Pastor Jay’s Jottings

December 2024

An Advent-ageous time of year.

As many people will share, Christmas is their favorite time of the year. I too, admit that I enjoy the Christmas season more than most. I enjoy decorating our home for the season, doing my best to create the “Jackson” version of a Norman Rockwell painting. Stockings, multiple trees, lights, candles, a fireplace; those all scream “Christmas” comfort to me.

And yet, in the middle of our best attempts to have a perfect Hallmark Christmas, life smacks us a round and our Christmas cheer is wiped away. If you live long enough, it will happen to you. Whether it’s a death in the family, the loss of a job, financial struggles, or something else, there will be a time when the trials of life will overcome the joy of the Christmas season.

And so, my word of encouragement for you is to lean into Advent rather than Christmas. Amid the hustle and bustle of the world, comes the arrival of our King. We have the advantage of knowing Jesus has come and is coming again. So our advantage becomes our “advent-age.” We know that Jesus is coming back, and when that happens, all of life will be renewed and recreated.

Advent is not “Christmas” it is an intentional time of reflection, remembering that Jesus joined us in our earthly journey, living like us, becoming one of us (incarnate), so that he could eventually find his way to the cross for us. And because he did all of that, we remember this time of year as an advent-ageous time.

“Advantageous” means something is beneficial, helpful, or favorable. “Advent-ageous” means that Jesus is beneficial, helpful, and favorable to our lives today, and to our ultimate future with him. This life is great, but our best life is coming with Jesus’ return.

All it takes to live and “Advent-ageous” life is a belief in Jesus. That’s it. A belief that he went to the cross for you, died for you, and was raised on the third day for you, so that when this life is through, we can join him in the best life ever. A life in the glory and presence of God. We get so caught up in all of the other things that we think are important for life, but the reality is, the best advantage we have is the advent of Jesus.

I pray that you have an adventurous Holiday season, and my family and I look forward to experiencing the joy of the season with our new FELC family and community.

God Loves You and So Do I.

Pastor Jay