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Merry Christmas
from the Outpost Ministries,
and TCJHOP staff!

Matt

Wendy

Ph

Greg

Annette

Scott



“We groan as we eagerly wait...”

- Romans 8:23* -

I've picked up on a theme this year: Advent is "in" again with Christians. Suddenly, it seems, there are dozens of new Advent devotionals out there. And this is appropriate, for Advent marks the start of the new Church Year, which starts the fourth Sunday before Christmas. This year, November 27 is New Church Year's Day.

Advent is a period of waiting for what's to come. It hearkens back to Isaiah 9:2 about "The people who walk in darkness", for that's what waiting feels like. 'Tis all darkness and gloom! But it also bespeaks a glimmer of hope. Something good is coming!

Paul describes this same longing in Romans 8:23, which also parallels our experience today: "We groan as we eagerly wait for our adoption, the freeing of our bodies from sin."

One of the greatest Advent hymns pushes our thinking forward to awaiting the second coming of Christ when we will be free of sin:

*He rules the world with truth and grace / And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness / And wonders of His love...*

Upon Jesus's return he will cause everyone to prove just how glorious his righteousness is and how "wonder-full" is His love! Imagine a world that agrees that LGBTQ+ is sinful and is awed by Jesus's love!

At Outpost, of course we focus intensely on righteousness. Most of us struggle with unrighteousness in our sexuality. We long for real righteousness that is not a performance, but truly heartfelt goodness. Half of this struggle, it seems, is about "doing our sexuality right," while the other half is about "doing it right for the right reasons." That's why I quoted from the GW translation, where it says, "the freeing of our bodies from sin."

Additionally, we provide space for people to meditate on God's love for them, to imagine the wonder and marvel at the attractiveness of that love. It never ends! Jesus said, "I will never turn away anyone who comes to me" (John 6:37). This Advent, we invite you to "Come! Let us adore Him!"

* All Scripture quoted from GOD'S WORD to the Nations Bible Society translation, © 1995

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