

## GET AN ATTITUDE

*Text: Mark 1: 2*

How many of us would rather complain about what is wrong than to try to make it right?

- To feel sad and upset, or angry, about what is going on around than to change it?
- To cast stones and criticize what is happening, rather than to gather up the stones and build from them a new and better thing?

Advent is a strange time of year for some of us. A time, in which we prepare for the coming of the Son of God, some times we feel down, disappointed, and anxious;

- A time in which instead of feeling joy, we feel despair,
- A time in which instead of rejoicing, we fret, worry, and drive others insane.

As I anticipate the Lord, as I look forward to Christmas, to candles, to the hymns, to have Ham and Sorrel. The number of grinchers that exist around me amazes me. The number of people who grump and complain about how Christmas is corrupt, how our songs have been

stolen, our gift giving cheapened, our hopes made trivial, and our dreams destroyed.

I am amazed by how much I hear around me the voices of doom, by people who tell me that things have changed, and that Christmas has become nothing but a merchant's delight, and that what is supposed to be a time of faith and hope has become nothing but a time of greed and despair.

Where is our faith?

Where is our conviction? Where is our sense that indeed God has come to us in Jesus and that he has overcome the power of darkness?

Do we enjoy cursing the darkness?

Do we enjoy it more than lighting a candle?

This is the season of good news, the season of preparing ourselves for the coming of the Lord, the season of celebration, of rejoicing, of praising God for what he has done, what he is doing, and what he will yet do.

However, can you tell? Can people look at us and say, "Yes, something special is happening! Something good is going on?"

Every year at Christmas, I want to cry with John the Baptist and with Isaiah the prophet. I want to cry with them:

*Get with it. Get an attitude! See what is really happening! Prepare ye the way for God! Look for he is coming in power! Make his path straight! Know that the time of vindication and of peace is at hand! Rejoice and be glad – for while there is darkness in the world – there is also light, and the light is stronger than the darkness, the darkness cannot overcome it.”*

I want to cry – *Prepare ye the way of the lord, Comfort, O comfort my people,*  
- *The Lord comes with might, his arm rules for him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom.”*

There is so much good around us. There is so much power and righteousness at hand.

My friends, a candle has been provided to us. A light has been granted unto the world, and its power is unquenchable.

So what are we doing? Are we letting the enemy in? Are we cursing the darkness rather than lighting a candle? Are we preparing the way of the lord?

Think of the good news! Get an attitude! Prepare the way of the Lord; celebrate the good news instead of cursing the bad.

Do we really want good news? Then let us look for what is good. Look, for God – and you will see that not only is he coming, you will see that he is here.

Let us think about parents who take care of their children. People who through the church and other organizations give of their time, talent and money to help others.

What keeps our outreach programmes going? What explains tenderness of a young married couple?

What sense do we make of the feeling we have when we see a baby makes the first step?

Advent is about preparing for the coming of the Lord – but we know – that getting ready is not for something to come in the far distant future, it is an opening to the God who is already with us, an opening to the Prince of Peace – who

came to us as a babe in Bethlehem, and who, after his resurrection, is Lord of both Heaven and earth.

Are we prepared? Are we open?

There are people who believe in God, and who yet miss the good news.

For them God is always coming, but never here.

God is always promising, but never delivering.  
God is always near, but never quite in touch.  
That is not so.

**God lives. God is here. In addition, God is coming.**

You can see it in the face of a new baby.

You can see it in the gaze of young lovers.

You can see it in the look of old married couples.

You can see it within your own hearts, when we take the time to look.

God will accomplish his purpose. The kingdom will come.

The question for us is – will we get an attitude for this season? Will we be a part of the

fulfilment of God's purpose? Will we light a candle? Alternatively, will we curse the darkness?

**AMEN!**

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