



Walton Churches' Advent Course 2020

Mondays in Advent 7-30pm on Zoom

WEEK 0

November 23rd WAITING FOR A KING

Dan 7:9-10, 9-13, Matt 25:31-46, Col 1:11-20

WEEK 1

November 30th HOLY SUSPENSE

Luke 21:25-36 or Mark 13:24-37, Rom 13:11-14

WEEK 2

December 7th ACTIVE PATIENCE

Mal 3:1-4, 2 Pet 3:8-15

WEEK 3

December 14th HOPE-FILLED EXPECTATION

Isa 35:1-10, Matt 11:2-11, James 5:7-10

WEEK 4

December 21st AWE-STRUCK ANTICIPATION

Isaiah 7:10-16, Luke 1:26-38, 46-55, Matt 1:18-25



WEEK 0

November 23rd WAITING FOR A KING

Opening Worship & Prayer

Opening Poem

Wake up! Get ready! Line the streets to shout,
anticipate the coming of your King!
Rehearse the anthem, put the bunting out,
and rouse the neighbours with Advent carolling:
Wake up! Get ready! Line the streets to shout!
His rule will end the reign of suffering,
so come with your despair, depression, doubt -
anticipate the coming of your King.
Wake up! Get ready! Line the streets to shout,
anticipate the coming of your King!

Introduction to this week and the series

What are you waiting for this Advent?

'As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. 'In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Dan 7:9-10, 13-14

11 being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, 12 and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you[a] to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 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.

Colossians 1:11-20

Discussion

'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him... Matthew 25:31-32a

In what way was Jesus a different king of King than expected?

In what way is Jesus' kingdom different?

How can we live our lives in the light of Jesus being the true king?

Matthew 25:31-46

31 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

34 'Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was ill and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

37 'Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you ill or in prison and go to visit you?"

40 'The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

41 'Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was ill and in prison and you did not look after me."

44 'They also will answer, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or ill or in prison, and did not help you?"

45 'He will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me."

46 'Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.'

Feedback

Closing Prayer

LEADER: Son of Man, come in glory!

ALL: *Come King Jesus.*

Help us serve you as we serve the least. May we see your face in the broken people of this world, and respond. Lead us into our Advent journey, to know your rule and reign in our lives.

Son of Man, come in glory!

Come King Jesus. Amen.

Week 1

November 30th HOLY SUSPENSE

Opening Worship and Prayer

Opening Poem

This long, dark, restless night is nearly done.
The morning star shows: it is nearly day.

The morning lark and owl now sing as one,
the owl is flying home, the lark will stay.
This long, dark, restless night is nearly done:

As from my darker dreams I turn away
and cling to dawn's faint hope, rise with the sun,
the morning star shows it is nearly day.

This long, dark, restless night is nearly done.
The morning star shows. It is nearly day.

Introduction to this session

WHEN IS TENSION USEFUL? WHEN IS IT UNCOMFORTABLE?

²⁴ 'But in those days, following that distress,
"the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light;
²⁵ the stars will fall from the sky,
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken."
²⁶ 'At that time people will see the Son of Man coming
in clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ And he will
send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds,
from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.
²⁸ 'Now learn this lesson from the fig-tree: as soon as its
twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that
summer is near. ²⁹ Even so, when you see these things
happening, you know that it is near, right at the door.
³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass
away until all these things have happened. ³¹ Heaven
and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass
away.

³² 'But about that day or hour no one knows, not even
the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.
³³ Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that
time will come. ³⁴ It's like a man going away: he leaves
his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their
assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep
watch.

Mark 13:24-37

³² 'Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass
away until all these things have happened. ³³ Heaven
and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass
away.

³⁴ 'Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with
carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that
day will close on you suddenly like a trap. ³⁵ For it will
come on all those who live on the face of the whole
earth. ³⁶ Be always on the watch, and pray that you
may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and
that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.'

Luke 21:32-36

¹¹ And do this, understanding the present time: the hour
has already come for you to wake up from your
slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when
we first believed. ¹² The night is nearly over; the day is
almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness
and put on the armour of light. ¹³ Let us behave
decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and
drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery,
not in dissension and jealousy. ¹⁴ Rather, clothe
yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think
about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

Romans 13-11-14

HOW IS JESUS' SECOND COMING IMPORTANT FOR HIS FOLLOWERS?

HOW CAN WE PREPARE OURSELVES FOR JESUS' COMING?

HAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE FOR YOU TO "CLOTHE YOURSELF WITH CHRIST"?

Feedback

Sending Prayer

ALL: What time is it?

LEADER: The hour has come to wake from your slumber!

What time is it?

The night is nearly over; the day is almost here.

What time is it?

Time to put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.

What time is it?

Time to go out, clothed in Christ.

Amen.

Week 2

December 7th ACTIVE PATIENCE

Opening Worship & Prayer

Opening Poem

Come back, Lord Jesus, and do not be slow.
Refine, renew, restore. We hope, we yearn.

When is this coming? Why can we not know
how long we have to wait for your return?
Come back, Lord Jesus, and do not be slow!

Or, help us in the lingering to learn
your saving way that savours love, and so
refine, renew, restore. We hope, we yearn.

Come back, Lord Jesus, and do not be slow:
refine, renew, restore. We hope, we yearn.

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Introduction to this session

MARK HOW GOOD YOU ARE AT WAITING ON THIS SCALE:



¹ 'I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,' says the Lord Almighty. ² But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. ³ He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the Lord will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, ⁴ and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the Lord, as in days gone by, as in former years.

Malachi 3:1-4

⁸ But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: with the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

¹¹ Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. ¹³ But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

¹⁴ So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. ¹⁵ Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom that God gave him

2 Peter 3:8-15

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE QUESTIONS YOU HAVE ABOUT JESUS' SECOND COMING?

IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING SLOW AND BEING PATIENT?

WHEN HAVE YOU BEEN THANKFUL THAT GOD IS PATIENT WITH YOU?

HOW COULD YOU WAIT ACTIVELY FOR JESUS? FINISH THIS SENTENCE:

WAIT AND _____

Feedback

Sending Prayer - Remade, Renewed, Restored

LEADER: In Christ we are a new creation:

ALL: remade, renewed, restored.

Jesus you will come again, perfecting all of creation:

remade, renewed, restored.

Help us live in the light of your coming, lives of grace and peace:

remaking, renewing, restoring.

Send us out, to bless the earth and bless all people:

remaking, renewing, restoring. Amen. Amen.

Week 3

December 14th HOPE-FILLED EXPECTATION

Opening Worship & Prayer

Opening Poem

A secret seed is rich with promised fruit,
for seeds are buried when it's time to grow.

This life begins with one seed, tiny, mute,
like treasure in a field, like yeast in dough,
a secret seed is rich with promised fruit.

We wait in darkness, wait in earth, below,
seek out the signs of life in root and shoot:
for seeds are buried when it's time to grow.

A secret seed is rich with promised fruit,
for seeds are buried when it's time to grow.

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Introduction to this session

WHEN HAVE YOU FELT DISAPPOINTED WITH GOD?

HAVE YOU HAD EXPECTATIONS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN FULFILLED?

¹The desert and the parched land will be glad;
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.
Like the crocus, ² it will burst into bloom;
it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.
The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,
the splendour of Carmel and Sharon;
they will see the glory of the Lord,
the splendour of our God.
³ Strengthen the feeble hands,
steady the knees that give way;
⁴ say to those with fearful hearts,
'Be strong, do not fear;
your God will come,
he will come with vengeance;
with divine retribution
he will come to save you.'
⁵ Then will the eyes of the blind be opened
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
⁶ Then will the lame leap like a deer,
and the mute tongue shout for joy.
Water will gush forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert.

Isaiah 35:1-6

² When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³ to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'

⁴ Jesus replied, 'Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

Matthew 11:2-5

⁷ Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸ You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹ Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

¹⁰ Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

James 5:7-10

WHAT WAS JOHN THE BAPTIST'S EXPECTATIONS OF JESUS?

HOW IS GOD'S SALVATION PLAN WORKED OUT IN A TWO-STAGE PROCESS?

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE "SEEDS" YOU'VE PLANTED INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD WHICH HAS NOT BORN FRUIT YET? HOW CAN YOU BE LIKE THE PATIENT FARMER OF JAMES 5 AND CARE FOR WHAT YOU'VE PLANTED?

Feedback

Send us out prayer

ALL: Send us out, Lord,

LEADER: to have faith that the waiting seeds will bear fruit.

Send us out, Lord,

to trust you through our disappointments.

Send us out, Lord,

to take joy in the journey, rather than rush towards the destination.

Send us out, Lord,

to live with the tension of the now and the not yet.

Send us out, Lord, to be patient and stand firm, because your coming is near. **Amen.**

Week 4

December 21st AWE-STRUCK ANTICIPATION

Opening Worship & Prayer

Introductory Poem

He brought down princes from their mighty thrones,
he lifted up the humble and the meek.

When God descended, took on flesh and bones,
emptied himself of power, chose to be weak,
he brought down princes from their mighty thrones.

When God the Word had not yet learned to speak,
and in his mother's arms made cries and moans,
he lifted up the humble and the meek.

He brought down princes from their mighty thrones.
He lifted up the humble and the meek.

WHERE CAN YOU SEE WAITING FULFILLED IN THE CHRISTMAS STORY?

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: his mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.'

²² All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ 'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel' (which means 'God with us').

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Matthew 1:18-25

⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:4

⁴⁶ And Mary said:

'My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

⁴⁸ for he has been mindful

of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me – holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants for ever, just as he promised our ancestors.'then,

Luke 1:46-55

HOW DOES MARY'S POEM EXPRESS SOMETHING OF JESUS' UPSIDE-DOWN KINGDOM?

HOW COULD YOU LIVE OUT SOMETHING OF MARY'S RADICAL VISION THIS CHRISTMAS?

WHAT PROMISE DOES THE NAME "IMMANUEL" HOLD? WHERE IS THAT IMPORTANT IN YOUR LIFE?

Feedback

Almost Over - Sending Prayer

**The wait is almost over,
Christmas is nearly here!**

Emmanuel is about to be born.
So go out, into this Christmas season,
aware that God is with you.

**The wait is almost over,
Christmas is nearly here!**

The King who has come, and who will come again,
sends you out to demonstrate his Kingdom on earth.
The long expected King,
born to the sound of angels singing,
sends you out to worship him with your lives.
The King who was born poor and humble,
sends you to serve those who are weak
and needy in the world.

**The wait is almost over,
Christmas is nearly here! Amen.**