



Advent Devotion - Hope

As we move into this Advent season, we are all hoping for things. We hope we will be able to see family for Christmas, we hope for a great new year, or we hope for a snowy Christmas. These are all good things to wish for but it is important to take a moment at the start of Advent to examine biblical hope. A biblical hope is more than wanting something to happen; it is

an assurance for the future. The Old Testament prophets had hope in the coming of their savior, Jesus.

One such prophet tells us in *Isaiah 40:28-31 (NIV)*, "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

The passage starts off questioning us, for many of us we do know and we have heard. For most of us this is not our first advent. We have heard the message of hope before but as we move into the craziness of the Christmas season though we know and have heard, do we remember and are we letting the hope of Christ fill our hearts? Let us take the opportunity this Advent to fill up on the hope in Christ. The passage goes on to give a quick resume for God and remind us of the power he has displayed. This is a great preface to the promise of hope the passage is about to make. Remembering what God has done, creating the ends of the earth, makes it easier for us to have hope in God. Then, it goes on to make the promise to give us strength so that we may walk and not be faint. The passage tells us this wonderful promise is delivered to us by the hope in the Lord. The Lord has been, and will continue to be, faithful to us which gives us this hope in Him. This is the biblical hope because it is not just something we want to happen; we can be assured of God's provision in and for our lives. God has seen the end of all of our stories and he knows it all works out. This Advent season, we can have hope in God's grace and love for us.

The, appropriately named, song 'Hope' by Remedy Drive says "What a beautiful sight for the worn and weary eye. The glimmer of light in the corner of a broken sky. Hope sweet hope like a star burning bright. When the sun goes down and the fears begin to fly. Hope's not giving up".

Hope is not giving up and so we can let the hope we find in Christ fill our hearts to share with our community this Advent season as we look forward to the birth of our Savior.

Let's pray: Lord as we enter into Advent and our heads fill with many hopes for the season, I pray that you would direct our hearts to our true hope in you. We know that all of the things of this world will eventually fail us but we can always count on our hope in you. Focus our minds that we may see you more clearly during this time and that we may radiate your hope to those around us. Lord, open our eyes to the needs around us and equip us to do your work this season and spread your hope.

-Written by Jake Weskamp