

Sermon Title: The Season of Advent, Part I 11.29.2026

Themes: Faith that lifts your spirits *and* pleases God. Live-streaming and sermon notes are at trinitycg.org and christforlife.life.

Weekly Question: Got faith?

Sermon Points:

1. Preparation. The focus of Advent is the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Messiah (His First Advent), and the anticipation of the return of Christ (His Second Advent). Advent is God-centered, not man-centered. Advent begins today and ends on December 24th. The first Advent Candle can be purple (Hope) representing the prophecy of the Messiah. **Luke 1:26-33.** Advent emphasizes themes of accountability, judgment of sin, God's love for mankind, and the promise of eternal life through faith by the free gift of His grace. **Ephesians 2:8-10.** Moments of joy like we have at Christmas help us weather the daily storms of life and anticipate the return of the eternal Savior! By grace you were saved *from* something (sin now and Hell later) *for* something (acts of kindness now and Heaven forever). Whatever you're going through *today*, your faith in Christ will get you safely to *eternity*.

2. Declaration. Isaiah 9:6-7. In love, Jesus came from glory to suffer horribly. He loves you. He wants you in Heaven. Our faith in Him and His message of salvation bless Him. **Hebrews 11:6.** How is *your* faith?

3. Affliction. The glory of the Lord cannot be defeated. **Colossians 1:24-27.** God's glory is not defeated or minimized by our brokenness, our weakness, and our painful moments of living and dying. Here are five reminders that His presence helps steady our faith in the face of our affliction, anxiety, and uncertainty:

1. God isn't over there, He is right here. His involvement in your life is real. Don't just sing songs about His birth in December, honor Him in your life every day.

2. God's blessings aren't just saved for someday—they're to be savored today. While you get to enjoy the blessing of being saved in *eternity*, you can have the joy of your salvation *right now*. Don't be so heavenly minded that you're of not earthly good.

3. God trusts you with His message. *Our holy God* expects us to share the Good News despite *our brokenness*. This Christmas, share the greatest gift ever given with others so that their name is written where it matters most, which is in the Lamb's book of life.

4. The world changes you from the outside while God changes you from the inside. The world changes your behavior by applying penalties and rewards. God changes your behavior by changing your heart through Christ. The world often tries to change people by rewarding conformity and punishing failure. The world wants you to look different; God wants to make you new.

5. God's glory isn't fragile. His glory is neither smothered nor surrendered by your past, your critics, or the chaos in your life. Your circumstances may challenge your faith, but they cannot diminish the greatness of the God in whom your faith rests. As you walk with Him, even your scars can become a testimony to His sustaining grace. Your circumstances don't have the final word about your life when God is still writing your story.

Our faith is not in *a* Santa in a sleigh but in *the* Savior in the manger. May we be blessed with our childhood Christmas memories and the legacy of those who have gone before us, with the assurance of our salvation, and the knowledge that God is on His throne, working all things to the good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. Let's faithfully honor the glory of God the Father by celebrating the birth of His Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, this Christmas. **John 1:14.** Where is *your* faith?

Reflection: Lord, help me to trust You and to seek Your peace and glory this Christmas.