

A New Year of Anticipation

Study Guide for Small Group Discussion and Personal Application
Lynn Haven UMC – December 6, 2020 – Pastor Craig Carter

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Today is the second Sunday in Advent, the four Sundays that lead up to Christmas. During the Advent season Lynn Haven UMC is reading a devotional titled “The Christian New Year” by J.D. Walt. For more information visit LynnHavenChristmas.com.

The word Advent means “coming” or “arrival” and in this season we celebrate Jesus’ birth (his first coming) and we eagerly anticipate His second coming. It is important for us to have a clear understanding of Jesus’ return, so that we will not fear, dread, or ignore it.

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed...For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. - 1 Thessalonians 4:13, 16-17 NIV

1) The REALITY of Christ’s Return

John 14:3; Matthew 24:30 – Christ’s return is a certainty.

a) When?

Matthew 24:36, 42, 44 – Only God knows when it will happen.

b) What?

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 21:1, 3-4 – Jesus will appear in power and glory, followed by the creation of a new heaven and new earth where God dwells among His people, there will be no more tears or sorrow or pain, and the unrighteous and ungodly will be judged.

2) Our RESPONSE until Jesus Comes Again

a) Watch and Wait

1 Thessalonians 5:6; Matthew 24:42; Luke 12:37a; 2 Peter 3:8-9 – We live with a sense of anticipation as we look forward to a glorious reunion with our Savior.

b) Work and Witness

2 Peter 3:11-12a; Matthew 24:46; Acts 1:6-8 – Until Christ returns, we carry on His ministry in the world.

c) Worship

1 Corinthians 11:26 – Worship reminds us that Jesus is coming back and prepares us for our future destiny in heaven.

Conclusion

⇒ How do you respond to the statement, “Jesus is coming”? Is it with fear or panic? With excitement? With a sense of “hurry up”? With a “not right now” because there is something more important on your mind?

⇒ How has your thinking on the return of Jesus been shaped by popular culture, books, or movies?

⇒ Do you take the return of Christ seriously? How much is it a part of your thinking? How might you live differently if you knew Jesus was returning this year?

⇒ What would each of these responses look like in your life, practically speaking?

Watching and Waiting
Working and Witnessing
Worshipping

He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen. - Revelation 22:20-21 NIV