



Advent – A Season of Peace and Joy

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Introduction:

Two weeks ago we began our advent season. Advent is a time of expectation. It is a time to both celebrate the coming of Christ as Savior over 2000 years ago and also a time to anticipate the fulfillment of prophecy that Jesus will come again as King of Kings. The people of Israel had a longing a great desire which is expressed so well in our Hymn O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL.

This morning we want to briefly look at the aspect of peace and Joy. [William Ewart Gladstone](#): “We look forward to the time when the Power of Love will replace the Love of Power. Then will our world know the blessings of peace.”

Anyone who would look at our world today would say it is a world filled with unrest and violence. There is not peace in our world. There are suicide bombings; there is a war on terrorism that is being fought. Not only is there no peace in nations, but in cities and families as well, there is great turmoil. We need someone who can step into the affairs of humanity and bring peace. Scriptures tell us that the time will come when a global leader will come to the attention of the entire world, and will make a treaty with Israel and will bring a sense of peace. But that person is not Jesus Christ. Only Christ as the prince of peace can bring the changes that need to take place within people so they can live at peace with one another. That starts from the inside out.

I. The anticipation of peace

The prophet Isaiah gives us this tremendous prophecy about Jesus before He was born.

Isaiah 9:6

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

When I think of a prince, I think of someone who has both wealth and power. He is a person who is royalty. He doesn't need to serve, He is served. I think of a leader. I think of a ruler. I think of a kingdom. Along with other titles, Jesus was given the name of prince of peace by the prophet Isaiah.

When we think of peace we think of an absence of turmoil and conflict. We think of people working together in harmony. Peace is not something that is based on circumstances but on relationships. When Jesus the leader and captain of peace is permitted to be lord and governor of your life, then no matter what happens around you, there is confidence. Strife and conflict between you and God are gone. It was while we were at odds with God that Jesus came to mediate peace.

You and I anticipate the advent of peace when Jesus comes again. That peace will be eternal. I am longing and anticipating and expecting that event when Jesus will reign and everybody will get along without misunderstandings, and without conflicts.

II. The anticipation of joy

The Advent season should also be a time of joy. All of us have been touched at some point in our lives by sorrow. Many in our church family who sit here this morning have recently been touched by a loss that brings sorrow.

Joy, according to Webster, is defined as the emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires; a state of happiness or felicity; a source or cause of delight.

The greatest need we have as human beings is for a relationship with God. We realize that sin prevents that from happening. We can be joyful in what Christ did, and what is prophesied He will do when He comes again.

Many things in life bring us satisfaction and fulfillment, but joy is not something that is based on things.

I find that my greatest joys in life are found in relationships. Every spiritual need that we have is met in Christ:

- The need for a redeemer
- The need for unconditional love
- The need for significance
- The need for acknowledgment
- The need for value

Isaiah 52:8-9

Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

Luke 2:10

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."

Jesus' first coming brought good news of great joy for all the people. A savior had come. God had seen the dilemma of His creation and had sent one who could bridge the gap and bring us back into relationship with Him.

Jesus' first coming brought joy to the hearts of the people who were longing for Him. It was after the angels first announced Jesus birth to the shepherds; they went to see if this truly had taken place. When they found the babe and Mary and Joseph as the angels had said, they returned glorifying and praising God. They were filled with joy. What they had been told was true. They found what they had been told about and went searching for.

His second coming will bring joy to the hearts of the people who are longing for Him to come back.

1 Peter 1:8

Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.

The anticipation of what His second coming will be like should bring joy to our hearts. We should be longing for His return.

1 Thes. 4:15-18

According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.

So until that moment we wait expecting, longing, eager for His coming. We celebrate today the peace that Jesus brought and still brings to those who seek to know Him, and the peace that we know He will establish when He comes again.

We also wait joyfully. We are anticipating the joy of seeing Him face to face and being with Him in heaven forever.

Conclusion:

One of the final benedictions we find in the book of Jude in the Bible says this:

Jude 1:24

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy...

Not only is Christ able to keep us from falling and will present us to the Father without fault, but also with great joy. A Star is born. The star is Jesus Christ. He has come and will come again. My question to you this morning is are you ready for His return?

If thinking of His coming does not bring you joy and peace, perhaps you are not ready to meet Him. Either there is something in your life that you know He would not be pleased with when He comes back, or you have not established a relationship with Him that you are certain.

He stands waiting – ready to receive you and fulfill those spiritual needs in your life. Won't you let Him do so?