the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC)



MON  
**1**  
JAN  
2024

Ds June Tan

## ALL READY FOR THE NEW YEAR

Scripture:  
**Numbers**  
**6:22 – 27;**  
**Luke 2:15-21**

### Devotional Thought:

When I was a child, my parents made sure I was ready for every new year. They would get my hair cut so I would look neat for school. They would prepare my school uniform, shoes and textbooks. How much more does our Heavenly Father also make sure that we are ready for every new year of life! Numbers 6:22-27 is a fitting passage to read on the first day of the year. In it we can see that God gives us a triple blessing for the new year: protection, plenty and peace.

**Protection:** *The LORD bless you and keep you (Numbers 6:24).* The Hebrew word, **shamar**, means to guard, watch over or protect. In Biblical times, the shepherd would protect his sheep in the wilderness by making an enclosure for them using thorn bushes. He would leave a gap where he would lie down so that wolves, bears or thieves wanting to harm the sheep would have to get past him first. As Jesus said: *I am the door of the sheep (John 10:7).* May 2024 be a year of restful, refreshing sleep at night for us as the Good Shepherd protects us from all danger.

**Plenty:** *The LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you (Numbers 6:25).* I once had 10 cats, fondly called my Tan Cats. I loved them all, but only two, Alexis and Friendly, enjoyed my company and stayed by my side. The rest were busy with their own lives and looked for me only at feeding time. So only these two cats saw my face shine upon them as I gave them not only food but also much of my love. Oh, that we would spend 2024 in God's presence, looking intently into His shining face!

**Peace:** *The LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace (Numbers 6:26).* Genesis 4 is the story of two brothers: Abel, who brought a good animal sacrifice that pleased God, and Cain, who brought a worthless offering which God rejected. *Cain was very angry, and his face fell (Genesis 4:5).* The Hebrew text means that Cain's eyes, cheeks and mouth all fell! But the blessing in Numbers 6 describes God lifting up His countenance – literally, His face – upon us. He is pleased with us and gives us peace.

The Hebrew word for peace, **shalom**, is so rich that it covers all of this: completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, health, prosperity and friendship! Thank you, heavenly Father, for giving us all we need for a beautiful 2024!

### Reflection:

1. Are you looking forward to 2024? How does God's triple blessing of protection, plenty and peace from Numbers 6 encourage you?

### Prayer:

Father, thank You for providing for my every need. I commit 2024 to You. May it please You to use me for Your glory and to serve Your purposes to bless many people. Amen.



TUE  
2  
JAN  
2024

Perdana Pan

## COUNTERING COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIANITY

Scripture:

1 John 2:22-28;

John 1:19-28

### Devotional Thought:

In 1 John 2:22-28, John warns us against those who oppose Christ in their teaching. An antichrist, as he calls them, or false teacher, is one “who denies the Father and the Son” (v. 22). To these counterfeit Christians, the truth is not important; only what is convenient is. In the last hour, we may get distressed. However, we should not let our guard down and allow quasi-Christians (if not pseudo-Christians) to exploit our fear and manipulate us. Instead, we should let the timeless Word dwell in us and possess us in all aspects of our lives, so we can live as authentic—as opposed to counterfeit—Christians.

My brother-in-law works in the money-changing business in Indonesia, where counterfeit money remains rampant. Some time ago, I remember asking him how he could tell real and counterfeit money apart. His answer was simple: “I handle the real thing, so I know what isn’t.” He then added: “I can count money with my eyes closed, and immediately tell a counterfeit bill.” It illustrates that the best way to recognise counterfeit Christianity may be to know *true* Christianity.

Whether we are young or mature Christians, we have the anointing of the Holy Spirit, who will help us discern “the real thing” and guard ourselves from false teaching. To that end of keeping to the fundamental truth, John encourages us to let the original apostolic teaching about Christ abide in us. He stresses: “Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you”, so that “you too will abide in the Son and in the Father” (1 John 2:24). Indeed, we can guard ourselves from deceivers by loving the Word and living in it. When Christ comes again in glory to judge the world, those who hold on to

the truth will not be ashamed, but will face Him confidently, that is, to “see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face” (1 Corinthians 13:12).

### Reflection:

1. Is there any way—in thought, word, and/or deed—that we might be denying Christ in our lives?
2. How can the Holy Spirit protect us from falsehoods?

### Prayer:

Lord Jesus, as we wait with expectant hearts for Your second coming, we know that there will be many who try to lead us astray. Strengthen us to abide in Your Word, so that we may have confidence and not shrink from You in shame at your coming. Help us to be obedient so that when You return, we can look You in the eye, hold our heads and hearts high, and be assured that we have remained faithful. Amen.



WED  
3  
JAN  
2024

Revd Canon Dr Louis Tay

## BAPTISED BY THE MESSIAH

Scripture:  
1 John 2:29-3:6;  
John 1:29-34

### Devotional Thought:

For 400 years, the Jews were waiting for their Messiah – God’s servant who would be anointed by the Spirit of God.

When John the Baptist came, he emphasised that he was not the Christ, but the forerunner (John 1:20,23). He subsequently identified Jesus as the One on whom he saw the Spirit descend “and remain” (vv. 32-33; Matthew 3:12-17).

So who is this Messiah, the Christ?

**The Christ is the Lamb of God** (John 1:29) who takes away the sin of the world. Jesus came to deal with the sin of humanity, so that sinners may be redeemed by the blood of the sinless One who was to be “tempted in as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). For the sake of His sinful creatures, God made Jesus “sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21) and be reconciled to our heavenly Father.

**The Christ is the Son of God** (John 1:34). He was “declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:4), so that we may receive the love of the Father and be redeemed and born again as “children of God” (1 John 2:29-3:1).

**The Christ in us enables us to practise righteousness and purity** (1 John 2:29, 3:3) and not lawlessness or sin (3:4). To keep on practising sin (pride and disobedience) is not to see or know Jesus as our Christ. The baptism of the Holy Spirit makes us God’s righteousness and enables us to live in and practise His righteousness.

Is this the Christ that we ourselves have come to know personally? If so, let us then persevere in following Him and proclaiming Him to the world. As we are enabled by the Holy Spirit of Christ to live in victory and power, let us therefore walk in righteousness on a daily basis.

### Reflection:

1. How does knowing that you belong to Jesus Christ, and that Christ is in you as His dwelling place, constrain you thus: “Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ” (Colossians 1:28)?

### Prayer:

Heavenly Father, fill me afresh with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ your Son, that I may live a crucified life to the world, the flesh and the devil, and live by faith, trusting and obeying Jesus and bringing others to Him and to be His faithful disciples, teaching others also. Amen.



THU  
4  
JAN  
2024

Eng Soon Khai

## LIVING A RIGHTEOUS LIFE IN JESUS

Scripture:  
1 John 3:7-10;  
John 1:35-42

### Devotional Thought:

How many of us marvel at a newborn? Spiritually, each of us go through a re-birth, too, when we put our faith in Jesus. In this Advent season, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, let us also remember that when we accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, we are reborn and are no longer our old selves.

There is a whole new life ahead of us, waiting to be lived out. For there is a purpose to this new birth – to live a life of righteousness and to do what is right. This may seem like a tall order, but take heart! We are not left to do this alone, or to struggle against sin by our own strength, for God himself will help us to live a life that is holy and pleasing in his sight. As 1 John 3:9 reminds Christians: “No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.”

Too often, when we are confronted by sin, we struggle using our own strength and resources, forgetting that God himself is our helper. I am reminded by what one of my pastors had shared about his past – before he came to know Jesus, he would use an unwholesome word in every other sentence. Looking at him today, I could not imagine him to be anyone other than what he is today – kind, compassionate and full of God’s love. God has clearly been at work in his life, transforming him and helping him to do what is right.

In His loving grace, God will provide us with the strength to do what is right, even if it is not the easiest path to take. At the same time, there needs to be evidence of righteousness in our lives; if not,

it suggests that our lives have not been transformed by faith through Jesus. So let us reflect on our acts and thoughts each day, and ask God to help us do the right things, that we may follow Jesus who is righteous.

### Reflection:

1. Are there examples of behaviour or acts in our lives that are not consistent with those of people who are born of God and have God’s seed in them? How can we lean on God’s strength and wisdom to do what is right, including loving our brothers- and sisters-in-Christ?

### Prayer:

Lord, help us to remember that as followers of Christ, we are born to a new life to do what is right in Your eyes. Help us to lean on You for strength and wisdom, and to live a life that is holy and pleasing in Your sight, for this is Your will for each one of us. Amen.



FRI  
**5**  
JAN  
2024

Milfona Quah

## LOVING IN DEED AND TRUTH

Scripture:  
**1 John 3:11-21;**  
**John 1:43-51**

### Devotional Thought:

In this day and age, it has become increasingly easy to find information online about a stranger. Sometimes, such information can impress us; at other times, however, it can lead us to form a bias against the individual.

Certainly, there have been occasions when I found myself pre-judging a person on the basis of one piece of information I gleaned about them, such as their education or workplace history. However, upon knowing the person better, I found some of these initial impressions to be wrong. The length of experience did not indicate a lack of knowledge or expertise, for example. Or, coming from a well-known school did not mean that the person was more intelligent or diligent than others. We need to see others for ourselves first, before making a judgment.

It reminds me of how Nathanael, on hearing from Philip about Jesus, voiced his disbelief and said: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip, however, offered him a simple answer to his question rather than using words to convince him: "Come and see." (John 1:43-46)

May we, too, "come and see" Jesus first, so that He may reveal the truth to us.

Jesus saw and reached out to Nathanael in kindness and truth, even though He knew Nathanael's bias against Him. In approaching others, may we, too, extend the love and acceptance we have received from Christ. And, in being approached by others,

may we also learn from His example in bearing an unoffendable heart, being ever gracious in our response so that in the process, Christ may be glorified.

The call to "not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth" in 1 John 3:18 demands stepping outside our comfort zone of attainable knowledge, and challenges us to come to a place of humility before God.

### Reflection:

1. Reflect on a time when you were on the receiving or giving end of prejudice. Would you have responded differently? How would you approach such a situation in the future?

### Prayer:

Father, thank You that You know our hearts better than we do, so we can have full confidence in You. We pray that You will convict us of our pride, so that we may freely surrender our struggle with loving others to You. May your Spirit turn these prayers into thoughts and actions of love. Amen.





## EPIPHANY SAT 6 JAN 2024

Revd Christopher Chan

## MANIFESTING JESUS

Scripture:  
1 John 5:5-13;  
Mark 1:7-11

### Devotional Thought:

Today we celebrate the feast of Epiphany. The root word from which “epiphany” comes means “revealing” or “manifestation”. In the context of this feast day, it refers to the manifestation of Jesus as the Son of God to the world.

During Epiphany, we remember – among other things – the baptism of Jesus, because on that significant occasion He was revealed as the Son of God by the Father’s declaration from heaven. 1 John 5:6-13 reinforces the point that God Himself testifies concerning the identity of His Son.

Jesus’ divine identity is highlighted in both of today’s readings, and this confronts us with the critical question: Who is Jesus to us, really? It would probably be easy for us to give a model answer in reply, but we should pause and consider what we truly believe about Him.

1 John 5:5 tells us that the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God will overcome the world. This isn’t something meant only for “super Christians”; it should be the experience of every believer!

Such a belief goes beyond mere intellectual assent to the idea of Jesus’ divinity; it is a deep conviction about and a firm commitment to this truth that must be lived out as a reality, each and every day. It also doesn’t depend primarily on what we do, but rather on who we are in Christ. Our abiding trust in Him enables us to experience life as God intended: transformed, victorious living.

If we truly believe that Jesus is the Son of God and wholeheartedly place our trust in Him, we will see

much of Him in our daily situations. And we will reveal much of Him in our daily situations.

Our faith in Him will not only be evident when we are in church, but we will also be revealing Jesus in and through different aspects of our lives. This should take place when we are spending time with our family and friends, when we are at work, in our interactions with our colleagues, and even during brief encounters with the strangers we cross paths with throughout each day.

Not only will we see Jesus in the midst of our daily routines, but others will also see Jesus in us! Wouldn’t that be a wonderful thing? So, let us renew our commitment to Christ our Lord and our God, and by our abiding trust in Him allow the reality of Jesus to be manifested daily in and through our lives.

### Reflection:

1. In which areas of your life should Jesus be manifested to a greater extent? What kind of changes do you wish to see, and what steps will you take towards this end?

### Prayer:

Lord Jesus, help me to better see You and reveal You in and through my daily circumstances. I pray that through my life, many will come to believe that You are the Son of God. Amen.





Scan the QR code to visit our website for the listing of worship services during this Advent & Christmas season.

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“Surely I am coming soon.”

Amen.

Come, Lord Jesus!

Rev 22:20b



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