



HOUSE CHURCH FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT — “HOPEFUL WATCHFULNESS”

Theme: *Stay Awake / Watch for the Lord*

Focus: Christ will return unexpectedly, so disciples live alert, hopeful, and faithful.

Texts: Isaiah 2:1–5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11–14; Matthew 24:36–44

I. Opening

Leader:

“Today we begin Advent—a season of waiting, longing, and hope. We remember Christ’s first coming and lean forward toward his return. Advent is both comfort and wake-up call. The first Sunday of Advent focuses on *hopeful watchfulness*—the call to stay awake because Christ will return.”

II. Scripture Readings

Have 4 different people read each passage:

- **Isaiah 2:1–5** — A vision of the future kingdom where God’s peace reigns.
- **Psalm 122** — Joy in going to the house of the Lord; a call to pray for peace.
- **Romans 13:11–14** — Wake from sleep; put on Christ.
- **Matthew 24:36–44** — No one knows the hour; stay awake.

After readings, leader says:

“These passages together paint a picture: the world is not yet as it should be, but God’s future is coming. And we are called to live awake and ready.”

III. Connecting the Texts

Summary:

- Isaiah gives a hopeful **vision** of God’s coming peace.
- Psalm 122 gives us a **desire** for God’s presence and kingdom.
- Romans 13 gives us a **call** to wake up and live differently.
- Matthew 24 gives us a **warning** to stay spiritually alert.

“Advent holds together the ache of ‘not yet’ and the confidence of ‘it will be.’ We wait with our eyes open.”

A. “Wake Up”: The Advent Call (Romans 13)

Romans 13:11–14 — Wake from sleep; put on Christ.

Romans 13 gives us a **call** to wake up and live differently.

Leader briefly explains:

Paul sees the Christian life as waking up from spiritual sleep. Not fear-based urgency, but **hope-based alertness**.

Discussion Questions:

1. *What does “spiritual sleep” look like in everyday life?*
 2. *What might it mean for you to “put on Christ” this Advent?*
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B. “Stay Awake”: Jesus’ Warning and Promise (Matthew 24)

Matthew 24:36–44 — No one knows the hour; stay awake.

Matthew 24 gives us a **warning** to stay spiritually alert.

Leader briefly explains:

Jesus does not call us to guess specific dates but to live as people who expect him at any moment—people whose lives are shaped by hope.

Discussion Questions:

1. *Why do you think Jesus emphasizes that “no one knows the hour”? What does this protect us from?*
 2. *What does staying spiritually awake look like in practice?*
 3. *How can we cultivate an attitude of readiness without slipping into anxiety or legalism?*
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C. “Come, Lord!”: Living Toward God’s Future (Isaiah 2 & Psalm 122)

Isaiah 2:1–5 — A vision of the future kingdom where God’s peace reigns.

- Isaiah gives a hopeful **vision** of God’s coming peace.

Psalm 122 — Joy in going to the house of the Lord; a call to pray for peace.

- Psalm 122 gives us a **desire** for God’s presence and kingdom.

Leader briefly explains:

Isaiah sees a future where nations stream to God, swords become plowshares, and peace defines the earth. Psalm 122 shares this longing for God’s peace in the world.

Discussion Questions:

1. *What part of Isaiah’s vision of the future kingdom stirs your hope the most? Why?*
 2. *How does praying for peace—like Psalm 122—shape the way we live today?*
 3. *What small, concrete practices can we take on this Advent to “walk in the light of the Lord” (Isa 2:5)?*
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V. Spiritual Practice for the Week

Advent Practice: A Daily “Wake-Up Prayer”

Each morning this week, ***before looking at your phone:***

Pray:

“Lord Jesus, awaken my heart today. Help me walk in your light. Keep me alert to your presence and faithful to your call. Amen.”

Invite people to place this prayer on a mirror or as a phone wallpaper.

VI. Closing Prayer

Leader prays:

“Lord Jesus Christ, you are our hope. Wake us from spiritual sleep. Make us people who watch, who wait, who trust, and who walk in your light. As we begin this Advent season, deepen our longing for your kingdom and shape our lives in readiness for your return. Amen.”