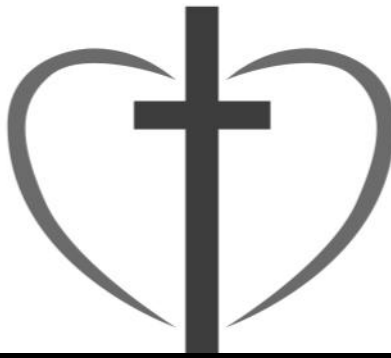


Temple Baptist Church



December 2019

Wade Allen

Lead Pastor

Derrick Bremer

Pastor of Student Ministries

John O'Connor

Pastor of Community Engagement

Ron Fields

Pastor of Senior Adults & Care Ministries



For the past month or so, we have had a lot of discussion here at church—in the office and in some of our small groups—about the meaning of the word “Hope.” We find this word scattered throughout Scripture. Most of us read over this simple word without giving it a second thought. I mean, we all know what “hope” means, right?

We use this word “hope” all the time in day-to-day conversation. Some might say, “I hope that my work will be satisfactory” or “That treatment is her last hope.” Or how many times have you heard a child say, “I hope that I get _____ for Christmas!”

We use this word “hope” as a synonym for “a wish, desire, goal or aspiration.” What we need to realize is that this is NOT the biblical understanding of the word “hope.” Hope in the Bible is referring to “a confident expectation” not wishful thinking!

In Peter’s first letter, he recounts God’s mercy in that He “has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:3). Hope is often used in the

Bible with other connecting words or phrases. The Bible speaks of good hope, blessed hope, a better hope, the hope of righteousness, the hope of the Gospel, the hope of salvation, and more.

In Romans 15:13, Paul refers to God as “the God of hope.” And back in 1 Peter 3:15, we are challenged to be “prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.” The Christian “Hope” is not merely wishful thinking—it is the confident expectation that God will do exactly what He said He would do. We can count on Him to fulfill His promises!

This Christmas, we will be diving deep into the story of Jesus’ first advent and correlating these events with their biblical prophecies and the writings of Paul to the church at Rome. He writes, “For in this **hope** we were saved. Now **hope** that is seen is not **hope**. For who **hopes** for what he sees? But if we **hope** for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience” (Rom 8:24-25).

There are many who struggle to find hope during this time of year. We want to encourage you to extend an invitation to them to discover the true meaning of hope this Christmas. As Paul David Tripp wrote, “Hope is not a situation, a location, a feeling, or a relationship. Hope is a person, and His name is Jesus.”



First there was an announcement: “Congratulations! You are going to be grandparents!” Shock and awe! Then the back and forth phone calls: “Are you doing ok? Obeying the doctor’s orders?”

Next came the ultrasound pictures. Baby developing, growing, all is well. Then as the due date approached came heightened anticipation. Mother, father and baby doing fine but we were wondering if the big event was ever going to arrive!

News flash! Baby here. Carolina Gray Fields and the accompanying statistics. And pictures! Surely the most beautiful baby in all the world!

Then came the necessity of working out schedules as to when we could get our first hands on. Since multiple families are involved we had to get clearance from different directions. And the anticipation continued. According to our plans we were to get first sight and first touch on November 11. We could hardly wait!

Disciples heard a first announcement back in Acts chapter one verse 11. “...this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” The anticipation was so great that some early believers became convinced He had already come thus Paul’s explanation to the Thessalonians (2 Thessalonians 2: 1-2). Others were comforted by John (1 John 3:2).

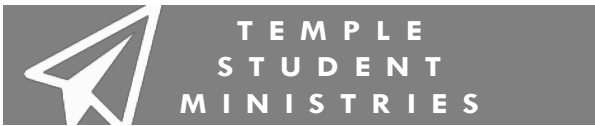
Though no person knows the day nor the hour when Christ shall return, we anticipate He may come at any moment. So our anticipation motivates us to serve Him more fervently, more boldly. What a day that will be when our Savior we shall see.



I hope your Thanksgiving was amazing, and a very Merry Christmas to you and your family! So many things cross our minds and our task list this time of year. Budgeting time and money for all the Christmas Parties, end of the year parties, and of course trying to finish the year strong at work. This season, I encourage you to look to add something to your list:

Matt 22:36-40 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" 37 And He said to him, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.* 38 *This is the great and first commandment.* 39 *And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* 40 *On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.*"

We are called to love with all our **Heart**, to love with our emotions... our first reactions. How do you first react? We are to love our God with all our **Soul**, which is to love with the innate part of us that was created by our Creator. We can’t love him with our Soul if we have not accepted His Son Jesus Christ. We are called to love with all our **Mind**, this is our faith. When we depend on our own understanding we lead ourselves to ruin, but we need to rest on His words. The way we rest on His words is to renew our mind with His words daily. Lastly, Jesus tells us to love our "Neighbor as Yourself". He has already given us the template to loving ourselves, which is to love God with all our **Heart, Soul, and Mind**. If we truly want to love our Neighbor, love them like Christ loved us. Show them the true spirit of Christ, which is the only reason we can celebrate Christmas. Merry Christmas!



Derrick Bremer, Pastor of Student Ministries

Holiday Season. For many, this seems to be their favorite time of year. The other camp however often dreads the travel, weather, and chaos of this season. Between the end of November and the beginning of January, our students are scheduled more than three weeks of vacation—just another contributor to the disorder that comes from coordinating the shenanigans of holiday festivities.

My prayer for our families is that we'll take time to rest and enjoy this season.

Remember what we're celebrating. I love starting this last quarter with Thanksgiving. I look forward to sharing what we're thankful for and reflecting on the year as a family. The advent and fulfilment of so much *eager anticipation* is worthy of our reflection. Starting December 1st, Michelle, Charlotte, and I will start reading out loud a chapter of Luke each night (there's 24) which will take us right up to Christmas Eve.



Have a grounding routine. When we're on vacation it is easy to fall away from our routines. There's no reason to keep up with the pace of a school or work week; but ignoring habits and schedules can contribute to the anxiety that comes with this time of year. Start your morning with some quiet time in the Word. If you're currently between studies, consider reading and responding to book IV of the Psalms (Ps. 90-106).



December 1	Business Meeting - 6 PM
December 2	Monday Ladies Study - 6:30 PM
December 3	Tuesday Ladies Study - 10:00 AM
December 4	Puggles/Cubbies Store Night
December 5	Christian Seniors - Noon
December 7	Next Step Party @ Jones' - 2 PM
December 8	Singing Men of Arkansas Concert
December 11	T & T Store Night
December 13	Unnamed Class Christmas Party
December 14	Ladies Party @ Dot's - 10 AM
December 18	Sparks Store Night
Dec 20-21	Youth Lock In
December 22	The Lord's Supper - PM Service
December 24	Christmas Eve Service - 5-6 PM
Dec 25-27	OFFICE CLOSED - CHRISTMAS
December 29	5th Sunday Fellowship Meal Evening Service Dismissed
December 31	New Year's Eve Party - 7 to Midnight
January 1	OFFICE CLOSED - New Year's Day

Take advantage of the family time. With students home from school, consider leading a bible study in your home. This doesn't have to require a lot of preparation. Simply choose a text (maybe the Gospel of John) and discuss what the Bible says and how you're going to apply it as a group.

I continue to pray that this would be a calm and exciting time of year for all of us as we reflect on how much we have to celebrate.

Opportunities for Worship & Service

SUNDAY

Sunday School 9:45 AM
 Worship Service 10:45 AM
 Children’s Church 10:45 AM
 Choir Practice 4:45-5:45 PM
 Student Life Groups 6:00 PM
 Alpha Sigma Bible Study 6:00 PM
 Kidz Choir/Preschool Praise. . . . 6:00 PM
 Evening Worship Service 6:00 PM

MONDAY

Ladies Bible Study (12/2) 6:30 PM

TUESDAY

Ladies Bible Study (12/3) . . 10:00 AM

WEDNESDAY

Awana 6:00 PM
 TSM (Temple Student Ministry) 6:00 PM
 Men’s Bible Study. 6:00 PM
 Adult Bible Study. 6:30 PM

THURSDAY

Christian Seniors (1st Thursday). NOON
 Alpha Theta Bible Study 6:45 PM



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