

## ADVENT 2 – 2007

### Acts 3: 19 - 26

One of Jesus Christ's advents (comings) was how He came to the hearts of Old Testament people through the words of the Prophets. Another advent, of course, was when the Son of God came to live in this world by birth of the Virgin Mary, a most awesome miracle. This one is called His first coming. Now Christ comes into us New Testament, last days, people by (again) prophetic/Apostolic Word and Sacraments. Finally, we still wait for what is called Christ's second coming, His coming again, to this world on the Last Day. All of these are at least mentioned in these few verses, first spoken by the Apostle Peter. They were spoken just after Peter and John served as Christ's tools to suddenly, completely heal a crippled man.

On the basis of these verses of God's Word, all of us are urged to

### **Believe God's Spokesmen (in order) to Speed Christ's (2<sup>nd</sup>) Coming.**

Jesus first coming into this world accomplished the wiping out of all our sins. His second coming to this world will accomplish the refreshing of creation forever.

We have sins that needed wiping out. To these people in the temple courts that day, and so people who must have taken the worship of God, our God, seriously, Peter talked about God turning them from their wicked ways. 'Wicked' is a very strong word. We do not find it any easier than those people to be called sinners and wicked, do we? But we also do know personally how real sin is in our daily living. It is easy to be religious and yet to miss the whole point. It is easy to overlook those particular words of God that we would prefer not to face up to or to conveniently forget.

We can be just as unloving to someone we are mad at as anyone else or as unforgiving toward anyone who has wronged us one time too many. Yes, there is plenty of evidence of sin and wickedness in us.

When Jesus was born in the flesh and in that flesh lived His entire earthly life sinlessly, loving His Father and all people flawlessly, and in that flesh died innocently, yet under all of the world's sin in the world's place, in our place, Jesus, God in the flesh, from God the Father, anointed with God the Spirit, wiped out all that sin. He proved that He had done that when He raised Himself from the dead on the third day, the first Easter.

We certainly, therefore, need to repent of our sin and to rely on Jesus for that forgiveness, forgiveness being the very purpose of His life and work here. This is quite a turn! It is a turn we cannot make on account of our sinfulness. Note, Peter said that it was God who aimed to turn Israel from their wicked ways by giving them Jesus first.

This is how God turned us and how He turns anyone today. Moses already told how God would send the ultimate Prophet to speak God's Word and how they should listen to everything He said. Note: everything! Every word Jesus spoke was God's Word because Jesus is God. Every word of the Bible is Jesus' Word just as much as it is the Father's and the Spirit's Word. They are the only God.

To listen to Jesus is to be God's person. Not to listen is to be cut off from God's people.

Those who believed the Old Testament Scriptures were ready for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem.

Once Jesus finished His first coming's work, heaven had to receive Jesus. It had to give Him its grand reception as its King. Jesus is the glorious, living King. He rules for the

benefit of His people, His Church. These days, since He ascended into heaven, are the last days. The whole New Testament time is the last days. These days are centered on Christ's forgiveness. That forgiveness prepares us for the Last Day, for when Jesus comes again.

God is patient. He wants everyone to repent and believe the Good News so that everyone can have everything Jesus won for everyone.

So, the more quickly people trust in their Savior and the more believers like you take the Gospel to the world so that they can, the faster Jesus will be on His way back.

We prepare to celebrate our Savior's coming at Bethlehem by trusting what God says about Jesus and His work. So, trust every word of it, through all the Prophets, Moses, Samuel, and all of them and now also the Apostles, like Peter.

By faith in those same words of God through the Apostles and Prophets we are prepared also for when our Redeemer will come to close out the last days on the Last Day, Judgement Day.

That day will begin the times (endless times) of refreshing. You know what it means to refresh something. Well, God, because of Jesus on that day will refresh everything, but His people will be the center of that refreshing. That is when all of them forever will share the glory of their King, body and soul. It is their bodily resurrection day.

All of creation has been moaning and groaning under decay because of man's sinfulness. Because of Jesus' redemption, God will make a new heaven and earth, all renewed, all refreshed, everything restored to pre-sin perfection.

It means we are heirs of the Prophets and will at that time receive as an inheritance from Jesus everything God promised through His Prophets and Apostles. It means we are heirs of God's covenant, His holy promise, the promise He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the promise that hits its high note in blessings for all nations and peoples through that one descendant, Jesus. On that day Jesus will return in glory, visibly, with His angels, to give His believers everything included in that Gospel covenant. Every believer in Jesus is God's heir.

We are God's people, His family, His sons and daughters, all of us who listen to what Jesus says. So, we are His heirs, co-heirs with Christ Jesus, forgiven and looking forward to the times of refreshing when the Father sends Jesus again to restore everything to sinless perfection.

Believe Christ's spokesmen, the Prophets and the Apostles to speed Christ's coming.  
Amen.