

## **Anticipation: Living Expectantly**

Isaiah 2:1-5

Crossroads Christian Church

Romans 13:11-14    November 27, 2016 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of  
Advent/Hanging of Green

Anticipation.

Waiting

Eager waiting

Longing waiting

Hopeful waiting.

That's Advent.

The get-ready time.

The hold-your-breath time.

The eminent theologian Dr. Seuss, in his book *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*, talks about the Waiting Place.

"The Waiting Place...for people just waiting.

Waiting for a train to go

or a bus to come, or a plane to go

or the mail to come,

or the rain to go

or the phone to ring, or the snow to snow

or waiting around for a Yes or No....<sup>1</sup> (unquote)

The waiting place.

An expectant mother waits to give birth.

A job applicant waits for the yes-or-no call.

A patient waits for test results.

A young family waits for mortgage approval for their first home.

A warrior waits for deployment's end.

A child waits for time to open presents.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Seuss, *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* (New York: Random House, 1990), quoted in "The Waiting Place, a sermon by Bill Self, Day1.org.

Christians wait for their Savior.

That's Advent. The waiting place. The waiting time.

We wait, and we anticipate.

Advent prepares us for God's greatest event.

Advent helps us get ready for the coming of Christ.

Advent opens our hearts so God's gift of grace can pour in.

Waiting's nothing new in the Bible.

Think of old Abraham and Sarah waiting so long for their promised child.

Think of the Israelites in Egypt, waiting for the chance for God to deliver them from slavery, to return to the land of milk and honey, their Promised Land.

Think of the Israelites at Mount Sinai, waiting and wondering. Would Moses ever come down? What kind of instructions from God should they expect?

Think of Job, waiting for God to bring an end to his undeserved pain and suffering.

Think of Israel in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century BC, their land darkened by greed and corruption, with the shadow of a pagan army ready to conquer Jerusalem. Isaiah the prophet had plenty to say in judgment about the people's unfaithfulness to the covenant. He warns them directly about the hard times to come.

But Isaiah sees farther. He says, wait. A time will come.

God's time will come.

"Come, let's go up to the Lord's mountain,  
to the house of Jacob's God  
so that he may teach us his ways  
and we may walk in God's paths."

Instruction will come from Zion;  
the Lord's word from Jerusalem."<sup>i</sup>

Wait, and learn the ways of peace, said the prophet of Isaiah.

“God will judge between the nations,  
and settle disputes of mighty nations.  
Then they will beat their swords into iron plows  
and their spears into pruning tools.  
Nation will not take up sword against nation;  
they will no longer learn how to make war.”<sup>ii</sup>

Wait, and be a part of God’s light, says the prophet Isaiah.

Wait, house of Jacob,  
“let’s walk by the Lord’s light.”<sup>iii</sup>

And so we wait.

We wait in hope, because God is in our future.

We wait, knowing that God’s grace will give us what we need—  
forgiveness, love and mercy.

We wait, remembering Paul’s advice to the Romans, knowing  
“that the day when we will be saved is nearer now than when we  
first put our faith in the Lord. Night is almost over, and day will  
soon appear.”<sup>2</sup>

We wait to prepare ourselves for Christmas, knowing that God’s  
word is true and can be trusted.

We wait in anticipation for the coming of our Savior. Amen.

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<sup>i</sup> Isaiah 2:3

<sup>ii</sup> Isaiah 2:4

<sup>iii</sup> Isaiah 2:5

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<sup>2</sup> Romans 12:14b-12a.