

FRIDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Beautiful Waiting

Wait for the LORD;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the LORD!

Psalm 27:14

*Patience comes from the word “patior” which means to suffer. ... To wait patiently therefore means to allow our weeping and wailing to become the purifying preparation by which we are made ready to receive the joy which is promised to us. (Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Out of Solitude*, 56)*

Waiting for something makes it all the sweeter when we finally have it—saving up for that bicycle as a kid, waiting patiently for the sun to rise on a dark early morning, anticipating the birth of a child.

The difficulties of life are part of our waiting. We know something great—something peaceful, whole, joyful and perfect—awaits us. How much sweeter it will be because we have waited for it so patiently! How much richer it will be because the waiting was not always easy!

Waiting is a time of preparation—for the coming of Christ, for the fulfillment of the kingdom of God, for the embrace of God warmly and securely enfolding each of us. Our patience is a sign of our hope in the good things to come.

Lord, I will wait for you—for as long as it takes! Help me to wait patiently through every difficulty and every twist and turn of my life. I am preparing my heart to be a place for you. Amen.

SATURDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Let in the Light

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

John 1:9

*It is very important to realize that Jesus never forces himself on us. Unless we invite him in, he will remain a stranger. (Henri J. M. Nouwen, *With Burning Hearts*, 55)*

We can't control the sun, its brightness or its warmth. But we can control how much sun we experience. We can close our eyes or draw the shades. We can sleep through sunny mornings or cover ourselves from head to toe to avoid the sun's rays. As powerful as the sun is, we can still resist it.

God's presence is like this too. It is everywhere, freely offered to us every day. But we have free will to avoid it if we wish. We can close our eyes to it or draw the shades of our hearts. We can cover ourselves from head to toe in our own distractions and desires. We can sleep through life and avoid the light of God's presence.

But this is not what we want. We want the brightness, warmth and healing rays of Christ, the true light. Let's step out into the bright sun of God's presence. Let's put on the warm light of Christ's love.

Lord Jesus, you are the true light. Cover me in your brightness. Warm me with your love. Amen.