

## **Advent 2017**

### **Week Two**

**Friday, December 15**

***We wait for, and yet we hasten, the coming of Christ***

#### **Prayers for candle-lighting**

I will listen to what the Lord God is saying;

for he is speaking peace to his faithful people who turn their hearts to him;

*[Light the candle]*

*The grass withers, the flower fades;*

*but the word of our Lord God will stand forever.*

I will listen to what the Lord God is saying;

for he is speaking peace to his faithful people who turn their hearts to him.

#### **2 Peter 3:11-14**

...what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Peter identifies here a certain paradox in the life of faith which has important

ramifications for how we live. On the one hand, we are waiting for the coming day of God in the return of the risen Christ and revelation of the new heavens and new earth where righteousness is at home. On the other hand, we also bear an active responsibility for “hastening” the coming of that day by the way we live our lives. In other words, the future “day of God,” when God’s ways will permeate the earth, is not a specific date carved in stone, fixed by divine decree. It is a time that may actually be accelerated by the readiness of God’s people and all humankind.

How do we hasten this day when the ways of Christ will saturate the earth? By leading lives of holiness and godliness, seeking to live in true peace with one another at all times and in all places.

### **For Reflection**

Do you live your life as if Christ’s return in glory were somehow linked to your actions?

If not, why not?

What efforts do you make to live peacefully with everyone, not ignoring injustice, but seeking true reconciliation with others? What particular actions do you take that produce peace and integrity in your relationships with others?

Where are you tempted not to live peacefully with others? In particular, what fears or self-concerns tempt you not to do the work of peacefulness or reconciliation?