

DECEMBER 10, 2023

"Introducing...!"

Scripture: John 1:6-8, 19-28 NRSV



INTRODUCING...!

ADVENT

Today is the 2nd Sunday of Advent. Advent is a time when we anticipate and prepare for the coming of Christ. The prophet Isaiah tells us that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. Read John 1:6-8. John the Baptist was the son of Elizabeth and Zechariah, who were righteous in God's eyes, obedient, and faithful but they were unable to have children until an angel of the Lord told Zechariah that God had heard his prayer and he and Elizabeth would have a son. Elizabeth and Zechariah are only mentioned in Luke's gospel. Read their story in Luke 1:5-25 and 57-80 and discuss what stands out to you. In Luke 1:15-17 how is John the Baptist described and what will he accomplish?
2. What happened to Zechariah after he questioned the angel?
3. Don't miss Zechariah's prophecy in Luke 1:68-79. In verses 76-77 what does Zechariah say his son, John, will be called and what will he do?
4. In Luke 1:79 what does Zechariah say Jesus will do?
5. Read John 1:19-28. In verse 20 what was John the Baptist's reply when he was asked, "Who are you?" (The priests and temple assistants thought John was either the prophet foretold by Moses -see Deuteronomy 18:15, Elijah -see Malachi 4:5, the Messiah, or a false prophet. They pressed him because people were expecting the Messiah.)
6. In John 1:23, John the Baptist quotes the prophet Isaiah. Who does he say he is?

7. In our own lives, how are we reflecting Jesus' light and clearing the way for Him?
8. Read John 1:26. John states he is baptizing with water. This is a symbolic act of repentance, but soon the Messiah will come who will truly forgive sins as only the Messiah can do. In our own Advent journey, we wait, knowing that Jesus is coming. How are you preparing your heart and mind for His coming?

AUTHORS

John, a fisherman, who along with his brother, James, became disciples of Jesus and were part of the original 12. John wrote his gospel around AD 85-90 to prove that Jesus is the Son of God and that all who believe in him will have eternal life. John was an eyewitness to Jesus' death and resurrection and gives a powerful account of these events.

CONTEXT

John's gospel opens by stating that in the beginning the Word already existed. The Word is Jesus who was fully divine and fully human and has always existed, being present at the creation. Jesus is the true light and the darkness of evil never has and never will extinguish or overcome his light. Our scripture passage today begins with an introduction of John the Baptist, who was sent by God to prepare the way and tell about the light that is Jesus Christ.

ENCOURAGEMENT

The author, Ann Voskamp, calls the Season of Advent, "A slow unfurling of grace."