



# A Season of Waiting

Waiting is difficult.

Whether waiting in traffic, or waiting for the results of a medical test, or waiting for the gifts of Christmas, few people like to wait. Advent is about waiting.

At a time when God's people were plagued by evildoers who prospered and arrogant men who were considered blessed, God promised a "great and awesome day" when the "sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings." The arrogant and evildoers would be consumed, and God's people would celebrate (Malachi 4). Over 400 years later, a man named Zechariah proclaimed that God's promise was being fulfilled. God was saving his people from their enemies and guiding them in the way of peace (Luke 1:67-79). That ancient promise was fulfilled in the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus.

But arrogant men and evildoers continue to abound. God still asks his people to wait.

For almost 1,500 years, the Church has celebrated the four Sundays of Advent as a time to remember Christ's first coming in humility, as we prepare for his second coming in glory. God's promises never fail, even though his people must wait for those promises to be completely fulfilled. All the arrogant and evildoers will pass away, and on that day God's people will know perfect peace.

Yet, as we long for that future day, we celebrate a present redemption. Advent is a time to remember that Christ has delivered us from arrogance and evil. Jesus comes not only to conquer "those bad people;" he came to conquer us. Our hearts are prone to harden against God, and the process of waiting often blinds us to the beauty of his plan. We maintain a posture of humble repentance; for without God's mercy, we too would be consumed.



The call to humble repentance is why you often see the color purple during Advent. Jesus came to save sinners (Matthew 1:21), and those who know him are saved by his grace. Often we see the story of the shepherds, angels, and wise men as something nice, but not really relevant to our daily struggle. Advent reminds us that our sin required a savior. God's plan of redemption includes what we experience day by day.

Advent is also a call to hope, and the purple can point to the majesty of Christ. Jesus is not only the baby in the manger; he is also the coming King of Glory. Every knee will bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord (Philippians 2:10). The deliverance we long for will one day fully come, and all that plagues God's people will pass away.

And so we wait. Advent is a time to remember that God has already kept his promise to visit his people; therefore, our faith in him is not vain as we long to see the fullness of his redemption.

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.  
Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,  
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.*



Discipling God's Covenant People

Christian Education and Publications  
1700 North Brown Road, Suite 102  
Lawrenceville, GA 30043

© Copyright 2013