



**Christian Life Fellowship**  
Becoming fully devoted followers of Christ



## **Advent—JESUS Is Coming--Prepare**

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### **Introduction:**

I would submit to you that to prepare for the birth of a baby or the return of someone you love, takes faith. We are going to talk about preparation and the aspect of fear and faith this morning: faith to believe and trust that what God has said He will do; the ability to deal with the fears during the process of waiting. We know Jesus has promised to return – we just do not know when He will come. Trust and fear are so interconnected. We want to believe but fear can dominate our thinking and lives and prohibit us from acting in faith. We have many fears: fear of believing something that isn't true; fear of being disappointed; fear of being abandoned; fear of being put down; fear of being rejected.

Do we trust? Do we believe? As we look at Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and the magi, we see that they had to deal with fears when it came to preparing for Christ's coming. I have no doubt that Mary and Joseph were somewhat fearful. I'm sure they thought about the responsibility of being parents to Immanuel. Most likely they questioned whether they could adequately care for this child. They were going to handle, guide, protect and shape the human side of God's son. What an incredible responsibility!

Parents, perhaps you struggle with fear about whether you can successfully parent that child or teen who is also made in God's image and has the potential to be a son or daughter of God. FEAR NOT. I remember when Julie and I were expecting our sons, some of those same questions and fears were present. The issue of trusting and believing is a huge issue to get past when it comes to Christ's coming.

Most generally, when you believe in something your actions and attitude show that you believe in it. If we are truly going to be prepared for His coming, we must deal with our unbelief. If we believe, we will act on what we believe.

**John 14:1-13** Jesus is coming back. In our text this morning, we see Jesus preparing his disciples for the time when He would leave them. He did not just tell them that He was going away; He reassured them that He was coming back. He knew that without telling them what they could expect, most likely their fears would dominate them and they would not be able to function and accomplish the task He was leaving them to do. He promised them He would come back.

## **I. Preparation deals with fear.**

Do not let your heart be troubled, do not be afraid. Any time I have been fearful, I needed to look to someone stronger, someone more powerful and someone whom I acknowledged to be greater than my fear. When children are afraid of the dark, when they are afraid of failure, they look to a parent, a guardian, a friend or someone whom they perceive has the strength that they feel they don't have to help themselves.

Jesus told His disciples to deal with their fears by putting their confidence in God and in Him. Basically He is telling them that they have control in dealing with fear and He is the strength they can trust. What is your concept of God? Is it that He is ALMIGHTY? Is it that He is in control? Is it that He is your provider? Is it that He is your healer? Is it that He is the lover of your soul? Is it that He is your protector, your stronghold?

A picture is painted for the disciples about what He is going to do after He has left them and a promise of His coming back to gather them to the place He is preparing. It makes me think that this time of waiting and anticipating His return is not just for His work in our lives and for those who still have not believed to repent, but there is something in the waiting that is part of His preparation of our dwelling places.

Since God created the heavens and earth and spoke it into existence, I know He could do the same thing for the dwelling places He is preparing for us. Perhaps just like He formed us from the dust of the earth and fashioned us with His hands, He is taking eternal time to create something unique with His hands for each one of us. The purpose of His preparing a place is not so it can be eternally empty. His purpose is so it will be occupied with the angels and those who are redeemed.

## **II. Preparation deals with where.**

In our modern technology, we can go on the internet and Google an address and pull up a map that will give us specific directions to get from point A to point B. Some people have what is called a GPS – Global Positioning System that takes coordinates off a satellite. Basically it pinpoints where you are on

the earth's surface and gives you directions how to get to where you want to be.

Thomas asks a question, "We don't know where you are going, so how can we get there?" Thomas was trying to figure out, "How are we going to get to where you are going Lord, when we don't even know where it is you are going?" Jesus told Thomas, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one can come to the Father, but through me." Jesus is the way to God. If we want to know God, it happens as we walk the way of Christ. It happens as we allow Him to be the truth we believe, as we allow Him to be the direction we walk, as we allow Him to be life for us. If we desire to enter God's eternal home, then the only way for that to take place is through Jesus Christ.

Philip asked that Jesus show them God the Father. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one being. You cannot see one without seeing them all. Jesus told them if you have seen me, you already have seen the Father. Humanity clamors to see something before it will believe. I see with my eyes things around me that take up space and dimension, but that is two dimensional.

There is another whole realm that we don't see with our eyes, that is more real than this stage I'm standing on, or the pew you are sitting on. That is a spiritual realm, where there are ministering spirits and deceptive spirits. There is an eternal place that is referred to as Heaven where all is peaceful, there is no pain, no suffering, no sin, no darkness, no death, no sickness, only beauty, and most of all God will be the ruler there.

There is also an eternal place that is referred to as Hell where all is torment, darkness, an unquenchable fire burns and fear, death and rebellion reign. Worst of all is that God's presence is vacant there. This place called Hell, was made for Satan and his demons. However, those who refuse to accept Jesus as the only way to God and receive the forgiveness of sin that He offers will also end up there.

## **III. Jesus reassurance of His return.**

What a comfort for those followers back then and for those of us who follow Him now. Jesus would not mislead them. Jesus would not go to the effort

to prepare a place and then not utilize it. Listen to some of the scriptures about His coming again:

- **1 Cor. 15:50-52**

**What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These perishable bodies of ours are not able to live forever. But let me tell you a wonderful secret God has revealed to us. Not all of us will die, but we will all be transformed. It will happen in a moment, in the blinking of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, the Christians who have died will be raised with transformed bodies. And then we who are living will be transformed so that we will never die.**

- **Rev. 1:7-8**

**Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven. And everyone will see him—even those who pierced him. And all the nations of the earth will weep because of him. Yes! Amen! "I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end," says the Lord God. "I am the one**

**who is, who always was, and who is still to come, the Almighty One."**

- **1 Thes. 4:14-18**

**For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus comes, God will bring back with Jesus all the Christians who have died. I can tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not rise to meet him ahead of those who are in their graves.**

**For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the call of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, all the Christians who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and remain with him forever. So comfort and encourage each other with these words.**

### **Conclusion:**

We are in a waiting period for Christ to come back. He has not forgotten His promise. He will return as He promised. He is giving opportunity for us to share with others and for them to repent. While we wait, we are preparing for that event. This week we deal with fear and faith. Have confidence. Don't allow what you don't see yet to keep you from functioning in faith and confidence.