



## Perhaps Today Max Lucado

**Focus** The first Christmas was marked by lookers—those who were watching and waiting for the Messiah. We need the reminder that God came, and God is coming again. This is the season to be looking and waiting for the return of our king.

**Fun** When you were growing up, what was your favorite Christmas tradition?

**Review** Key Scriptures: Luke 2:25–32

### 1. **Watching**

We are in the last days. The history of the world is not a repeating cycle but a straight arrow. Scripture promises that we end up in a better place than we begin. We survive the winter times of life because we believe that God's glorious promise awaits us. We live and wait between the Advents. The second Advent will include the sudden, visible, bodily return of Christ. In the twinkling of an eye, Jesus will resurrect His Church. God's children will lift up their worship and watch, like Simeon, for Christ's return.

### 2. **Waiting**

Hebrews 9:28 tells us that Christ will appear a second time to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him. At any point Christians will be transported into the presence of Christ. The rapture includes the resurrection of dead believers and the transformation of living believers. This is the season to be looking and waiting for the return of our king.

### 3. **Redemption**

The redemption of mankind is finished. The act of atonement is performed. The price of salvation has been paid. God does not count our sins against us.

Instead, He counts them against Christ. Jesus voluntarily accepted liability for our sins. Embrace the great work of God for your soul. Out of pure grace, Jesus offers you the benefits of His finished work of redemption. God keeps His covenants; He always has and always will.

**\*Group Dynamics Idea\*** During this pandemic, many people have been facing loneliness or other struggles unique to this season. Take time in your group to ask how people are doing and pray specifically for them. Your group members may know people who have deep needs during this time. If so, take extra time to pray for grace, encouragement, and strength.

### **Discuss**

1. When did the craziness of this pandemic disrupt you?
2. Read Luke 2:25–32. What do you think it was like for Simeon during the time he was waiting on God’s promise? How do you think he felt the day that promise was fulfilled?
3. Are you able to relate to Simeon? What are some promises God has given you that you are waiting on?
4. What aspects of heaven are you looking forward to the most?
5. How does believing that we will experience the joy of heaven help us endure difficulties on earth?
6. How does focusing on eternity and looking beyond our time on this earth affect the decisions we make?
7. When people are discouraged by the difficulties of life, how can you be an encouragement to them?

**Take Home** As we conclude, remember the following:

- Jesus came on the first Christmas as a newborn King.
- Jesus completed the work of redemption.
- Jesus is coming again.

### **Prayer**

Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us the most sacrificial offering of all: Your Son, Jesus. Help us to recognize how You are at work in our lives. Help us to allow Your redemptive work in every part of our hearts and lives as we watch and wait for Your redemption. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

**\*New Leader Tip\*** Be sensitive to the unique dynamics of your group. Make sure your conversations are inclusive and encouraging to people wherever they are in their journey of life. Your prayers, support, and encouragement for each member can make a big difference in their lives.