



Hillside Monthly Dispatch

Hillside Baptist Church, Pembroke, NH

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Modeling the Truth of God's Word

December 2019

Expectations and Hope Fulfilled

From the Pastor's Desk

A Season of Expectation and Hope

John 1:29

This time of year always conjures up that old time feeling of nostalgia and familiarity. I'm not sure why, but it does. Maybe it is the smell of winter in the air, perhaps it is the shelves in the stores fully stocked with Christmas related items, or possibly it might be the festive music I hear everywhere I go. There is just something about this time of year that reminds me of when I was a child.

For me this season always has had that feeling of expectation and hope – the expectation of presents, parties, family, food, and fun. As for the hope, it was placed in the idea that I would get what I asked for from my parents with all the little hints I had been dropping to them over the previous four months.

As I consider what this time of year means now versus when I was younger, it is far different. My hopes and expectations are not what they once were. I look forward less to receiving presents and more to giving them. I hope to see a spirit of goodwill wherever I go, and the work of charity to the many that are in need. My expectations are not in what others may do for me, but in what God may do in man. The times have changed, but the fact that this season seems to bring a sense of expectation and hope has not.

As I think about hope and expectation, there was a time in history when there was an immense expectation and hope in what God would soon do. It was in the time between the two testaments of Scripture, you know, that break of silence between the Old and the New Testaments. It was a time in which there was an immense oppression of the Jews by the Romans, which was tremendous and difficult.

They were in pain and they knew what it was to be beaten down. Because of the pain there was at that time a great hope and expectation that was unparalleled in history. It wasn't until John the Baptist broke onto the scene that this expectation and hope actually had a chance to be fulfilled.

He came preaching and teaching in the power of the Holy Spirit. He came to call the Israelites back to God and offered them hope through a baptism of repentance that the Jews had never known. The more he preached, the more the people believed him to be the coming Messiah, the fulfillment of their expectations and hope.

Upcoming Events and Meetings

Dec. 1, 10:45 a.m. – Lord's Supper

Dec. 7 – No Men's Breakfast

Dec. 8, midday – Christmas Dinner

Dec. 25 – Christmas Day

Dec. 31 – New Year's Eve

Weekly:

Sundays at 9:30 a.m. – Sunday School and Bible Discussion

Sundays at 10:45 a.m. – Worship Service

Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m. – Weekly Bible Study

Of course we know today that John the Baptist was not the Messiah, but can you imagine their disappointment when he emphatically declared to the crowd that he was not the long awaited Messiah. Their hopes and expectations of that season in life must have been crushed. Their hearts must have been squashed. They must have felt deflated in what would be misplaced hope and expectations.

That is true for any of us in this day and age, for when we wrongly place our expectations and hopes in someone other than God we feel defeated and deflated. We get angry and upset. We get despondent and depressed because that which we expected was not realized the way we thought they would be in the person we felt would fulfill them.

Fortunately for them, John the Baptist did not leave them hanging high and dry to sulk in their pity and despair. He would go on to tell them that there was One who was coming after him. It was the One who would follow him. It was for this One that he was sent to prepare the way.

Such a statement was received in a mixed way by all his hearers. Those who did not want to accept that statement went on to ask further if he was speaking of himself. Others

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On the web at <http://www.hillside-sbc.org>

Pastor's Desk (from p. 1)

went on to ask who it was, but in each case at that time he did not know for whom he was clearing the path, but he did know that the One whom he served was coming soon.

We see that fulfillment in the Gospel of John in chapter 1 verse 29. It states, "The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'"

What a delight that must have been for John. He had been working, he had been toiling, he had been tilling, and he had been preparing the people for the coming Messiah. All of a sudden, it dawned on him who it was.

It was none other than his own cousin, Jesus of Nazareth. John's testimony was the fulfillment of all the expectations and hopes that the people had been expressing to him for the entire time he had been preaching. What they hoped in him was going to be realized in Jesus.

This must have been a great joy and blessing for John to be forever linked with the Messiah, for we know that in John's eyes all his expectations and hopes were finally realized and fulfilled. Even though he was to decrease in popularity, even though he was to be imprisoned, and even though he knew he would die, he found his hope and expectation in Christ Jesus who was the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world.

How about you? Are your expectations and hope fulfilled each year around this time? Do you feel as if you have been filled with joy and comfort? Do you hope in man and what he can do only to find disappointment?

Then you no longer need to end your season this way if you know Christ Jesus as the one who takes away your sins and bestows upon you His love and grace. When you receive the salvation in Christ, you receive the greatest gift of all, His very righteousness that brings healing and fulfills all your longings.

This time of year is truly wondrous and great. It is the time of year in which we can find the spark of grace in the eyes and lips of many. It is the time of year in which we can witness the good that man can do for his fellow man. It is the season of the year that many wait for the whole year through only to relive that old time feeling that is conjured up by sights, sounds, and smells.

But for us Christians it is more than just those things, it is a time where we reflect in joy and praise that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has fulfilled our deepest longings and greatest needs. It is He who has given us the fulfillment of our expectations and hopes and we no longer look past Him, for we find our all and all in Him.

May you know the pleasure of your Lord and the love He gives to you, not just in this season, but also throughout the whole year.

May His Grace be upon you.

✠ Pastor Jim

Men's Breakfast

We are skipping the monthly breakfast this one time. We are having our Christmas Potluck Dinner on Sunday, Dec. 8, which is the day after our usual first Saturday of the month. That would make for too many events on one weekend, and rescheduling it to the following Saturday would be too far into the month.

Hang in there. We'll resume in January.

Fellowship Events

On Sunday Dec. 8th, plan to bring something to share at the Church Christmas Dinner. This takes place right after the Sunday Service.

Visitors do not have to bring anything since it is our pleasure to serve you.



Jesus Is Right Behind You

This story came from the *Our Daily Bread Devotional* for January 12, 2019 and was written by ODB writer John Blase. It deals with a novel way of sharing a cup of coffee.

My daughter was ready for school a little earlier than usual, so she asked if we could stop by the coffee shop on our way. I agreed. As we entered the drive-thru lane, I said, "Do you feel like spreading some joy this morning?" She said, "Sure."

We placed our order, then pulled up to the window where the barista told us what we owed. I said, "We'd like to pay for the young woman's order behind us too." My daughter had a huge smile on her face.

In the grand scheme of things, a cup of coffee may not seem like a big deal. Or is it? I wonder, could this be one way we carry out Jesus' desire for us to care for those He called "the least of these"? (Matthew 25:40).

Here's a thought: How about simply considering the person behind us or next in line a worthy candidate? And then do "whatever"—maybe it's a cup of coffee, maybe it's something more, maybe something less. But when Jesus said "whatever you did" (v. 40) that gives us a great deal of freedom in serving Him while serving others.

As we drove away we caught the faces of the young woman behind us and the barista as she handed over the coffee. They were both grinning from ear to ear.

Property and Space Patrol

The grass has gone to sleep and the leaves have all blown away.

At this point there is nothing much else to report.

✠ Pastor Al

Tune in to Gospel Radio

In the Concord area, get more of God's Word by tuning into New Hampshire Gospel Radio at 99.1 FM or 104.3 FM. For example, on Saturday nights at 6 p.m. the locally produced "Saturday Night Gospel Hour" offers a wide variety of southern and country gospel music. During the week, tune into well known speakers such as Alistair Begg, Chuck Swindoll, Dr. David Jeremiah, and Dr. Jim Daly.

Learn more at <http://www.nhgr.org/>.

Jesus' Birth in Bethlehem



Luke 2 (from the NASB)

1 Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. 2 This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. 4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, 5 in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. 6 While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; 11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

15 When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us."

16 So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. 17 When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. 18 And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. 20 The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

Birthdays and Anniversaries



Hillside wishes a happy, happy, happy birthday to the following people who are celebrating another orbit around the Sun:

12/12 Tracey Bachand

12/16 Connor Robertson

12/21 Juliette Robertson



Hillside also wishes God's blessing on anyone who is celebrating a wedding anniversary this month. If that's you, let the editor know about it.

Prayer Request for the Robertsons

Special prayer is requested for Pastor Jim and his family. We learned on Thanksgiving Day that Pastor Jim's brother Dennis had died along with a co-worker in a construction accident in Haverhill, Mass.

Funeral arrangements have not yet been announced.

Hillside on the Web

Go to the Hillside web site <http://www.hillside-sbc.org/> for more information about our fellowship, including this newsletter in PDF format.

Submissions for Next Issue

Deadline is Dec. 25. Send news items to News Wrangler and Editor, Michael Frascinella, mfrascinella at comcast dot net.



Hillside Baptist Church is a member of the New Hampshire Baptist Association, part of the Southern Baptist Convention.



MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR!



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Modeling the truth of God's Word



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