

REDISCOVER CHRISTMAS: HOPE

The Purpose of Advent:

Advent is about _____ & _____.

Christmas is something we have to _____.

The Meaning of Christmas:

It is _____ in the _____.

It is _____ in the _____.

God is _____ in this _____ & _____.

It _____ the _____.

Two Extremes to Avoid

1) Being _____ with _____ & _____.

2) _____ the topic _____.

Two Things the Church Can Do:

1) Stop celebrating the _____ and start celebrating the _____.

2) Focus on a ministry of _____, not a ministry of _____.

Questions for Further Growth

For the week of November 28, 2010

- 1.** As we enter the Advent/Christmas season what are one or two things you look forward to the most? Are there any things that you're not looking forward to?

- 2.** What are some of your favorite Advent/Christmas traditions from the past? How do you continue to celebrate these traditions today? Which traditions from your past or present is it important for you to keep as you move forward into the future?

- 3.** What is the most meaningful Christmas gift that you have ever received? What made it so special? Who was it from? Was it something physical or something someone did for you?

- 4.** Pastor Tim said that the church needs to stop celebrating the holidays and learn again to celebrate the Holy Days. What do you think he meant by that?

- 5.** What evidence do you see that the church and church members have opted for secular celebrations of Advent and Christmas over long-standing historical traditions? Read Luke 1:39-45. Mother Theresa once noted that the first person to welcome Christ was John the Baptist, who leaped for joy on recognizing him, though both were still within their mothers' wombs. We, in contrast, are often so dulled by superficial distractions that we are incapable of recognizing Christ in our midst. Where do you think people are so distracted that they are prevented from jumping for joy at Christ in their midst?

- 6.** Pastor Tim said that we should be more concerned with a Ministry of Presence than a Ministry of Presents. How might you be the Presence of Christ for someone who needs to feel God's presence this Advent season?

REDISCOVER CHRISTMAS: HOPE

The Purpose of Advent:

Advent is about anticipation & preparation.

Christmas is something we have to get ready for.

The Meaning of Christmas:

It is grounded in the past.

It is celebrated in the present.

God is with us in this time & place.

It anticipates the future.

Two Extremes to Avoid

1) Being preoccupied with how & when.

2) Avoiding the topic altogether.

Two Things the Church Can Do:

1) Stop celebrating the holidays and start celebrating the Holy Days.

2) Focus on a ministry of presence, not a ministry of presents.