

The Season of Advent: **Fulfilled Expectations**

- * Each week of Advent we have “looked forward” and “Expected” certain “fulfillments” as the events of Christmas unfolded to us!
- * Now, let’s once again look at the truths and literally life changing events that are reflected in our celebration of Christmas!
- * Remember, Advent is from the Latin word “Adventus” which is taken from the Greek word “parousia” which is used for “Christ coming in human flesh!”
- * Also remember, we have the vantage point of looking back on these events with somewhat of an understanding! Our forefathers in scripture were looking forward and trying to understand the application of these events!!

Romans 8:22-25 (NIV)

22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

- I. The Season of Advent is a reflection on various aspects of the restoration of our relationship to God made possible by the birth of Christ, the Messiah or Anointed One!
 - A. You will recall that it is believed that Advent began to be celebrated during the “winter solstice” because on the darkest time of the year the “Light of the World” brought His light to us!

Isaiah 9:2 (NIV)

2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

- B. It makes things so real when we realize the awesome things Jesus said and how the folks He was speaking to must have heard it!

John 8:12 (NIV)

12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”

II. Advent started with the “Sunday of Hope!”

A. From the “Fall of Man” until the birth of Jesus, all creation has hung on to HOPE!

Romans 8:20 (VOICE)

20 You see, all of creation has collapsed into emptiness, not by its own choosing, but by God's. Still He placed within it a *deep and abiding* hope!

1. We were created in the image of God, but we struggled being in His likeness!
2. This is part of the groanings spoken of in Romans 8!
3. You see, the image of God never left, but being like Him was abandoned and we decided we wanted to “do our own thing”!

Genesis 3:7 (NIV)

7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

4. We began to lead by reason, logic and emotions!

B. The Hope man has always sought is to be placed back into relationship and fellowship! We have always known things were not supposed to be this way! This is not how God intended life to be!

Colossians 1:19-22 (NIV)

19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. 21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

III. Then came the Sunday of Love, Preparation and Faith!

A. The first mention of this redemption plan of love and restoration can be seen in the Garden story!

Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)

15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

1. Jesus is first called The Seed!
2. The word used here means, “to sow or scatter”!

3. The familiar scripture in Isaiah 9:6-7 seems to express this express this “sowing and scattering” well!

Isaiah 9:6-7

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. 7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

- B. Jesus was referred to in the first chapters of Gospel and Epistle of John as ... The Word made flesh!

1. The word used here for “Word made flesh” is the Greek word “logos.”
2. It comes from the root work “lego” like the toy we play with!
3. It means “systematic discourse or to lay a course!”
4. In other words, “the systematic discourse of God reordered God’s creation and placed man back into relationship with God”!

IV. Next we visited the Sunday of Joy!

- A. The Angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds with the statement in Luke 2:10.

Luke 2:10

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

1. First, why appear first to the shepherds? Why not Caiaphas the High Priest?
2. The early Church fathers and others throughout Church history thought these shepherds to be “temple shepherds.” Those in charge of protecting “spotless lambs” for sacrifice.
3. They would have surely understood the significance of this great event!

- B. The Good News that brought Great Joy was this.....

1 Peter 1:18-19 (NIV)

18 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

V. And finally we arrived at the Sunday of Peace!

A. I believe the birth of Jesus was an explosion of the natural and spiritual! The human and the divine!

1. The Son that always had been “was given”. The Word that was “made flesh was “born!
2. As hard as it is for us to grasp, Jesus was 100% man and 100% God!

Hebrews 4:15 (NIV)

15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

B. He was prophesied as “the Prince of Peace!”

1. This is not societal peace!
2. It is not “world peace!”
3. This peace is one that reconnects us all with our purpose of living in fellowship with God and once again “walking with God!”
4. This peace removes my separation from God and restores, regenerates - back to our created purpose!

Romans 5:1 (NIV)

1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ!

2 Thessalonians 3:16 (NIV)

16 Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.