

TUESDAY, THE SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

## Surrender to the Promise

She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

Matthew 1:21

*Whenever we pray with hope, we put our lives in the hands of God. Fear and anxiety fade away, and everything we are given and everything we are deprived of is nothing but a finger pointing out the direction of God's hidden promise which one day we shall taste in full. (Henri J. M. Nouwen, *With Open Hands*, 73)*

The words from the angel of the Lord were almost beyond Joseph's comprehension: his wife Mary would bear a son who would be a Savior! What good news—but the news was almost too much to digest.

God always wants to give us more than we expect, more than we can digest. The only thing holding us back is our own limited perspectives. If we can give ourselves over to God completely—to God's will for us, to all that God wants to give us—then we can finally avail ourselves of the good news that is ours to hear.

This is our Advent prayer: that we can surrender our very lives to this Savior and all that he wants to do in and for us.

Lord Jesus, Savior, help me to give myself over to you completely. I am not afraid; I am not anxious. I hope in you and the good news you proclaim to me. Amen.

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## Yearning for Christ

It will be said on that day,

Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.  
This is the LORD for whom we have waited;  
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Isaiah 25:9

*Just as the love of a mother for her son can grow while she is waiting for his return, and just as lovers can rediscover each other during long periods of absence, so also our intimate relationship with God can become more mature while we wait patiently in expectation for his return. (Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Out of Solitude*, 61)*

Imagine the disappointment of the apostles when Jesus did not return in their lifetimes! They waited for him so faithfully, so eagerly. They must have missed him in an almost gut-wrenching way, they who were accustomed to being in his physical presence.

Let's use our imaginations and share their experiences. Let's imagine walking with Jesus in the fields, listening to his stories, witnessing his compassion. Let's imagine eating lunch with him or laughing together at something funny that someone said. Let's be one of them and miss him like they did. Let's yearn for the return of Christ like the apostles did. Let's await his return with their eagerness and faithfulness.

He is our friend too.

Lord Jesus, you walked this earth long ago. I wasn't there. I didn't see you heal the sick or cast out demons. I did not witness your death or your rising from the dead. But I follow you every day. I wait for your return. Amen.