***1 John 2:28-29 And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. 29If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.***

This is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent, as many know, means Arrival, in this case the arrival, the Advent of our Savior Jesus Christ. We celebrate both the first Advent, when He arrived as a Babe in a manger and the second Advent when He will come back, not as a Babe in the manger but as a conquering King and Master. In the coming weeks, we’ll talk of Hope, Joy, Peace, and Love, but today we talk of Faith. Hebrews 11:1- *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen –* Faith is our foundation for all we hope for and is our proof for all that we do not see. But there will arrive a day, not far away, when our eyes will behold what our hearts have always believed – that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. My friends, if we can’t get excited about that, if that does not make our hearts feel glad this morning, something is dreadfully wrong, not with God’s Promise, but with our Faith.

Verse 28 begins, *And now, little children, abide in Him.*The Apostle John, a man that walked with Jesus, witnessed His miracles, heard His teachings, attended His transfiguration, heard the voice of God speak over Him, sat at the Lord’s Supper, stood as He was crucified, saw where He was buried, came running to the Tomb on the morning He arose, and stood looking up as He ascended into heaven is here saying to us – and, now, this very moment, little children, abide in Him. Little children can be taken to mean converted Christians, indeed it can be a term of affection similar to when we call a child our little darling. Abide, dwell in Him, stay in His Word, stay in His Presence, keep believing His Truth.

Verse 28 continues *That when He appears*, *we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.* When He reappears, is made manifest again to us, when He comes again, when the second Advent takes place, we may have confidence. This Greek word also appears in Revelation 3:18 where Jesus Himself says - *I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be* ***revealed****; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.* We must abide Faithfully in Him so that our wickedness and unworthiness may not be made manifest when Jesus comes again. That is very similar to our verse this morning. When we are found abiding in Christ and doing His will, He can come in the morning, at noonday, or the dark of the night, and we will not be ashamed. Why? Because He finds us, His servants, abiding in His Will, doing His work, living in His word. In Luke 12:43 Jesus says - *Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.*

Verse 29 - *If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.* If we know He is righteous… that is Faith. We believe that Jesus is righteous, through Faith we have confidence, we know that He is the Source of righteousness. 1 Corinthians 1:30 *But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.* Because of the goodness of God, we are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom for us. He became something else for us too – righteousness. Last week, we read that He took our sin so we might become the righteousness of God in Him. So, when we see another practicing the Righteousness that is only available through Jesus, we know that this is our brother or sister reborn and regenerated through Faith in Jesus Christ. When Jesus told Nicodemus, in John 3:3 *Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,* this is what He was speaking of – a rebirth, a regeneration, a renewal by the Spirit of our spirit. John 3:6 *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.* When cry out to Christ, we are reborn of Him, born to redemption, sanctification, and righteousness. We are changed and there we must abide, seeking the Spirit always, that we might never be found ashamed.

This week, let’s align our spirits in Faith, knowing that the day is drawing near, when Christ will come and claim His Kingdom. As Paul writes in Galatians 2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.* Let us die to self, and live by Faith in the Son of God. Let us look expectantly for His wonderful return. May He find us all waiting and watching, wise and faithful stewards, Faithfully doing our work at the time of His Advent.