
Are You The One Who Is To Come?

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
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"Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" The first time I remember asking that question was when I was a child, waiting for the perfect Christmas present. Would this box contain the right one, or was it another?

I asked that question as I looked for the perfect song. Would this next album have it, or not? Later, I asked the question very seriously indeed, when I began to fall in love with members of the opposite sex. Wow, this is getting serious, I would think; is this the person I will one day marry, or am I to wait for another?

The question has remained with me even after I found the right person to marry. Should I be this, or that, in life? What job should I take? As a young priest, I pondered various invitations to join churches. Is this the right church, or should I wait for another?

Whatever vocation God has for us, we ask the recurring question. Is this what I have been waiting for, or not? Should I look for another? It is an inevitable question in life. We all want the best for ourselves, and we naturally wonder where it is.

Unfortunately, the question is also a paralyzing question. For, I have missed many a wondrous person in life because I was looking over their shoulder to someone else. I have ignored many a perfect gift, because I thought I wanted something else. Indeed, I have missed many a glimpse of the messiah because I was looking for something else.

I believe that "instability" is one of the unfortunate marks of our present age. By "instability," I mean a certain restlessness and impatience with what is right before us. So much of the world seems to be longing to be somewhere else. So many of us wish we were at another station in life, younger or older, or wiser or more innocent, or whatever. That is instability.

When John's disciples asked Jesus if he was the one who is to come, they were asking a perfectly earnest and understandable question. But the question was also a sign of their paralysis. Their leader, John the Baptist, was in prison; they were almost helpless. The answer of Jesus was "Go and tell John what you hear and see; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them." (Matthew 11.4-5)

How come John's disciples did not see that already? Probably because they were looking for something else. Jesus' reply was simply, "Open your eyes."

Open your eyes today, too. Open your eyes this Advent and Christmas season. We are all, inevitably, looking and waiting for something. It's our nature. But we all too often miss the moment of joy, the moment of sheer happiness, the moment of love, because we take our eyes off the present.

So, this December, no matter where you are—whether you are at home or at some party, or alone or in some crowded mall—pause to consider that what God has promised you is already here in some way or another. You do not need to be at any other place than where you are now. You do not have to be wishing for something else, or for someone else.

There is a moment of healing and resurrection right here, today, at this moment. There is a moment of incarnation right now, at this moment. When we realize that moment, when we can rejoice in the wonder of God at this very instant, Christmas has come.

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