Advent 2017

Week three

Friday, December 22

Blessing

Prayers for candle-lighting
The true light, which enlightens everyone, is coming into the world.
[Light three candles]
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God.
The true light, which enlightens everyone, is coming into the world.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24
> May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Interpretation
In Deuteronomy 5:3, we read that the words of the covenant that God made with Israel were not only for the first generation who fled Egypt, but for all generations.

> •As Jews sometimes say, "We were all at Sinai." That is a principle that holds equally true for much of the scriptures: they were written not only for their first hearers, but for all of us.

> •The blessing from 1 Thessalonians that is our scripture for today is, then, not only for the church in Thessalonica in the first century, but for us, as we continue to wait and prepare for the full revealing of God's kingdom in our world.

> •And, like those first Christians, we wait for the coming of Christ not only at the fulfillment, but each day, as Christ draws us more fully into his paths of holiness, in soul and spirit and body.

> •We do not need to rely upon ourselves alone for the wisdom and strength to make such wise decisions. God, who calls us toward holiness, is faithful to that call, and will guide, strengthen, and defend us as we make the everyday decisions that add up to a life of holiness.

Reflection
The best way to engage a blessing like this one is to memorize it and carry it with you during the day. Allow it to unfold in all the places where you work and rest and love:
> *May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely;*
> *and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless*
> *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.