

December Devotional:

How Sweet the Sound of Anticipation!

It was December of 2006 when Jill and I welcomed two little ones into our home. The weeks leading up to move-in day were filled with anticipation. There was much work to be done, but we were excited to hear the sound of little footsteps and laughter in our home. These were happy sounds. But the sounds in our house were not always happy. The sound of tears and sadness, anger and stress dominated at first. Our once quiet home was filled with the reverberations of frustration. There were times we thought we would never see the light at the end of the tunnel. The days were dark, the noise was piercing but there was a love that was growing. Soon the girls learned that our home was safe, tears gave way to smiles, screams turned into laughter.

Transition from foster care to a forever family is always difficult, and children can feel the stress. There are still some tears and frustration at our house; that will never change, but most days are filled with the sounds of joy, happiness, and a love that continues to grow. ***Anticipation has given way to joy.***

Advent is a season of waiting. It is a season where we wait for the coming of Jesus again. For many the anticipation of the season comes as we look forward to the celebration that happens on the 25th. It is a time of great anticipation, especially for children. But what are we really waiting for?

Read Isaiah 9:1-7

† What were the people waiting for?

† What will this promised child bring?

Charles Wesley, in his hymn *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* (LSB # 338), summarizes the anticipation of the season:

***Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art,
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.***

One of the first people to celebrate the coming of the long-expected Messiah was John the Baptist.

Read Luke 1:39-45

† How old was John when he leapt for joy at the coming of the Messiah?

† How was he able to do this?

Are you leaping for joy this season? Are the sounds of sadness, anger and stress dominating your life right now? Is your life filled with the reverberations of frustration? Are the day's dark and the noise piercing?

Read Psalm 130

Hear the good news; our Redeemer has come! Even as we wait for Jesus to return, we celebrate what he has already done to adopt us into his family as his love grows within us.

Transition into this forever family is sometimes difficult and stressful, but, when Jesus comes again, our days will be filled with the sounds of joy and happiness forever. What do we do in the meantime?

Read Romans 8:18-25

For now we wait patiently for his return, assured of our place in the forever family of Christ. How sweet does that sound?

-Pastor Seth Moorman