

GoDeeper



CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION WITH YOUR SMALL GROUP, FAMILY, OR IN YOUR PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY TIME.

The Cast of Christmas | Part 1 | Pastor Steve Wells | 12.06.2020
Replay message at: <http://www.northpointeFL.org/messages>

Video showed during church today: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nM65pWjxsN8>

Question: "What is Advent?"

Answer: Advent is the season of the year leading up to Christmas. The word advent itself means "arrival" or "an appearing or coming into place." The Advent season lasts for four Sundays. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, or the nearest Sunday to November 30. Advent ends on Christmas Eve and thus is not considered part of the Christmas season. The Advent celebration is both a commemoration of Christ's first coming and an anticipation of His second coming. As Israel longed for their Messiah to come, so Christians long for their Savior to come again. Advent is seen as a time to prepare one's heart for Christmas and for the eventual return of Christ (and the judgment He will bring to the world).

Advent calendars, used to count down the days till Christmas, are popular in many homes. An Advent calendar contains a number of covered "windows" that are opened, one a day, until Christmas Day. Each open window reveals a picture related to the season or a poem or a Bible verse or a treat of some kind. Many parents find that an Advent calendar is a good way to teach their children the true meaning of Christmas—although there are secular versions of the calendars, too.

Should Christians Observe Advent?

This is a matter of personal conviction. There is certainly nothing wrong with commemorating Jesus' birth and anticipating His return—such commemoration and anticipation should be an everyday part of our lives.

- Are Christians required to observe Advent? No.
- Does observing Advent make one a better Christian or more acceptable to God? No.
- Can celebrating Advent be a good reminder of what the season is truly all about? Yes, and therein lies its greatest value.

Discuss & Share with your family or your Small Group:

- What were your childhood memories and traditions of Christmas?
 - Was Jesus the central character or was it Santa?
 - What impact do you think that had on your life/faith as an adult?
- Has your family ever celebrated Advent?
- How does your family "anticipate" the Birth of Jesus?
 - What traditions do you have in your family to keep the focus of Christmas on His Birth and Second Coming?