

Week 1: Overview and Christ our Hope

Getting Started: Reflections on Advent

1. Advent is a time of waiting and expectation. What are you waiting on and what have you expectantly asked of God?
2. As we prepare for Christ's coming once again, how can you intentionally 'make room' in your spirit and your life for Emmanuel, God With Us. In so doing, how might God be calling you to walk in righteousness as the hands and feet of Christ to the world?

Primary text

Isaiah 11:1-9

Secondary text

1 Peter 2:22-24

Discussion

1. When you think about the word "hope," what jumps into your mind? How do we talk about hope in everyday life? How might this differ from the Biblical understanding of the word?
2. In the video, we discussed how prophets stand in the middle of the story of God's redemption, looking ahead to the promised fulfillment in Christ. As we have engaged this redemption story with the theme of "Christ the True and Better" this fall, what has been most impactful to you?
3. In Hebrew, there are three words typically used of the prophet: navi – referring to someone who calls or proclaims something to someone else, ro'eh – which can be translated as seer, and khozeh – which specifies that someone has received divine revelation. How do these words help us to think about the role of the prophet in the Old Testament?
4. In the video, we heard that the prophets spoke words of judgment as well as words of hope. How are the ideas of judgment and hope related? Where do we see these two ideas in Isaiah 11? Why might this relationship be significant?
5. What do you think of the idea that our hope might be too small? In what way is the vision of hope presented in Isaiah 11 a "God sized hope?"
6. Where do we see Christ in this conversation of hope?
7. As you think about your own life, what role does hope play? In what way has your relationship with Christ shaped your hope?
8. What might it look like to have a life that is shaped by a God-sized hope? Would anything change day to day, and if so, what might that look like?
9. What steps can you take this week to find hope in Christ? Who might encourage you?