

# Hope Arrives

-2025-

CHRISTMAS AT B4CHURCH

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

### HOPE IN THE FATHER'S HEART

SPEAKER: RUSSELL JOYCE

DATE: December 21, 2025

TEXT(S): John 3:16, Isaiah 7:14,  
Luke 2:11, John 1:14

**HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:** *This resource is designed to help you, or your group, step through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message. Our goal is to help you better understand and apply B4's teaching.*

### MESSAGE SUMMARY + DISCUSSION PROMPTS

As Pastor Russell reminds us, Christmas reveals the heart of a good Father who gives Himself to His children. Against the backdrop of broken families, absent fathers, and human pain, God does not stay distant. Instead, He enters our broken world through the vulnerable gift of His Son. The incarnation shows a Father who is compassionate, sacrificial, and full of grace, willing to be weak for the sake of love. All of this reassures us that our worth is not based on our goodness but on His, while hope is found in trusting and receiving this loving Father's heart.

**LEAN IN:** *These are icebreakers and warm-ups, mostly to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. When you hear the word father, what emotions or images immediately come to mind?
2. What is one Christmas memory that shaped how you think about God?
3. Why do you think family stories resonate so deeply with us?
4. What makes a gift feel truly meaningful to you?
5. What's something you're really hoping works out these days?

**LOOK DOWN:** *These are questions about the Bible passage(s) above. Spend about 15-20 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:*

1. What does John 3:16 reveal about God's motivation toward the world?
2. Why is it significant that Jesus entered the world as a vulnerable child?
3. How should we understand "believe in him" from John 3:16?
4. What does "God with us" (Immanuel) communicate about God's character?
5. How does the birth of Jesus foreshadow the cost of the cross?

**LOOK OUT:** *These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:*

1. How do broken father-child relationships shape people's view of God today?
2. Why does vulnerability feel so risky in a culture that prizes strength?

3. How does the John Lennon story in the message reflect modern spiritual longing?
4. Where do you see people trying to escape “hell” without addressing its roots?
5. Why is grace often harder to receive than judgment?

**LOOK IN:** *These questions help you consider how to engage the teaching for yourself. Spend about 15-20 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:*

1. How might you be projecting an earthly father’s flaws onto God?
2. What part of God’s Father-heart do you struggle most to trust?
3. How does knowing God “wants to be with you” change your prayer life?
4. What would it look like for you to fully receive God’s grace this season?
5. Who might God be inviting you to love with the Father’s heart?

**LIVE IT OUT:** *These practical action steps help you apply this message to day-to-day life. Choose one prompt and talk it over for 5-10 minutes:*

1. Throughout the coming week, quietly begin your day by praying John 3:16, “For God so loved (insert your name to personalize its truth) that...,” asking God to show you where He wants you to receive (not earn) His love.
2. Offer one intentional act of vulnerable, sacrificial love (listening, forgiving, serving) to a family member, friend, or coworker, during the coming week.

You can find [B4’s Daily Advent Devotional here](#).



**WEEKLY Sunday Recap:**

*12/28 Recap*

*Subject line: Hope from Sunrise to Sunset*

*Teaser: On Sunday, Pastor Bo invited us to close the year with gratitude, standing in awe of God's goodness from "horizon to horizon," and stepping into the new year rooted in hope, God's Presence, and community.*

*12/21 Recap*

*Subject line: Hope in Our Father's Heart*

*Teaser: This Sunday, Pastor Russell explored how Christmas reveals the heart of a good Father, one who enters our brokenness with vulnerability, gives Himself freely, and declares us worthy of His love.*

*12/7 Recap*

*His Nearness Offers Hope*

*On Sunday, Pastor Bo taught how God draws near to us personally in Jesus, offers hope, and invites us to respond with attentiveness, worship, and trust.*

*11/30 Recap*

*Discover God in the Ordinary*

*On Sunday, Pastor Bo showed us how God entered the ordinary life of Nazareth, inviting Mary's honest questions and courageous surrender. He knew she was someone who recognized and welcomed His hidden work.*

*11/23*

*Prayer: Overlooked Communion with God*

*On Sunday, Pastor Russell reminded us that every part of life, whether delightful or difficult, should draw us into prayer. Discover how a life rooted in honest, consistent prayer can form the very heart of Jesus in you, and our church.*

*11/16*

*Generous Love*

*On Sunday, Pastor Bo showed how James calls us to reject favoritism and embody Jesus' royal law of love. This love honors others with grace, generosity, and mercy regardless of status.*

*Pastor Bo explores James's challenge to love without favoritism, especially when the money, power, and status of others promise us worldly benefits. James 2 exposes how easily we honor the influential while overlooking the poor, revealing a contradiction within our hearts. Jesus' "Royal Law," that is, loving one's neighbor — expressed through generosity, hospitality, and mercy — is the "good soil" of God's house. Favoritism of the "shiny people" is not a minor violation of the law but a fracture of covenant love. The church is called to be a community of new creation where worth is measured by grace, not appearance, and where that oft-invisible value becomes apparent through godly, mutual love.*

*11/9*

*Sticks, Stones, and Words*

*This past Sunday, Pastor Andy reminded us that our words have the power to shape lives and communities, for better or worse. But when we yield to the Spirit's guidance, our speech becomes an instrument of healing, truth, and spiritual encouragement.*

*10/26*

*The End Is the Beginning*

*Pastor Bo reminds us that God's story ends not in destruction but with renewal, where Heaven and earth are reunited. Even better, Heaven is already breaking into everyday life through Jesus and His people.*

*10/19*

*The Script that Whispers His Name.*

*The Scriptures are breathed by God, a story with Christ at the center. They're our plumb line, revealing God's love, shaping our faith, and enduring through time while they whisper the name of Jesus.*

*10/12*

*On Sunday, Pastor Russell reminded us that the early Church imitated Jesus' way of life through practices like prayer, Scripture,*

*worship, and friendship — creating loving spaces where God meets and forms us.*

*Whether you missed it or want to dig deeper, use the buttons below to watch the full message or ask your questions.*

*9/29*

*This past Sunday, Pastor Bo shared about the most stunning act of grace — how the innocent Star of the Bible, Jesus, died for the object of His affection — us.*

*9/22*

*This past Sunday, Pastor Russell spoke about how the shalom of creation was shattered by sin, but how God's atoning grace has kept His gaze fixed on us through it all.*

*9/15*

*This past Sunday, Pastor Bo gave a timely word on the power hate can have in our lives, but the hope the radical love of Jesus brings.*