



**WARM UP QUESTION:** What are you hoping for during this advent season? Are you hoping someone will give you a special gift?

**READ:** Hebrews 11:1-2

**OBSERVE:**

- Fathers and mothers of the Jewish faith were so convinced that their God would grant them His promised rewards, that they obeyed Him, even to the point of seeming contradiction or suffering. They died, still hoping for these promised rewards. They were commended for their faith.
- Jesus is the perfect example of this faith and hope. He was commended for His faithful, hopeful obedience by His resurrection and the reward of being seated at the right-hand of the Father.
- If we encounter difficulties, discouragement, suffering or grief, we should persevere, as Jesus did, with hope in the promises of God to sustain us.

**REFLECT:**

- Are you experiencing suffering today, or have you in your lifetime? Do you find that discouragement and despair sneak in more easily during Advent? How do you draw on your relationship with God to see you through?
- Do you have scripture verses you read to yourself in these times?

**TAKING ACTION:**

- Put verses you use to combat difficulties, discouragement, suffering or grief in a document of some sort. If possible, choose special print fonts and add coloring or illustrations.
- Share them with the other members of the group.

**PRAY:**

*Heavenly Father, much of the difficulty, discouragement, suffering or grief we experience is invisible to others. During this Advent season there are more expectations on us: more things we need to spend money on, more food to prepare and more social events where we need to appear as though nothing is bothering us at all. We look to You during these times of magnified difficulties and higher expectations. God, shower us in Your love and endow us with Your rest. Draw our attention to others, giving us hearts to come alongside them and bear their burdens with them. We thank You, Lord Jesus, for coming to earth and being willing to obey the Father, dying in hope that Your sacrifice would buy our forgiveness and sending us Your Holy Spirit to sustain us. Amen.*