

Revelation 19:5-9; 21:1-3

Advent 2013
December 22, 2013

Presence
“Presence Anticipated”

Introduction: Today we conclude this Advent series on the presence of God

- ✓ In the Old Testament-Presence Feared
- ✓ In the Incarnation-Presence Revealed
- ✓ In our lives today (by the Holy Spirit)-Presence Experienced

Today-Presence Anticipated

Texts- Reveal the ultimate hope that we as believers long for. (That hope as a promise, shadow, anchor).

I. The hope as a promise

A. In the upper room the last night with Jesus

Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. John 14:1-3 NKJV

“A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. 20 At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. John 14:19-20 NKJV

You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I. John 14:28 NKJV

B. Scripture tells us what Jesus is doing while we anticipate His return.

1. Secured eternal redemption

Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. Hebrews 9:12 NKJV

2. He is interceding for us

Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Romans 8:34 NKJV

3. He is preparing a place for us

C. Yet, we still long for that day

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed — 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 1 Corinthians 15:51-53 NKJV

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 NKJV

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. Philippians 3:20-21 NKJV

(ILL) Alexander MacLaren (Scottish preacher)

“Early church thought more about the second coming of Christ than about death or heaven. They were not looking for a cleft in the ground called a grave, but for a cleavage in the sky called glory. They were not looking for an undertaker, but an uppertaker.”

D. For 20 centuries one generation of believers has called forward to the next Christ is coming again! “Louder” louder the voices grow and more insistent as the days go by! One day we will shout-Christ has come!

II. The hope as it was foreshadowed

- A. Last time church under one roof-Pentecost
- B. Just 7 weeks before-Jesus with the 12 at Passover meal
- C. Four cups of every Passover meal

Great promise of Exodus 6:6-7

1. Cup of Sanctification-“I will bring you out from under the burden of the Egyptians.” (At beginning of meal-bitter herbs).
2. Cup of Judgment-“I will rescue you from your bondage.” (Passover Lamb eaten)
3. Cup of Redemption-“I will redeem you with an outstretched arm.” (Share stories of redemption)-Sing a hymn-Hallel
4. Cup of Consummation-“I will be your God and you will be my people.”

D. The unfinished meal

But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom. Matthew 26:29 NKJV

E. Next time whole church is in one room

(ILL) George Wood

Picture that banquet hall, so vast it stretches as far as the eye can see, but so intimate each feels a part. Look at the tables set with the linens, dishes and utensils of heaven, ornamented with dazzling elegance and beauty. Banners stream from the vaulted ceilings, and visual delight presses on the senses from the rainbows of color fashioned from the palette of the master Artist. The room is breathtaking in its beauty.

Throughout the banquet room orchestras are playing instruments known and unknown with such symphony in praise. Harps are singing, chimes ringing. Bells and horns, lutes and violins, dulcimers and clarinets. And from time to time the instruments die down so the vast angel choirs positioned throughout the assembly room break in with such melody of joy and praise to God as to banish every memory of the pain-filled night of earth.

The tables are for the guests: those who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. They are clothed in white. But perhaps if you looked closely enough, you might notice that the white seems to miraculously change for an instant into their earthly dress-the simple browns and blacks of peasants and prisoners.

A powerful angel steps to the rostrum and announces to the assembled crowd: “Please stand at your place. The meal will begin momentarily.”

A hush falls in the room. We look at those standing near us and further out to the vast tapestry of guests in grand assembly. We note faces of joy all around and eyes that glisten with happiness.

Entering now to the head table are the company of apostles, prophets and martyrs who bore the burden in the heat of the day and remained faithful. Then the moment comes. The last earthly guest is standing at his place. Another mighty angel announces the entry of the honored Guest: “I present to you the King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus of

Nazareth!” Trumpets begin their fanfare, and myriads of angels lift their harmony of hallelujahs. A heavenly honor guard waving flags and streamers fills the hall.

He enters, majestic in His beauty. The Son of Man, the Son of God strides to His place of honor. Silence falls. His voice breaks the stillness: “Welcome to My Marriage Supper. Let us take the cup of consummation.”

Together with Him, saints of all ages, nations, languages and cultures, from villages and cities, from farms and desert places—all will take the chalice and lift our golden cup in toast to Him and His finished work. Redemption’s saga is complete, and the eternal age has opened before us.

This hope was: Promised
Foreshadowed

III. This hope as an anchor

(Ill) 1952 Florence Chadwick-attempted a 26 mile swim between Catalina Island and Californian Coast

- ✓ Swam 15 hours
- ✓ Quit ½ mile from coast
- ✓ Fog prevented her from seeing how close she was to coast
- ✓ She became discouraged and felt like quitting

A. Hope of Christ’s return and full experience of His presence keeps us going

Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. James 1:12 NKJV

Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. 8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. James 5:7-8 NKJV

B. This hope is an anchor for our souls

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, Hebrews 6:19 NKJV

1. Soul/emotions waver
2. This hope anchors us

(ILL) Anchor not in some murky ocean bottom. It does not go down-it goes up before the veil-tied to the throne of an unshakable King who offers us an unshakable Kingdom

C. So we hold on

Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. Revelation 3:11 NKJV

Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Hebrews 10:35-37 NKJV

D. The hope of His presence anchors us in uncertain times

(ILL) Victor Plymire A/G pioneer missionary to China and Tibet

- ✓ Started in Tibet in 1908-served 16 years before the first Tibetan convert
- ✓ 19th year of missionary service-wife and only son (6) died of smallpox within one week
- ✓ Local cemetery refused burial for missionary
- ✓ Bought small plot of land on Tibetan hillside overlooking a valley outside of town
- ✓ Middle of winter-bitter part of world
- ✓ Only strength to dig one grave in the frozen ground ????
- ✓ What a reward for all his labor?
- ✓ He died not knowing where
- ✓ 65 years later (36 years after his death)-God's purpose came into view
- ✓ 1991 that small church wanted to officially re-open but had not proof that property and buildings belonged to them
- ✓ Town people did-out playing games with son of martyred pastor put in charge after Plymire left in 1949
- ✓ He called replace of Victor Plymire (David) if any evidence existed
- ✓ Found a deed in Springfield, MO to deed of grave on hillside-not in Victor's name-but the church's
- ✓ The only legal evidence found
- ✓ Gave deed to pastor who gave to officials who accepted it as incontrovertible evidence of ownership
- ✓ Property and buildings returned to church
- ✓ Had town cemetery been available-no record would have existed-years before town cemetery leveled for out buildings
- ✓ No instant gratification-but there was a purpose

Conclusion: Anticipation of His return-His presence-anchors us!

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. 1 John 3:1-3 NKJV