

New Roots Review

December 2019 Edition

Advent is a Time of Hope, for ALL

by Fred Wilgenburg



**NEW ROOTS
MINISTRY**

If you are reading this in December, before Christmas Day, it is during the season of “Advent.” That word came from the Latin term, *adventus*, which means “coming.” Though it has been used religiously by Christians since about the 4th century, with various significances, in the present day during Advent, the Church looks back upon Jesus’ coming, in celebration of the coming Messiah in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago, while at the same time looking forward in eager anticipation to the coming of Jesus’ kingdom when he returns.

Two Advent hymns which may be familiar to you are “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,” and “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus.” The words are as relevant for us today as they would have been for the people of God in Bible times:

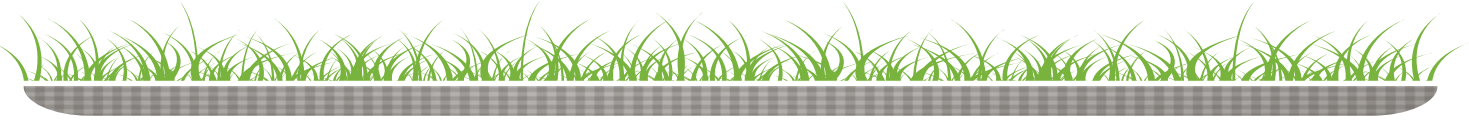
“O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel. That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.”

“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.”



Advent is a season of hope. If a person feels enveloped in darkness, a Light—Jesus—is shining, always. That is, Jesus welcomes being a person’s Savior, anytime, anywhere. As John 1:5 describes, Jesus is the Light which shines in the darkness, even though in many cases, the darkness has not understood it. The song above says this of Him: “hope of all the earth Thou art; dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.” Life can be confusing for us so we don’t know what we need. But still, as each of us are spiritual beings who are specially made in God’s image, having a “longing heart” for more, that is, for God, is innate for us humans.

Advent is a time of hope, for all people. For we who are children of God, we feel hope, knowing that our Savior has come, and He will come again. What’s also hopeful for me is knowing that life is not us and our God against a big, dark world. Rather, the hope we have is also hope for everyone else, including Unreached People Groups (UPG), which make up 40% of the world’s population. (An UPG can be defined as a group that lacks enough followers of Jesus and resources to evangelize its own people.) God knows and desires each person in an UPG, as much as He knows and desires me. In part, Jesus’ words in Matthew 24:14 allude to that hope: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be —>



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are now in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where we have the opportunity to shine the Light of Jesus to them.

If you would like to meet some of the people I describe above, it would be our pleasure to introduce you. Let us know so we can hang out together, and do that.

God bless you and your loved ones this Advent and Christmas season!

Continued...

preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come."

At New Roots Ministry, we are acquainted with numerous people of God who were part of UPGs in the past. Before they even knew Jesus, there was hope that they would come to know Him, and they eventually did. People like this, including the Nepali and Bhutanese people who were formerly Hindu or Buddhist, then often shine the Light of Jesus to those in their former country, many of whom are still in UPGs. At New Roots Ministry, we are also

blessed to be acquainted with many who are still unbelievers. Many of them were formerly of UPGs, though no longer as they



What is New Roots Ministry?

It's "a springboard for immigrants & their churches." This is done through workplace chaplaincy (both as Fred is chaplain for 17 hours/week at Smithfield Foods & as we train & place bi-lingual chaplains on commercial farms), through Timothy Leadership Training, through hosting special educational events, through empowering refugee/immigrant pastors, leaders, and their churches, through offering unique Service Opportunities—serve in, or visit, stores owned by refugees or immigrants, then hear their stories, and through helping people navigate the American system and strategically achieve their goals, like education.

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