

DAY 8 ADVENT-COMFORT OR DISCOMFORT

*"Blessed are you
when people revile you and persecute you
and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely
on my account."*

—Matthew 5:11

*". . . remember, I am with you always,
to the end of the age."*

—Matthew 28:20

When we encounter a "rough patch" in life—death of a loved one or a major trauma—we can remember two things. First, that patch will change us forever. But second, we can go on. Advent is much like that, giving us hope.

We are called to allow Advent to change us. And change is almost never without difficulty. It may bring wonderful new experiences but it usually brings the unknown as well. And the unknown has some difficult moments. But we have hope.

Taking our Christian life seriously can bring other difficult moments as well. Not everyone will receive our faith willingly. Nor will everyone receive our stand readily. But we are people of hope.

We can go on. We can put difficult times of the past behind us. We can know that the Jesus who came to us once to save us, who shares every difficult moment with us, is coming again to receive us.

Advent is a time for change. Make certain that you are ready for both the joy and the difficulties that will come. Be prepared. You have hope.

Going Deeper

Think about times when you have had to take God's power and stand firmly for your faith. Think about times to come when you will need to firmly take a position on an issue because of your faith. Thank God for the strength of times past and ask God for such strength in your future.

Almighty God, I claim the hope that I have in Jesus Christ—for today and tomorrow. Grant to me the patience that I need to wait through this season of Advent. Walk with me through the "rough patches" of life, the difficulties that life will bring. Walk with me as well through the victories of life, as they are enriched by your presence. I claim the joy of life with you—in both the difficulties and the victories. In the name of Christ my great hope I pray. Amen.