

Week 1, November 29: Hope

Big idea: We wait with hope because Jesus keeps His promises, and God is still shaping us while we wait.

Readings: Isaiah 64:1-9 · Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 · 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 · Mark 13:24-37

MEMORY VERSE

"But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." Isaiah 64:8 (KJV)

Kids' lesson (30 minutes)

1. **Light the candle (3 min).** Light the first candle, or show a paper one. Say: "Advent means coming. For four weeks we get ready for Jesus."
2. **Game: Keep watch (5 min).** One child is the doorkeeper and closes their eyes. Others tiptoe toward a "door" line. When the doorkeeper opens their eyes, everyone freezes. Ask: "Was it easy to stay ready?"
3. **Story: The doorkeeper (8 min).** Read Mark 13:32-37. A man goes on a long trip and tells the doorkeeper to watch, because no one knows when he will come back. Jesus says we don't know the day He will return either, so we stay ready (Mark 13:32-33).
4. **Talk about it (6 min).**
   - What does it mean to "keep watch" for Jesus?
   - How do you feel when you wait for something good, like a birthday?
   - What can we do while we wait for Jesus?
5. **Activity: God shapes me (6 min).** Give each child a ball of play dough. Read Isaiah 64:8. They shape something that shows how God is making them kind, brave or helpful.
6. **Prayer (2 min).** "God, thank You that You keep Your promises. Shape us while we wait for Jesus. Amen."

Supplies: Advent wreath or paper candles, play dough, a strip of tape for the door line.

Take-home note for families

Today we started Advent and learned to wait with hope. Ask your child: *What did the doorkeeper have to do?* This week, give your child a lump of dough or clay at dinner and read Isaiah 64:8 together.

Adult small group questions

1. Mark 13 speaks of the sun darkening and stars falling, yet tells us to watch with hope. How do you hold both fear and hope about the future?
2. Isaiah 64 begins with a cry for God to "rend the heavens" and come down. Where do you long for God to break in this year?
3. Paul tells the Corinthians they lack no spiritual gift while they wait (1 Corinthians 1:7). What has God already given you for this season of waiting?

Quiz

1. In Isaiah 64:8, who is the potter?
2. What three things does Jesus tell His followers to do in Mark 13:33?
3. According to Mark 13:32, who knows the day and hour of Jesus' return?
4. In Jesus' story, who was told to watch at the door?
5. Which tree did Jesus use to teach about reading the signs (Mark 13:28)?

Story video

A 45-second narrated video for this week is at **biblelessonhelper.com/advent**. It works with the sound off too, thanks to captions.

Quiz answers

1. God (Isaiah 64:8)
2. Take heed, watch and pray (Mark 13:33)
3. Only the Father (Mark 13:32)
4. The doorkeeper, called the porter in the KJV (Mark 13:34)
5. The fig tree (Mark 13:28)

Before you teach: look up each reference once in your church's Bible. Some newer translations word the verses differently, and a few name places differently, such as "Bethany beyond the Jordan" instead of Bethabara in John 1:28.

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