

An Invitation to Wait

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Date: 22 December 2024

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[0 : 00] So Luke chapter 2 verse 21. Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon who was righteous and devout.

He was waiting for the consolation of Israel and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations, a light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.

The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed and a sword will pierce your own soul too.

[1 : 52] And that's the word of God. Thank you, Venus. And good afternoon, PCBC. Let me grab this stand, if that's all right.

Yeah, lovely to see you all. And Merry Christmas. Who's excited? Yeah? Okay. Anyone keeping track? How many more days are there till Christmas?

Three, correct. Thank you, Isaac. And what a wonderful season it is. I also personally love Christmas. And I love most of all how Christ is magnified during this time.

We live in a privileged place, don't we? I have a friend in Morocco at the moment, and there's nothing mentioned about Christmas. It's just a normal day of the week. And so he's having a lot of withdrawals, having lived in New Zealand, and being able to celebrate Christmas here all year.

So I want to encourage you to make the most of the opportunity. We do have a Christmas Day service. We have so many opportunities to share the hope that we have in the Lord Jesus and hail his arrival.

[3 : 01] So this is a different passage, Luke chapter 2. Thank you for reading that, Venus. I want to pray, and then let's see what God can teach us about this person who waits for the Messiah.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you so much for your word. We thank you for the Christmas story. We thank you that the story is true. We thank you that the story is for us today.

And, Father, I would ask for all of us here that you would help us to see in how Simeon waits for the Messiah, the consolation of God's people, that you would help us as well, even as we live in this time where we have seen the Messiah in one sense, and yet we await his return.

And so we thank you. Whatever sufferings and pain that we have, we thank you for them, and we bring them to you, knowing that one day you will end all suffering and pain through your Son, Jesus, who saves us.

In his name we pray. Amen. My family didn't go to church at all while I was growing up, so I grew up in a non-Christian household. But one thing we did do that was Christmassy in Malaysia was that we did put up a tree at Christmastime.

[4 : 16] And then we would pop the obligatory presents for each other. Of course, you know, sometimes we'd whisper, you know, ahead of time, like, what kind of present are you looking for? This is what we'll do with our siblings.

And then you might get it, you might not, you're not sure, and suddenly the present would appear, right? And some of you know this, but as a boy, I felt time pass especially slowly during the days leading up to Christmas because I was just so eager to get that present open, all right?

I could not wait to open my presents. I was just waiting, counting down days, waiting, waiting, waiting for the 25th of December. Christmas is a time when we wait in lots of different places and for lots of different reasons, all right?

Anyone had to wait for a car park this Christmas season, yeah? Anyone been waiting for, I don't know, tickets to go on sale? Maybe you're looking forward to next year already, right? A flight or something.

Some of us are waiting for decisions to be announced or results to be published, you know, school or uni. And then, of course, all of us know what it's like just to wait for that parcel or delivery to arrive.

[5 : 29] I want to ask you the question, what does it look like to wait for the Lord's coming? What does it look like to wait for the Lord's coming as God's people? Here in Luke chapter 2, we have just heard the story of a man named Simeon, all right?

Simeon who waits for the Messiah, Luke, our biographer, tells us. He was waiting, all right, it says here, for the consolation of Israel, the Holy Spirit upon him.

He is someone worth listening to, worth watching, worth paying attention to, tells Luke to us, right? We see this in verse 25, this waiting posture.

And so I want to dig into his story a little bit and see what we can learn as we ourselves live as waiting people. This church building sits pretty much empty through much of the week until you guys grace with your presence or others do from our church family.

But that's not what the scene is here, right, in Luke. Luke is describing the scene where Jesus and almost every other person in Israel is descending into the temple all the time, okay?

[6 : 39] This temple we have heard about before, haven't we, right? Because we've been going through this series where God's people were enabled to rebuild the temple. And so this is the same second temple as it was.

And you want to imagine the crowds there busier than Boxing Day, all right? Between then and now, you know, 400 years earlier in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah until today, a lot has changed around that part of the world in Jerusalem, okay?

So the Persians let them rebuild that temple. After them, the names and ethnicities of Israel's earthly rulers have changed over and over and over again. You want to imagine that Persians come and go, then there's the Greeks, then there's the Seleucids, then there's the Romans.

And yet whoever's in charge, Israel, they're kind of pretty much in the same position. They're people and they're under foreign rule. They're kind of like a minority group trapped and stuck, waiting on their world to change, waiting for the promises of God to come true.

And Simeon was one such person, someone who waited, waited for God's kingdom to truly arrive. And after years and years of waiting, he witnesses firsthand the arrival of the Lord's Messiah.

[8 : 02] And we are told here he is moved to praise God and even to prophesy over Mary and Joseph, to speak words for the future for them. Some of you might know this song.

There's a well-known worship song that's called Mary, Did You Know? Like, you know, Mary, did you know that your baby boy would da-da-da-da-da? Mary, did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?

That's one of the questions that song asks. Well, actually, Mary's answer would have been, yes, I did know. Simeon told me, right, when Jesus was eight days old. But that aside, why exactly does Luke want us to hear Simeon's story?

You know, why don't we just zoom straight into Jesus' adult life? Why did he want us to pay attention to Simeon's response? His long-awaited interaction with Jesus.

What can we learn? So I'm going to do something very simple. Keep your Bibles open. We're going to go through this text, and I'm just going to talk about it as we follow along the verse. And so we're going to look at the text together, and then I want to suggest three ways that Simeon invites us to wait on the Lord this Christmas.

[9 : 12] Okay, so listen again to verse 25 and 26. Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. King Herod was the person who extended this temple, some of you may know.

And after this temple was extended, God's people could have just said, ah, that's it. So easy now to access God. That's it. We now have a building to unite around.

Yeah, we are kind of ruled by, you know, these foreigners, but, you know, we have a good life. Ah, yes, the taxes can be a bit high, but we're comfortable. What more do we need? That could have been the prevailing opinion, but not for Simeon, you notice.

He was waiting for the consolation of Israel. You console someone, you comfort them when something's wrong, right? He knows that something's wrong. He knows that the time he lives in is not the best there is, that it could be.

[10:22] He knows the consolation that Israel needs, God's people needs, cannot come from just having a temple building. That's busy and full of people. He knows that consolation cannot come from just a certain lifestyle that is comfortable, that he's been able to keep, or from anything else in this world.

And you and I, through this passage, we're not told when and how the Holy Spirit spoke to him, that he would see the Lord's anointed one. But verse 26 tells us he did.

He did speak to him. And whenever Simeon heard this, it seems to have changed his life, right?

Here's a promise that has kept him waiting, waiting patiently.

I think one of the biggest obstacles to faith in our generation is that we live in a time where you don't have to wait for anything, really, right? And it feeds our love of convenience and comfort and instant gratification.

That's how we're conditioned. When we have Uber deliveries, we have Temu, right? We don't have to wait for stuff. We just get it as quick as possible. And so the temptation is, even when there's deeper problems, we don't think we have to wait.

[11:36] We can just settle for a quick fix. We buy this pill for instant relief. We hit this link for instant gratification. Far too often, we settle too quickly for lesser things to satisfy us.

But I think you and I, we do well to learn from Simeon here. He's waiting for something much better for God's people. He waits on the Lord to unveil ultimate consolation.

And note that Simeon actually hasn't been told a lot from the Holy Spirit. Actually, further earlier in chapter 2 is the story of the shepherds, which we'll hear about on Christmas Day.

Even the shepherds in verse 12, they got a very specific sign, right? The angel said, look for the baby in the manger. Simeon's just told to wait. Something's going to happen in your lifetime. Just wait.

It's a little bit like a fortune cookie. But you do wonder, right? How will he know? What's he meant to look for, right? He's told, you'll see the Lord's Messiah.

[12:37] You'll see the Lord's Christ. Is he going to be this really, is he going to be the devout leader that walks through the temple? Is it going to be some other person he meets down the street? He's not even told.

All he has to go on is what the Holy Spirit has revealed to him. And moved by the Holy Spirit, verse 27, one day he goes into the temple courts.

Right? He's got a hunch. If I'm really going to meet the Lord's Messiah, I'm going to go to the temple courts. I'm going to go where people meet with God. And so he does. And he goes there, and in the Lord's providence, he goes there at the same time as Joseph and Mary walk in with their baby.

These parents too, I think we can call righteous and devout, can't we? Because they're at the temple to follow what they understood from the law of Moses, along with every young parent.

A first century Jewish family, you have a baby, you follow the Torah, you follow the first five books of the Old Testament, the regulations and guidelines on how to live God's way as God's rescued people.

[13:43] And as Luke summarizes, Leviticus 12 gave instructions. If you're a Jewish woman and you've just given birth, you could be ritually pure again after childbirth.

And for your son to be set apart for the Lord as well. These were specific instructions. Notice the sacrifice they bring, to offer a sacrifice, verse 24, they bring two doves or pigeons.

This is a clue that they weren't well-off people. This is a clue that reflects their financial poverty, because if you were well-off, you wouldn't bring, you'd bring something worth as much as your car, maybe for a sacrifice.

But it's two birds instead for them. And the sacrifice, when they do bring it, and when it does get sacrificed, it will be a graphic reminder, okay?

They don't just bring it and then, you know, just drop it in a box. They're going to be graphically reminded by the priest that there's a need for a sacrifice to atone for their sins.

[14 : 46] As they walk to that temple, they're expecting blood will be shed that day to cover them, to restore them before the presence of the Lord. And so, not just them, but every parent that walks in. And so, it's going to be a busy temple.

You want to imagine this scene, a busy, busy temple. And in the Lord's province, Simeon is able to see them and instantly recognize his waiting is over.

In verse 28, he takes the child in his arms and he praised God. He praises God because now he has seen the consolation of Israel that he's been waiting for.

Here is one who defies all expectations. He's not a royal. He's not a celebrity. He's not an influencer. Just a baby from a poor family. And yet, as Simeon cradles the baby Jesus, he realizes, he knows all his hopes are fulfilled.

He realizes all the promises to his fathers and his father's fathers, his ancestors, they have come true. And it's a moment of clear faith for this man.

[15 : 53] Because, as verse 29 says, Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. Everything that God has promised him has now come true.

His waiting is finally over. There's a common misconception, I think, in Christian faith, about the Christian faith. One common misconception is this.

Jesus is our doorway to heaven and then the rest of the Christian life is up to us to kind of work it out for ourselves. Maybe some of you, you've spoken, sinners prayer, you made a decision for Christ to get into heaven and then after that, you've been told, now, life is now up to you to live out, to do, do, do.

And where Jesus is and what his future plans are and our response to him becomes a bit irrelevant almost. But actually, the Bible never portrays a Christian life that way, does it?

Think about Titus 2, chapter 2, verse 13. Paul says to believers, I hope you can see Paul's logic there.

[17 : 09] The key to continuing in the Christian life and beginning the Christian life is exactly the same, right? To keep going in Jesus and to start the life in Jesus is exactly the same posture.

We need to be trusting and putting our faith in this coming King. We need to be waiting for the coming of our great God and Savior Jesus who gave himself to redeem us from our sins.

Just like Simeon's posture. As we wait for Christ, his second coming, right, which is coming soon, motivates us then to then live for today, to be sorry for our sins and to believe in the good news each and every day.

As we wait for Christ, this motivates us to live as people who belong wholly to him, devoted to doing good. That's the secret to the Christian life, that we are people who are waiting for the Lord Jesus, even now.

Like Simeon, Luke invites us as well to wait for the consolation of God's people, Jesus himself. And like Simeon, we're not told all the details, are we, right? When and how he'll come again.

[18 : 19] We might speculate, we might have our theories, but we're not given the exact time and date of the Lord's return. And yet, the same Messiah that Jesus was waiting for, God gives an invitation that we also wait for him.

And having trusted in him, once you and I finally see him, we too will be dismissed with peace. In fact, before the word Christmas became used to describe this whole season that we celebrate, actually most Christians for much of church history actually referred to the four weeks leading up to December, the 25th, as the Advent season.

Has anyone heard the word Advent before? Advent, yeah? It's a word that means arrival, like the first song we sang, or coming. It's a beautiful word because one of the tensions, as we've just described, of the Christian life is that we are also in Advent.

We are also waiting for Christ's second return. Right? But the doctrine of waiting for the Lord runs right through the Bible. Right?

Right from the times when people first called upon the name of the Lord in Genesis 4. Or you think of the psalmist in Psalm 130. They're waiting for the Lord. In his word, I put my trust. We too wait for the Lord, his plentiful redemption.

[19 : 43] In fact, God's posture, the people of God's posture most of the time is waiting rather than acting. What the psalmist sings about in Psalm 130 is describing Simeon, isn't he?

Right? Plentiful redemption. Listen again to verse 30 and 31. What does it say? Simeon says, For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people.

I love this phrase from Simeon, this declaration. Christmas often comes across as sentimental, full of generic holiday spirit, but first and foremost, Christ is worth the wait because he has fulfilled this promise from Simeon.

Jesus has come. He has prepared and he has accomplished salvation in the sight of all people.

What happened on the cross was not something tucked away and done in secret.

It was done in public. Every eye knows and can see it. Even before preparing Joseph and Mary's birds for their temple sacrifice, here is Simeon giving them a hint.

[20 : 55] This can be an even greater sacrifice, not just two birds. It's going to be their own son who will one day be sacrificed on a Roman cross in the sight of all people to bring God's true and final salvation.

I mean, after all, think about Mary and Joseph's situation. The temple priest, he can do what he does according to God's law. He can declare Mary pure for a time, but only Jesus can purify a people for his own possession forever.

And if that's true, if you're not yet a Christian, can I ask you, have your eyes truly seen the salvation like Simeon has? This Christ child, when he becomes a man, others are going to say of him, behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

What about you? What do you say? Who do you say this Jesus is? Because the good news, the good news is this, Jesus lived the perfect life that you and I could never live.

The good news is that he was crucified, sacrificed on the cross for our sins. And the good news is that he rose again three days later showing that he conquered sin and death which has no hold on him.

[22 : 17] And so when you and I put our faith and trust in him, we turn away from other lesser gods and saviors, Jesus opens the way for us to truly experience joy and freedom forever in him.

Have your eyes seen the salvation that Simeon has just been told of? And even if you call yourself a believer, actually I think the question is exactly the same. Have your eyes seen the salvation? Are you turning to Christ as your consolation this Christmas? Or is the rush of everything, last minute shopping, family feasts to prepare, all just crowding out the simplicity and joy of knowing that Jesus has truly come to save me?

Are you turning to Christ as your consolation this Christmas? Or are you impatient for lesser things this Advent season? Are your eyes and ears drawn to those things more than the comfort God offers you in his Son?

You know, when our eyes have seen this Jesus, our salvation, which God has prepared before all people, that's when we have a future hope, one that lasts well beyond any sale, any purchase, any achievement.

[23 : 39] Jesus is God with us, Emmanuel. and he is also the one who will come again to fully bring everything he promised to pass. Church, we see in Simeon's story someone waiting for the consolation of Israel.

And this consolation comes truly and finally in Jesus the Messiah who has prepared salvation before all people. And this promise of seeing the Lord's Messiah made Simeon live differently, right, to others around him.

Not everyone was waiting around for Jesus. Many of them were, I'm sure, doing good things but just living their own lives, okay, building their own empires.

But if, let's say, we see a blue and white car with flashing lights in the rear view mirror when you're driving. If that miraculously changes how we drive, right, and what speed we go at, how much more so then should seeing the risen Lord Jesus on his throne really understanding he's coming again soon, how should that miraculously change the way we drive as it were in the Christian life?

Have you ever thought about that? For me, as I reflect on our family's fifth Christmas here at PCBC, as I reflect on over 20 Christmases as a Christian now, these verses are a wonderful reminder to ask what priorities are more pressing once you and I truly see the Savior this way.

[25 : 09] He's coming. There is a day that he will return. Simeon gets to depart in peace straight away and, you know, we get a few more years than he does, but not that much more, right?

Not that much more. When you know you have a couple of decades at most to invest, truly invest for eternity, what choices will you and I make?

What commitments are worth doubling down on because those truly matter for God's kingdom, for eternity, and what are projects, busy work, that's necessary to let go of for the greater good of Christ and knowing him fully?

Can I make three suggestions as a church? Three suggestions from our passage. First, let us wait like Simeon as a people on mission for Jesus.

I mean, look at verse 32 again, right? Simeon praises God that the baby in his arms is, he says, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

[26 : 17] There's many things our particular church is and many things our church isn't, right? So, we are very talented in lots of different areas. We make music, we make coffee, we greet people very well.

There are all kinds of gifts that God has given us and then there are some things that our church isn't, right? We are not super multicultural, right? In the same way that, you know, the church I visited this morning was just a typical Kiwi church.

But one thing PCBC definitely is and it's this, it's a living proof that God has kept this promise here in verse 32. Look at it again, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, the nations and for glory to your people Israel.

Because Jesus has truly kept this promise, he's become light to the world. You are here. Look around you. None of us would have encountered Jesus' light if not for faithful followers from Simeon onwards who were committed to telling people about Jesus and who then made disciples of Jesus, who then made more disciples of Jesus and then it came down to you thousands of years later. And while you and I wait for Jesus to return, the question is this, how can we wait as a people on mission for Jesus? On this mission, how might we continue revealing the Son of God to the nations around us?

[27 : 39] We could start with the precious opportunity, don't we? We have in our English service every year a new group of people are going to graduate from our Sunday morning service and we can come alongside them.

we are big enough to worship together in our heart language of English and we are compact enough that people can get to know each other well. We can be personally involved in making disciples with each other.

While we wait for Christ's return, who can you personally, intentionally disciple towards maturity in Christ? Isn't that worth waiting as people on mission for Jesus for?

And of course, mission is not just here locally, mission is global too, isn't it? We remember the millions of unreached peoples. There are countries, whole countries and nations with no opportunity to meet a Christian, not just Morocco, as I was talking about my friend, but many other places all around the world where it is statistically very unlikely that a person will be born, live, and die and ever hear about the name of Jesus.

To reach those people, well, we must wait as a people on mission, right? Not just wait as a people waiting to go home. We must take the opportunity to participate in this global mission in some way.

[29 : 08] Some live across the street from us, some of these unreached peoples actually. Walk around Pakaranga and you will meet people who have never heard of Jesus before. Some we must cross oceans to meet.

Who has the Lord laid on your heart? How can we pray for them? How can we partner with those who go with them and who go to live with them? Let us wait as a people on mission. Secondly, I think this chapter, this passage, invites us to wait as a people who marvel at Jesus.

The child's father and mother, verse 33, marveled at what was said about him. Simple sentence and yet profound the more we think about it. As Simeon holds the baby Jesus in his arms, Luke records how Joseph and Mary marveled at this, all that's been said about their son.

It's easy to forget but the first Christmas was surrounded by far more amazement and wonder than any shopping mall can conjure up. Forty days earlier to this scene, as Mary and Joseph welcomed the Son of God into the world, there were shepherds who spread the word about the Savior, weren't there?

Spread the words about the Savior and Messiah and as they shared about the newborn king to their countrymen, verse 18 actually tells us further up, all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

[30 : 32] Amazement is part and parcel, ought to be part and parcel of the Christmas season and so can I ask you, how are you rekindling your marvel for Jesus beyond this Christmas?

like some of you, our family ran into December a little bit weary after a difficult year and I think the last thing on our minds was to marvel at Jesus again, probably just wanted to finish the year and think about that for next year but it was listening and singing Christmas carols from the 1st of December, feels like that's when you actually have permission to, that rekindled my joy for the Lord, the Lord who marvelously loves me, marvelously lives with me and his people and look, even if hope is not seen on the horizon in every area of my life, I know the God I serve has brought marvelous, certain, sure hope into the world through his son Jesus and just to wonder and to be grateful, to be amazed at this salvation afresh is a wonderful posture for you and I to take as we wait for his return.

Perhaps ask yourself tonight, how incredible is it that God would deal with all my sins in this way? If you need someone to spark joy in your life, let it be Jesus.

And finally, I think our passage reminds us not just to be on mission for Jesus or to marvel at Jesus but it reminds us to wait as a people who suffer with Jesus.

You listen in as Simeon blesses this child and he says to Mary his mother, this child is destined to cause a falling and rising of many in Israel, to be a sign that will be spoken against so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed and a sword will pierce your own soul too.

[32 : 27] Try bringing that line up at someone's baby shower and see how they respond. It's a bit awkward, isn't it? Right? Here's Mary and she's just hearing news. Her boy will be appointed for the rise and fall of many in God's kingdom, spoken against.

He's going to unveil people's most secret thoughts and then as he says, a sword will pierce your own soul too. I think Simeon here is looking forward to the one good Friday where Mary herself has to witness her own son, the son of God, dying on the cross, hanging there for her sins.

This is true. This baby she delivered will one day deliver her from sin, from death. This is not the picture perfect family life that most parents sign up for.

I'll tell you that. And imagine carrying a prediction like this for 33 years as you raise your child, as you change their nappies, as you teach them how to walk and just knowing that one day a sword will pierce my own soul because of what will happen in Jesus' life.

As uncles and aunties are asking, hey, what's your son Jesus going to do after finishing school?

Any plans? Any hopes and dreams for them? What will you say? But just as Mary faithfully obeyed the angel Gabriel in Luke 1, after Simeon's prophecies here, actually you read the rest of the chapter, she and Joseph, they proceed to obey.

[33 : 57] They do everything that the law requires of them. They go back to Galilee, they begin their lifelong ministry of raising up the Son of God for his future crucifixion.

Aware of that cost, aware of the shame, and yet they patiently live out the same waiting that Simeon does, waiting for the Lord to bring his salvation to pass.

It comes with suffering, doesn't it? Alright? We wish that there was no pain and suffering in our lives, but it comes with suffering when we wait for the Lord, when we follow in his footsteps.

Here in verse 34, there's glimpses of some of the most hardest aspects of the Christian life. The more you wait for the Lord and follow in Christ, the more you face opposition that he faced.

The more you wait with Christ, the more he will expose all your deepest, darkest secrets, sins you didn't even know you had. the more you wait with Christ and long for his promises to come to pass, the more we will experience moments of soul piercing grief or frustration or heartache.

[35 : 08] As one of the early apostles said, we must go through many tribulations to enter the kingdom of God. And I want to speak to you, for you today, this Christmas does not bring joy to your world.

I pray often still for the person who once shared and I think we brought it up and we shared and we read it out, this prayer and gratitude write-up, you know, the request that December is the hardest month for them for so many different reasons.

Still pray for them. And I know many of you have your own hidden struggles and yet we can take heart because yes, we wait as people who suffer but we wait as people who suffer with Jesus and that makes all the difference doesn't it?

Right? Simeon's words here came true. Christ did come to our broken world. He is God's wonderful sign that people still speak against.

Yes, he was acquainted with all our sorrows, all our griefs. And as you and I suffer in this life, we don't suffer alone. It's actually an invitation.

[36 : 21] We suffer and wait with him. We suffer and we wait and we are able to see Jesus' hands and feet pierced for us.

And he invites us to come to him, the suffering servant, to hear the assurance of his gentle voice saying, come to me, find rest for your souls.

To just know and be dissatisfied with all the suffering in this life and know that, yes, his glorious return is one day closer. And as he promised in his final words to God's people, surely I am coming again soon.

And so to that, you and I can say, amen. Come, Lord Jesus, and we wait for him. I'm going to pray, and as the worship and song team come up and prepare for our song of response, I'm going to pray words from a wonderful Christmas carol called O Calm, O Calm, Emmanuel.

I'm going to pray to you the last line. The last line reads this, and I want to invite you to use these words if you feel like this is your prayer as well. So I'll read it slowly, and I hope that this is a song that we can continue to respond with and as we continue to wait for our coming king.

[37 : 48] Let's pray. O Come, Thou King of Nations, Lord, we praise you, mighty God, wonderful counselor, everlasting father, prince of peace.

You are the king of nations, more so than anyone on this earth. you are the only one who died and rose again. You have authority beyond anyone on this earth.

And so we ask that you come soon. O Come, Thou King of Nations, bring an end to all our suffering. Lord Jesus, you know all our suffering.

You are acquainted with all our griefs. you were despised and rejected. You were crushed for our iniquities. And so you know what it's like when we go through our own hardships and trials.

And we ask that as you ended suffering through what you did on the cross, bring an end to all our suffering. Lord, we confess so many of the pains and sorrows of this life are our own doing.

[39 : 18] We have not loved as you have loved us. We have not trusted you in many of the situations that we have encountered. And so there is pain.

There is sorrow. Would you bid the more to cease? Would you reign in everyone's lives that we love as our Prince of Peace?

Lord, we pray over and for broken relationships, areas of our lives where we need to confess and reconcile, to admit our faults, to be willing to forgive, reign now in our lives as our Prince of Peace.

We thank you for being the Lord who is peace, who has broken down the dividing wall between peoples, and yet, Lord, we don't feel like this has always come true.

So we ask you to reign and rule over our lives. Bring Prince, bring the peace that is part of your name. Help us initiate conversations that lead to healing, and restoration.

[40 : 30] Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel, shall come again with us to dwell. Father, we pray this in this space where we know your salvation, and yet we've not yet experienced it fully.

And yet we rejoice, Lord. We rejoice because you are God with us. You have come again, and you have come, and you will, and you shall come again.

And so we long for that day, Lord. Help us live for that day. Help us to be trusting in your Son, Jesus, as the one who truly dwells with us and works in our hearts.

We thank you, Lord, and we ask that you would be with us as we continue reflecting and worshipping as a people who wait for the Lord. In his name we pray. Amen.