



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

April 21, 2024

“Waiting on the Lord ... and the Good News”

(Ezekiel 36:26, 33-36) A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh... Thus says the Lord God: On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the towns to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt. The land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by. And they will say, ‘This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined towns are now inhabited and fortified.’ Then the nations that are left all around you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places, and replanted that which was desolate; I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do it.

Last week’s “Blast” touched on the connections between the Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures. This week we start with the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel. In the Scripture above he has called upon Israel to repent, but his admonitions have gone unheeded. He declares that an entirely new creation must replace the current sad state of affairs. Today, we understand that to be the Gospel of the New Testament, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But that brings up our question: “Are we there yet? How do we wait on the Lord?”

Waiting on the Lord: What Does That Mean?

In a recent article in Tabletalk (a publication of Ligonier Ministries - <https://store.ligonier.org/april-2024-tabletalk-magazine>) we read that waiting is a part of human nature. While God is timeless, we are not. I think we’d all agree that the Ezekiel passage tells us that our world has not yet “become like the Garden of Eden!” And so we are waiting...but shouldn’t we also heed Jesus’ words (“Repent, *for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*.” Matthew 3:2)? As the Ligonier article suggests: “Our waiting is an opportunity to experience Him [God] within the framework of our time.”

The Good News

Christ’s coming into our world in human form 2000 years ago began to fulfill Ezekiel’s words, and though our “desolate land” is still in the process of repair, we can trust in God’s promises *in God’s time*. Our relationship with God can be restored *now*. We can experience God’s Peace and presence in our lives *now*. We can act as agents of reconciliation in our broken world, extending God’s love and forgiveness to others *now*.

Two Waiting Stories

Our culture is permeated with impatience. This week I suggest you refresh your memories about these two important “waiting stories” in the Bible: Israel's Temptation: Israel's temptation in the wilderness, where they desired immediate gratification and considered returning to Egypt instead of waiting for the Lord's provision in the wilderness and the promised land, referenced in Exodus 16:2-3. And (2) Jesus' Temptation: The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, where Satan tempted Him with immediate gratification, suggesting He turn stones to bread, throw Himself off the temple, or bow down to Satan to receive the nations without waiting for God's timing (referenced from Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, and Luke 4:1-13).

- God’s peace, Vance

Prayer Box: pray for healing for Mia, MaryBeth, Jazmine, and Elizabeth; pray for all grieving families and friends; pray for those suffering from extreme weather; pray for peace in Ukraine and the Middle East; pray for those who seek God or a deeper understanding of God. *Lord, hear our prayers!*