

## Advent

Gail Arterburn –2024

Monday, 9:30 – 11:00 am  
To be discussed – 10/21/24

Lesson 1  
*In the beginning...* Gen 1, John 1

1. The Christmas story doesn't really start in the New Testament with the familiar accounts of Jesus' birth found in Matthew and Luke. To fully appreciate the baby born in a manger, we have to go back to the beginning. Read Genesis 1:1, John 1:1-14. Who was that baby? What do these verses tell us about his existence, his "beginning," his actions, his very nature?
2. One author wrote, "Christmas comes alive when we make time to think about Him." For instance, the child in the manger is the same person who put the stars in the sky...even the star that led the wise men to him. The creator of all there is, became a creature living in the world he created. Consider Him...how does that expand your view of Christmas beyond presents, candles, food and decorations?
3. Read Gen. 1:31, 3:1-24. What happened to the "good" found in creation? When confronted with what they had done, how did Adam and Eve respond? Re-read this familiar account and list acts of God's mercy in the face of such willful disobedience and rebellion.
4. What hope is found in Gen. 3:15? Notice this promise of God comes in the midst of His curse on the serpent and before he pronounces curses on Eve, on the ground, and on Adam. Was this promise of Satan's destruction dependent on the future actions of sinful man? Who was the seed to come?
5. How is His coming and our salvation and act of grace and mercy? Should not those thoughts fill our minds through the season of Advent as we prepare ourselves to celebrate His coming?
6. Read Hebrews 10:5-14, Isaiah 53:10-12. Here is the Christmas Story as told by Jesus Christ. Why did He come? (Heb. 10:7, 9) What was the will of God for Him? Why was He the only one perfectly suited to carry out that purpose?
7. God's plan of salvation is like a 3-act play: Act 1 – eternity past, Act 2 –1<sup>st</sup> Advent, Act 3 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent. We are living in the intermission between Act 2 and 3. Victory has been won, but not fully realized – and so we still struggle as we live in a fallen world. Writers of Christmas carols recognized this even as they rejoiced in His coming– *Yet in the dark streets shineth the everlasting Light; And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low; who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow.* What darkness are you living in? What load are you carrying? Do you feel as if life is an uphill climb? Jesus is the solution! He came! There is light in the darkness. How can that encourage you now? Change your perspective?