

December 8th

Advent 2019

—A SEASON OF HOPE—



*Haste, therefore, each degree,
To welcome destiny.
Heaven is our heritage,
Earth but a player's stage;
Mount we unto the sky.
I am sick, I must die.*

Lord, have mercy on us!
— Thomas Nasche (16th C.)

“HOPE IN THE SEASONS OF LIFE”

Introduction: Christmas and the Seasons of Life

- As with most things, our experience of the Christmas season changes as we move through the various seasons of life.
- The Scriptures recognize the importance of the various seasons of our lives, exhorting us to live faithfully throughout them, and providing both positive and negative examples for us to consider.

Example: _____ Youth (1 Kings 3:3) Middle Age (1 Kings 11:3-6) Old Age (Eccl. 12:11-13)

Eccl. 12:1—Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, “I have no pleasure in them”

Key Point: The reality that Jesus has come into our world as our Savior allows us to live with _____ throughout the seasons of our lives, and the birth narratives provide several examples of this for our encouragement and instruction.

The Season of Youth

This Season of Life Considered:

The Examples of Joseph & Mary - (Matt. 1:18-25, 2:13-13; Luke 1:26-38, 46-56, 2:1-52)

Joseph:

Mary:

Important Observations

1. From the example of Joseph, we learn that faithfulness in the lives of the young is expressed in the _____ of and _____ to God's Word.
2. From the example of Mary, we learn that faithfulness involves _____ ourselves to God in order that our lives might be used for His purposes.
3. Joseph and Mary accepted by faith the dramatic altering of their _____ for their own lives because of the coming of Jesus.

Key Point: The coming of Jesus gives hope to the young because it gives our lives _____ and _____!

The Season of Middle Age

This Season of Life Considered:

The Examples of Zechariah & Elizabeth (Luke 1:1-25, 39-45, 57-80)

Zechariah:

Elizabeth:

Important Observations

1. From the examples of Zechariah and Elizabeth we learn what it means to live faithfully despite life's _____.
2. From the example of Zechariah, we see that God _____ us in our unbelief both for our good and His glory.
3. Zechariah and Elizabeth's lives were dramatically altered by God in order that He might _____ Himself before others through their testimony.

Key Point: The coming of Jesus gives hope to the middle-aged because it shows us that God is at work in our lives for His glory and our _____, even amid the difficulties and disappointments of our lives.

The Season of Old Age

This Season of Life Considered:

The Examples of Simeon & Anna (Luke 2:25-38)

Simeon:

Anna:

Important Observations

1. From the example of Simeon, we see the importance of the aged knowing God's Word in order to both _____ it to and _____ it over those who are younger.
2. From the example of Anna, we see that the bereaved can have a significant ministry among God's people in the form of prayer and _____.

Key Point: The coming of Jesus gives hope to the aged because it reminds us that our lives were never ends unto themselves, but they are _____ for eternity as well as an opportunity to proclaim the good news about Jesus to others!

Living With Hope This Advent

1. We must face the facts:

⇒ *We are not _____ the various seasons of life.*

⇒ *We are not guaranteed the fulfillment of our hopes and _____ for our own lives.*

"I'm not sentimental, this skin and bones is a rental, and no one makes it out alive." - Switchfoot, "Somewhere I Belong"

2. We must reflect on what God has done for us through the advent of the Lord Jesus.

John 3:16-17—¹⁶“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

3. We must reflect on what this means for us both now and for the future.

John 14:1-3—¹“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ²In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

Phil. 1:20-21—²⁰as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.