



## Naughty or Nice: Obedience in Advent

### Week 1

**Advent:** The arrival of a notable person, thing, or event.  
The first season of the Christian Church year, leading up to Christmas and including the 4 preceding Sundays.

#### Historical context of Advent in relation to Christmas:

1. Before the 6th century:
  - a. There was a celebration in January known as \_\_\_\_\_. Many new Christians would be baptized at this event as it was tied closely to the time of year when Jesus himself was baptised and also to his first miracle at the wedding in Cana.
  - b. Early Christians would spend \_\_\_\_\_ in penance (humble confession), prayer, and fasting in preparation.
  - c. The visit of the Magi and the gifts they brought to Jesus as a baby during this season were peripheral to the celebration of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. After the 6th century:
  - a. Roman Christians focus the Advent meaning on the actual \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.
  - b. The arrival they celebrated was not \_\_\_\_\_, but instead it is a celebration of his \_\_\_\_\_ coming as the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world.
3. Middle ages (11th-15th centuries A.D.):
  - a. The focus of Advent became what we now hold traditionally as Jesus' birth.

#### Cultural context of Advent in relation to Christmas:

1. The Magi visited Jesus.
  - a. bringing gifts for a baby, Matthew 2:11
  - b. the child of God, Psalm 2:7
  - c. born by a virgin, Isaiah 7:14
  - d. into a poor and likely outcast family,
  - e. proclaimed by the stars and planets, Matthew 2:9-10
  - f. at the time set by God when the world was created.
2. St. Nicholas (3rd Century A.D.): - traveled modern day Turkey aiding the poor and sick.
  - a. Popularized by Dutch communities as Sinter Klaas, a shortened name of St. Nikolaas, in the 18th century in New York when they would gather to celebrate the anniversary of his death on December 6th.
  - b. Gift giving to the poor eventually was perverted and used as a motivation for kids to be "good" so that they would get presents.

3. Eddie Cantor's Santa Claus is Coming to Town (1934): - Naughty or Nice
4. More recently, Western culture has backslid to the point where we really don't want Christmas at all. It is just a highly-marketed sales season where we buy what we want and maybe something for people we feel obligated to give something to that probably don't need it or maybe even want it.

It can be said that this really is not a new event, but rather a repeat of something that happened a very long time ago. Genesis 3:1-15

Before this, the creation was very good. And yet, when a simple act of disobedience occurred, the creation knew of the sin.

Goodness originates with, and is defined by\_\_\_\_\_.

Apart from\_\_\_\_\_, there is nothing good or bad.

The lie of the world is: Without \_\_\_\_\_, there would be no bad.

The reciprocal of that would say that, without \_\_\_\_\_, there would be no good.

**The truth is:** Without \_\_\_\_\_, there would be nothing at all.