

*Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered... (Revelation 5:5)*

During the season of Advent, we need to hear good news. And here it is: Jesus reigns. He was crucified, but he's alive. We were in our sins, but he has freed us. Nothing is out of his control. Nothing. And nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ.

Sometimes it seems like a struggle to keep going, though. There are a million reasons in this world why we might feel like this: sickness, heartbreak, dissension, war, famine, natural disasters, poverty, hunger; I could go on listing difficult realities for the rest of this page. Whether "out there" or in our own houses and communities, so much seems to go wrong. And sometimes we feel like simply giving up and letting someone else fight.

It can be easy to try to find another solution apart from God. Others can come claiming the throne for their own, promising health in the midst of sickness, prosperity in the midst of poverty, and rest for the weary. They have claimed that their own reigns would bring peace to a world torn apart by war and a new start to kingdoms desperately looking for salvation. They come promising jobs for the jobless, food for the hungry, and every good thing for those who would support them. But, each and every one of these rulers has been an imposter. Hopes of health are dashed by ineptitude, plague, and corruption. Promises of prosperity are broken, even as those in power line their own pockets with the daily wages of those who are scraping by. Reassurances for rest are taken back by those who send our young men and women out again to fight another endless war. The situation never gets better in the end – it always gets worse.

The truth is, we live in a sinful world of our own creating. We can't take control and make it better. And so, we weep with those who weep (Romans 12:15) because of betrayal, abuse, failure, sin, and death. Even more, though, we long for Jesus' second coming. It will be then that we hear the words John heard in his Revelation: *Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered* (Revelation 5:5). Jesus has conquered in the fight, even against the ancient enemies of God's people. He is the Lamb of God who had been slain (5:6), but who shows himself to be alive forever and ever. The Living One had come to ransom the people of God from their sins (5:9). We have no need to fight, only to stand with his armor (Ephesians 6:10–20), only to *be still and know that he is God* (Psalm 46:1).

So, during this busy season, take time to be still. Quiet is important, yes, but even more important is to be still in God's Word. Listen to his promises. Pray by yourself and with God's people. Know that the Lord is God and that Jesus has conquered. He holds you in his hand, both now and forever. And in him you find rest.

-Pastor Squire

"Those dear tokens of His passion still his dazzling body bears, cause of endless exultation to His ransomed worshippers. With what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture, gaze we on those glorious scars!"

("Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending," *LSB 336*, v. 3)