

**Advent 2017**

**Week Two**

**Thursday, December 14**

***The Lord is patient***

**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 3:8-9**

But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.

As the decades passed following the death and resurrection of Jesus, many of the early Christians began to wonder why Jesus had not returned to claim the entire world for the reign of God. In today's reading, Peter cautions Christians not to be too eager for Christ's return. After all, he writes, some of us are not yet ready for Christ's return. Not

all of us have turned our lives around and turned back to the ways of God.

Earlier in my life, I was driven to succeed in everything I did. Whether in my academic studies, or my participation in competitive sports, or my professional life as a trial lawyer, I always pushed hard to come out on top. I usually won all the awards for being the “most competitive” at anything I pursued. While this competitive spirit often helped me produce quality work and high achievement in whatever I undertook, it sometimes led to strained relationships and a lack of intimacy with others. This was ironic, since I was pushing so hard simply to get love and affirmation from my family and friends.

In today’s reading, I hear and recognize good news. God did not want me to perish, to destroy my own life and that of others by always fighting to get to the top. I surely tested the Lord’s patience, as God waited for me to realize there was a better way to live my life. Fortunately, I finally realized the need to repent and turned back toward God.

My life is now rich and full, and, ironically, the quality and results of my work have not suffered. Had it not been for the Lord’s patient waiting on me, and the delay of Christ’s final return, who knows where my life would be right now. As it is, though far from perfect, I am better prepared for the day when Christ finally does return.

### **For Reflection**

In what areas of your life has the Lord shown great patience, waiting for you to repent and turn back to the ways of God?

Conversely, we sometimes grow impatient with the Lord's seemingly slow response to our own prayers and discernment. As Peter notes, that delay in God's timing can seem like a thousand years. Where in your life today are you tempted to act decisively without waiting on the confidence that comes from knowing the Lord will be with you?