

## ARE WE WAITING EXPECTANTLY AND BEING READY?

**Scripture:** Luke 3:7-18

Thursday, December 13, 2018

John came out of the wilderness baptizing those coming to him. There had not been a prophet in Israel for more than 400 hundred years. It was widely believed that when the Messiah came prophecy would return (Joel 2:28, 29 and Malachi 3:1, 4:5) When John burst on the scene, the people were excited. He was obviously a great prophet, and they were sure that the eagerly awaited age of the Messiah had come. Some, in fact, thought John himself was the Messiah. John spoke like the prophets of old, saying that the people must turn from their sin to avoid punishment and turn to God to experience his mercy and approval. This is a message for all times and places, but John spoke it with particular urgency - he was preparing the people for the coming Messiah.

John warned of impending judgement by comparing those who refuse to live for God to chaff, the useless outer husk of the grain. By contrast he compared those who repent and reform their lives to the nourishing wheat itself. The winnowing fork was a pitchfork use to toss wheat so that the kernels would separate from the blades. Those who refuse to be used by God will be discarded because they have no value in furthering God's work. Those who repent and believe however, hold great value in God's eyes, because they are beginning a new life of productive service for him.

As we come to this Advent Season and await again to celebrate the coming of Jesus. may we remember that we are called to his service and willingly offer ourselves to Him as a gift - as His coming is our gift of salvation - the greatest gift!

**Prayer:** Father God who knows our hearts and calls us to his service - we are present and awaiting expectantly. We praise you for who you are in our lives and for giving us a way to be your children. Forgive us for not always being obedient children and not always seeing the needs of others. Give us a desire to be a people who care deeply for those around us and being more loving. In the name of Jesus the Christ we pray. Amen

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