

December 5, 2021

A Long Wait

Luke 1:5-25, 57-58

My daughter asks almost every day now if Christmas is tomorrow. She notices the decorations, the imagery, the songs. People have started asking her what kind of presents she wants. Her brain is full of Christmas. Her brain is also not great at judging time yet, so a month is approximately the same amount of time as 300 years to her. It's forever. One of my all-time favorite Advent study titles is *Christmas Is Coming! But Waiting Is Hard!* It's a book of family activities and devotions, and its title perfectly sums up my daughter's thoughts on the holiday season.

Advent gives us the opportunity to talk a lot about patience in our house. We talk about how to be patient and how that patience helps everyone enjoy the anticipation of things to come. The student book author writes, "I once read somewhere, 'The secret of patience is doing something else in the meanwhile.' In John 14, Jesus says, 'Don't be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also in me. . . . When I go to prepare a place for you, I will return and take you to be with me so that where I am you will be too' (John 14:1, 3). But Jesus didn't intend for us to sit around and simply wait. He gave us plenty to do."¹

In this season of Advent, there is much to do while we wait. There are songs to sing, candles to light, and prayers to pray. We have decorations to hang, family to see, and presents to wrap. Lines must be learned for Christmas plays. Recipes must be perfected. We will also find quiet time in which we can reach out to God in reverence and thanks. Waiting is hard, but once the wait is over, we celebrate! "The Lord is come. . . . Let every heart prepare Him room."²

1. Are you a patient person when you have to wait for something? Why or why not?
2. For you, what is the hardest part about waiting for Christmas?
3. How can you meaningfully fill the waiting time of Advent this year?

Rachel Mullen lives in Nashville, Tennessee, with her husband and daughter. She blogs at www.travelwithgrands.blogspot.com and is mom to the world's worst behaved dachshund.

¹From *Adult Bible Studies*, Winter 2021-2022, by Gary Thompson (Cokesbury, 2021); page 14.

²From hymnary.org/text/joy_to_the_world_the_lord_is_come.