

View the Present Through the Promise



This hymn encourages us to live expectantly, always in Advent. According to Thomas Troeger's hymn we are to look for Jesus to come in ways expected and unexpected, in times we have calendared and in times that will surprise us. We are to live in the moment, in the present, knowing that God steps into our place and our time to be with us and to bless us.

The promise of Christ's presence should give us hope and courage. It should also humble us. To live in the presence of Christ, always expecting to see him in the people and things around us; this is a way of living that sets the Christ-follower apart from the rest of the world. It is the position of heart and mind from which we minister to the world.

The message of this hymn expands Advent beyond preparation for Christmas and for Christ's "second coming." The message of this hymn opens our eyes and imaginations to the understanding that Jesus is with us and can't help but be seen now and then. Christ has come. Christ is with us. Christ can be seen, most often in people who do not realize that Jesus is glowing in them.

Christ is always coming and always here. This is hard for us to grasp, but it's not hard for One who is three-in-one and who was fully human while here on earth and, at the same time, fully divine.

To view the present through the promise of Christ's coming is to adopt, or live into, a particular "world view." World views are too often established by politics or our economic status, or fears of one sort or another. Here, we are admonished to establish a world view based on a divine promise. This should be the primary, if not the solitary, world view of the Christ-follower. World views based on self-centeredness or fear deny the validity of Christ's promise and the teachings of the gospel. This hymn seeks to clear our lenses.

Christ will come again. Until the time that the whole world sees Him, Jesus' disciples are supposed to make Him visible.

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