

To all members of the St James Traditional Services

A Weekly Word of Encouragement: Waiting patiently for the Lord

The season of Advent speaks of the hope of Jesus' coming. This second Sunday in Advent emphasizes the Word of God which sustains us in that Hope.

Psalm 40: a psalm of varied life experiences – read it reflectively.

Waiting patiently for the Lord (v. 1) is a challenging experience: at times it is long and excruciating as we learn to accept His timing and wisdom; but it is never a time to be passively doing nothing: we keep our eyes on Him, attentive to Him.

We look back (vv. 1-5) and praise Him for His past blessings and provision for us. Our past experience gives us a testimony to share with others to encourage them to put their trust in Him (vv. 9, 10).

We look at present circumstances (vv. 11-17) with all its troubles: personal challenges, pressure from the godless society in which we live; personal sin and failure within.

What is the secret of waiting? Looking to the Lord and desiring His will. The heart of this psalm are vv. 6-8 – reflect on them in particular.

God's character and will are revealed in His word;

God opens our ears to understand that Word;

God inscribes His Word on our hearts so that we delight in Him and His purposes.

When I compare what I am (poor and needy v. 17) to what the Lord is (v.16 "the Lord is great", merciful, loving, and faithful v. 11), I know He alone is my salvation, so I continue to look to Him in His word.

(N.B. In Hebrews 10:5-9, Jesus in His Humanity is the one who perfectly fulfills this psalm: the one who desired God's will, carried through that will in perfect obedience, and brought us salvation.)

Prayer

Blessed Lord, you have caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning: grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, encouraged and supported by your holy Word, we may embrace and always hold fast the joyful hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen. *Collect for Advent 2*

Remember

- keep praying daily
- keep reading God's Word
- keep in touch with your Christian community at St James: Wednesday 10am; Sunday 9am, 11am, 6pm.

With Christian love,

Robert