

**Wednesday  
December 16, 2020**



***Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus***

*"Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.*

*Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,  
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne."*

Advent is about expectation and hope. Charles Wesley, an outstanding hymn writer and theologian, captures both in one of his shortest hymns. Even though it was written in 1744 its message is timely and welcome in these days of weariness with a prolonged national election season and an endless flu pandemic. How we long for a better day, a rescue from fearful days of avoiding the "bug" and a conclusion to divisive politics. Who or what can save us?

Charles Wesley's hymn, however, reminds us that our hope is not in a President or civil government, but in Jesus; not in a successful vaccine, but in Jesus; not in a stimulus check, but in Jesus; not in correcting social problems, but in Jesus! They may seem to be pressing issues at the moment but they should not overwhelm us and blind us to the larger hope. All ages and nations have their problems as we have ours today. Do you see Wesley's point? Our hope is in Jesus. Jesus was born to free us from our fears and sins. He is the "*hope of all the nations*," "*the joy of every longing heart*." Our problems are local and temporary; his Kingship is universal and eternal. "*By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone*."

Advent is a time of expectation and preparation for the coming of Jesus and for renewing our commitment to his Lordship of our lives. We definitely need to remind ourselves each Advent season

because it is so easy to forget as we try to go it alone in troubled days. We struggle needlessly alone. So will you accept with me His Lordship again and pray Charles Wesley's prayer:

**Prayer:** "*Come thou long expected Jesus ... set me free from my fears and sins; let me find my rest in thee. Reign in me forever. By your eternal spirit rule in my heart. By your grace and all sufficient merit, raise me at last to your glorious throne.*" Amen.

Ray Edmonds