

Tell me, [Slide 1] how do you play Hide and Seek?

Does the person counting say something before they start looking? [Slide 2] (Ready or not here I come) What does that mean?

Lots of things happen whether we are ready for them to happen or not.

Christmas is coming whether we are ready for it or not.

Visitors may turn up early, whether we are ready for them or not, which may cause panic.

We may get woken up in the morning by mum or dad, or an **alarm clock**, whether we are ready to get up or not.

[Slide 3] Likewise Jesus comes, whether we are ready or not. Advent is the season of checking whether or not we are ready for Jesus to come.

How does Jesus come to us?

Well, Jesus comes to us in three ways.

[Slide 4] He came as a **human baby at Christmas**.

He will come back at the **end of the world** and raise everyone who has died back to life. Then those who trust in him will live with him forever.

He comes to us today, whenever we listen to **God's word** and receive his sacraments – which are **Baptism and Holy Communion**.

So let's look at these three a bit closer.

When Jesus came as a human, do you think people were ready for him or not? Well, some were, but some weren't.

Mary was ready for Jesus to be born.

The **Shepherds** got ready to leave their paddocks and worship baby Jesus.

The **Wise Men** were ready to leave their home and travel a long way to find Jesus and give gifts to him.

At the temple, **Simeon** was ready to see the saviour. [Slide 5] He had been waiting so long that he was really old, and he prayed to God, "Now that I have seen the saviour, I am ready to die."

But King Herod wasn't ready for Jesus. When he heard a new king had been born, he believed that his power, authority and position had been threatened. So he tried to have Jesus killed.

[Slide 6] When he was older, many sick people were ready to receive Jesus' healing.

[Slide 7] But many of the teachers of the day were not ready to receive his teaching. They also felt threatened and eventually had him put to death.

Some were ready for Jesus to come, but some weren't.

After Jesus died he rose back to life again and later went up into heaven. [Slide 8] He said that he would come back one day. He tells us to be ready.

We don't know when he will come back. In fact, today's bible reading says that before he left, Jesus didn't even know when he would be coming back. Only God the Father knew.

So it will be a surprise to everyone. Just like visitors can sometimes surprise us by turning up unexpectedly.

So if we don't know when Jesus is coming back, how do you think we can make sure we are ready? (always be ready)

What are some things we can do to be ready for Jesus?

If someone has hurt us, and we are really angry and upset, then it's important not to bottle up those feelings, but to deal with them.

[Slide 9] The bible tells us to make sure that we are always trying to forgive the people who have hurt us and sinned against us. We are called to forgive just as Jesus forgives you and me, for hurting him.

Another important thing to be ready for Jesus to come back is to trust our lives to him. He says only those who trust in his death and resurrection for them will have eternal life. Therefore, trusting that this is enough for us to get to heaven is a really important part of getting ready.

[Slide 10] And I said there was a third way people can be ready for Jesus. Jesus promises to speak to us through the **bible**. He also promises to come to us in our **baptism** and in **Holy Communion**. How do you think we can be ready to receive Jesus during bible readings? (Listen, pray for him to open our ears, our hearts and our minds to what he is saying). Whenever there is a baptism or Holy Communion we can make sure we are ready for him to come to us by listening to the words of the pastor. We can also ask Jesus to be at work in our lives as we receive the blessing, or the bread and wine

[Slide 11] Jesus has began a good work in you. And today's bible reading says that he will continue working in you until he returns at the end of time. **[Slide 12]** Jesus is coming whether we're ready or not. May we be ready for him to come and speak to us through his word. May we be ready for him to come back, no matter when he comes.