

Sermon Discussion Guide  
Sunday, November 29, 2020  
Where Is Hope to Be Found?  
Matthew 1: 18-25

This Sunday began the first week of Advent. Advent means “arrival.” So, in Advent, we prepare to celebrate the arrival of our Savior, Jesus. The theme of the first week of Advent is hope.

1. Hope is the assurance of a favorable future. Biblical hope is also eternal rather than just being temporal. With this definition in mind, can the world offer us true hope?
2. Promises are only as good as the character of the one making the promise. What aspect of God’s character gives us the assurance that his promises are rock solid?
3. God is faithful. He always keeps his promises. He has called us into a relationship that is supposed to be characterized by mutual faithfulness. So, how do you think he wants us to respond to his faithfulness?
4. Sometimes it seems as though we have watered down the definition of what it means to be faithful. We think we are faithful so long as we don’t fall away from our faith in God. We set the bar quite low there, though. If God was lukewarm in his love toward us, would you consider that to be faithfulness? Why or why not?
5. What does our devotion to God have to do with faithfulness?

Judah and Israel were unfaithful to God for many generations. Isaiah spoke against their unfaithfulness and warned of God’s impending judgment. The Assyrians were coming. They would defeat the people of Judah and Israel and take them into captivity. Intertwined with those dire warnings were prophecies of redemption. “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and they will call him Immanuel.”

6. Why are those prophecies full of hope even though the child will not be born for about 500 years?
7. What is the significance of the virgin birth? Why was it necessary?
8. Many generations before, God told Abraham that all peoples on earth would be blessed through him. How is this child born of a virgin the fulfillment of that promise?
9. Why are we still a hopeful people, even in the midst of a pandemic?