

## **12-13-20 Third Sunday in Advent**

Sermon- Healing Light

Scripture- Malachi 4:2-4, 1 Thess. 5:16-24, CTW- Ps 126

Hymns- TBD with Dave Shover

Theme- With repentant joy we anticipate the birth of our Savior. We listen for His Word, live by it, and are healed and inspired by His many-faceted light which shines upon us. This season of anticipation is an excellent time of all of us to seriously consider and attempt to understand just what it is we are looking for.

First a trip down memory lane. Listen to these song titles:

"Yesterday." "Hey Jude." "Twist and Shout." "We All Live in a Yellow Submarine." "I Wanna Hold Your Hand." "Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds." "Strawberry Fields Forever."

Sound familiar? In spite of the Decca Recording company telling them in 1964 that, "Groups with guitars are on their way out," John, Paul, George and Ringo went on to change a generation.

Add one more song to the best of the Beatles. And what would that be? "Here Comes the Sun", a song that first appeared on the Beatles' album *Abbey Road*.

### **I. Our Theme for the Day is Here comes the S.O.N! That's the focus of the Malachi 4 passage.**

Our Advent message this year is on the Savior's Second Coming, the grand finale of history, our final victory and the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Christ came to us in Bethlehem and he will come again!

**A. Malachi longed for the Messiah!** He lived during the dark days of Persian domination over Judah in the mid-fifth century B.C.

The darkness was all-encompassing.

The people surrounding Malachi at the time scoffed at him, saying, "The LORD's table is contemptible" **Malachi 1:7** and, "It is vain to serve God" **Malachi 3:14**.

Those are dark words! At the root of it all is this expression in **Malachi 2:17**, "Where is the God of justice?"

People were saying, "God, you say that you will come and right all the wrongs, heal every hurt, vindicate your people and defeat every enemy!

But none of this had happened yet!" "Evildoers not only prospered but they put God to the test and they escape" **Malachi 3:15**.

**We too are in the midst of dark times, and we cry out to the Lord for relief...answers...justice!**

We know the frustration! Overcome with this kind of cynicism and sarcasm, our prayers don't deepen, our devotion doesn't increase, our zeal doesn't grow and our generosity remains stagnant.

Our whole lives can feel pretty stagnant under our current circumstances!

**B. In the turmoil of today's world where we are pelted with unfairness and sin daily, we also cry out, "Where is the God of justice?"**

A five-year-old watched with fascination as his dad filled the family car up with gas. A few days later, the five-year-old decided to do the same thing.

Removing the gas cap, he placed the end of a garden hose in the gas tank and was about to turn the water on when his horrified dad intercepted him and foiled his plan.

The child had a misconception! He had a misconception about the kind of hose it took to fill a car with gas.

Misconceptions can be humorous. **But misconceptions can also be harmful.** Occasionally misconceptions can be fatal. Are you currently operating your live under any **misconceptions?**

**1. It is a fatal misconception** to think that Christ will never return, that his promises are null and void, that there will be no final victory.

**2. It is a fatal misconception** to say, "Evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they escape" **Malachi 3:15**. Why is that? Malachi says, "Here comes the Son, the Messiah!" He is the one who rights wrongs!

The Son will come because of God's overwhelming love for his people. How so? **Malachi 3:17** tells us: "They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in the day when I act for my treasured possession."

The phrase "**Treasured possession**" is the most endearing term God has for his people. Even though they sometimes didn't feel valuable, they were still loved!

These weren't valuable people in the eyes of the world, but they were dearly loved by the Father! So much so, that God calls them his treasured possession.

**II. Even when we don't feel valuable, God calls us his dear, treasured possessions Titus 2:14.**

**1 Peter 2:9** reminds us: <sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

**A. We are so valuable that God's heart aches until the day when he will perfectly restore us, raise us up and make all things new.**

Now the Bible isn't clear about all of the finer details of our eternal life, but this much is sure. The future for believers is glorious!

How so? **Malachi 4:2** tells us: "But for you who fear my name, the son of righteousness **shall rise with healing in his wings**. You shall go forth leaping like calves released from the stall".

The Son of Righteousness will bring with him a new day, when every hint of darkness will be scattered, all gloom will be gone and the night of terror and dread will be forever banished.

Is that enough for us all to really look forward to the Advent season? There is healing to be had with this small child and Lord knows we are all in need of healing. It reminds me of the song: **"There's a Balm in Gilead, to heal the sin-sick soul!"**

On that day, our righteous standing, by faith, will become clear, just like the shining sun in all its brightness and beauty.

**B. The Son of Righteousness will also bring healing in his wings! He will restore everything we have lost.** All the years of pain will be erased.

Every tear of disappointment will be wiped away. And the symphonies we missed and sunsets we didn't see will be beautifully played over again and again!

There will be healing for people broken by divorce, illness, death and loss. In the twinkling of an eye, Jesus will erase our lifetimes of hurt and pain and brokenness.

We will see the Savior born in Bethlehem take up his cross for us. We will see the hands and feet that took the nails, the head that was crowned with thorns.

We will see the Savior, once wrapped in swaddling cloths, who left behind the burial wrappings when he rose from the dead!

We will hear his words of welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant ... Enter into the joy of your master" **Matthew 25:21.**

**III. All of this will be ours on that day, and so much more, because the Son who once slept in a manger finished the work of salvation—for us.**

Look at dark another day in our history: The sky is dark. Two criminals are slowly dying, one on his right and one on his left. Jesus is in the middle, taking a deep breath and speaking his **last words**. John records them, "It is finished" **John 19:30.**

The veil of the temple is rent asunder. Jesus' blood is poured out. The curse of sin is removed. The sacrifice is complete. Death is defeated and paradise is restored forever!

**A. Because the Son of Righteousness rose on the third day, he will come again with healing in his wings.**

When the Son comes again, Malachi says, "You shall go out leaping like calves released from the stall" **Malachi 4:2.**

Imagine that! What joy! What exuberance! What freedom! Leaping like calves! No wonder Christmas time is a beautiful time of joyous anticipation!

Critics have always denied that Jesus will return. The always have, they always will. Cynics have laughed at the idea of it. Others have tried to explain it away. On that day Jesus will summarily dismiss all of them, saying "away with you, I never knew you!"

The brightest and best of the modern world think that Jesus' return is a fairy tale, a legend or a myth.

**B. But the truth stands, solid as a rock and soon to be fulfilled.**

On that great day when Jesus returns, all the faithful will celebrate with great joy when we shout aloud, "Here comes the Son!" and He brings with Him the **healing light** for His people!

Amen? Let Us Pray...