

“If Jesus Came Here for You”

Isaiah 64:1-8, Mark 13:24-37

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Today is the first Advent Sunday. In the church calendar, Advent marks the beginning of the church year. Last Friday, our worship ministry team and volunteers decorated our sanctuary and transformed it into a holy space. It is truly beautiful and spiritual! On behalf of the church, I express my appreciation to all those who came and worked hard last Friday. Advent is a special time to prepare ourselves for the arrival of Christ Jesus *in our hearts!* Traditionally, we put out five candles as symbols of hope, love, joy, and peace plus one Christ candle. These represent our aspirations for and deep anticipation of Christ’s arrival. The church uses purple during this season because traditionally purple symbolizes ‘repentance’ as an opportunity to begin again (nowadays, some churches use blue as a means of distinguishing Advent from Lent or because they believe that blue signifies the color of the night sky.) Spiritually, Advent gives us a fresh beginning and new companionship with God in the birth of Jesus.

For the next four Sundays, I am going to preach a new sermon series titled “Someone Is Coming!” Imagine a situation in which your best friend or one of your loving family members calls you and wants to visit you without any warning, especially from a long distance. Surprisingly, that person tells you that a gift is coming. How do you feel about that? What things must be done first? In my 10 years of marriage, I would have to clean my house first! This is stressful! For the next four Sundays, we will explore various topics: “Invitation,” “Excitement,” “Preparation,” and “Celebration.” Today’s subject is invitation!

The word ‘Advent’ originates from the Latin word *adventus* meaning “coming.” Truly, Jesus is coming down towards us as *the greatest gift* in this special season! God so loves us that he decides to come humbly into our hearts, intimately and personally. Wait a minute! Let me ask you a question first. We know that God loves the world and everyone in it. Why does God want to send His only son to us? Why does God make such an effort to share His love with us?

I want to share a story with you. Last Tuesday evening, Joshua asked me a question.

“Daddy, do you know what one plus one is?”

I pretended that I didn’t know the answer. “Joshua, what is it?”

He proudly said, “**One plus one equals two!**”
 I was surprised to hear his math. “How did you know that answer?”
 Again, he proudly responded, “I did it with *science!*”
 “Science? Where did you learn science?” He smiled and said, “I don’t know.”

He was being silly, but his science or math made me think of God’s love from a different perspective. God loves us, so then why did God have to allow His only Son to come down to this dangerous world and die for us? I want to share a story that helps me find a clue to God’s great love.

A physician once said, “The best medicine for humans is love.” Someone asked, “What if it doesn’t work?” He smiled and said, “Increase the dose.”¹

Here is my spiritual math to help us understand God’s science for humans. God’s love plus Jesus’ love equals the most powerful force in the universe! (God’s love + Jesus’ love = God’s super-powerful love.) This power will be enough to save us! Then, what will Jesus bring to us?

Today’s sermon title is inspired by Bernard Most, a children’s book author who wrote *If the Dinosaurs Came Back*.² While I was reading his book for Joshua a couple of days ago, I thought that it would be fun to borrow his title. The book was written for Bernard’s grandson, who loves dinosaurs. The story goes like this:

I like dinosaurs.
 I think about them all the time.
 I read about them.
 I talk about them.
 Oh, how I wish the dinosaurs could come back!



¹ “Explore Life Quotes, Humor Quotes, and More!” *Pinterest*, <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/393220611187862219/?lp=true>, accessed Dec.1 2017.

² Bernard Most, *If the Dinosaurs Came Back* (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 1978).

If the dinosaurs came back, they would carry people to work and back.
If the dinosaurs came back, we wouldn't need any more lawn mowers.
If the dinosaurs came back, house painters wouldn't need any more ladders.

If the dinosaurs came back, they would scare away robbers. . . .

If the dinosaurs came back, they could help fire fighters put out fires.
If the dinosaurs came back, they could rescue kites stuck in very tall trees.

If the dinosaurs came back, they could take swimmers on rides at the beach.

If the dinosaurs came back, dentists would have plenty of teeth to work on.

Like many other ordinary three-year old boys and girls, my son Joshua loves dinosaurs. While I was reading this book, he asked me why we haven't invited a dinosaur to come to our house. I asked him, "Aren't you scared of dinosaurs?" He answered that they are very friendly and want to come to our house and stay with us! He especially loves the one who could give him rides at the beach! I was surprised and impressed by his pure and innocent heart.

In this special season of Advent, we think of Christ's coming as the baby Jesus. God is not scary but is friendly! If Jesus came back here, what would He do for us? The dinosaur book helped Joshua dream about a friendly big and tall dinosaur who would be his good friend. In Advent, God decides to come down to us as the baby Jesus. God's best gift for us is not something to meet our needs, but it is God Himself coming down to our hearts! Not only does he stay, but He dwells in our hearts! God can do this because God is love! The baby Jesus was a manifestation of God's love! This love will give us courage and hope when we are in need and in difficult times. God's best love is coming to us as Himself, which is the greatest gift! We need to make room in our hearts! Remember that, just as you have to clean up your house when you have a special guest coming to your house, you need to prepare your heart for receiving the greatest gift that fits in your heart and stays with you! Open your heart and anticipate this great gift! Amen.