Advent 1 Mark 13:32-37
November 29, 2020 220-29-208/19-15

Jesus Is Coming – AGAIN!
I. So be watching!
II. So get busy!

Dear Christian friends,

Over the years I've really grown to appreciate this First Sunday in Advent and its **Scripture readings**. Our focus today is NOT on Christmas and **Jesus coming** AS THE BABE of Bethlehem but on Judgment Day and **Jesus coming** AS THE JUDGE of all. Today's message is JESUS IS COMING – **AGAIN**! Jesus is **coming again** SO 1)be watching and 2)get busy!

I. So be watching!

Jesus is coming AGAIN! The Bible so clearly teaches that – and **just** WHAT A DAY it will be. A few verses before these Jesus had said, ***"Then you will see the Son of Man coming on clouds with great power and glory. At that time He will send out His angels and gather His elect from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of the sky."*** Or recall Jesus precious promise in John 14, ***"In My Father's house are many rooms. …I go and prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me, that you also may be where I am."*** Three times in the very last chapter of the Bible – **Revelation 22** – Jesus says, ***"Yes, I am coming soon!"*** You know there are PLENTY MORE passages that make clear that Jesus is coming – AGAIN!

As clearly as the **Bible teaches** that - it just as clearly teaches that we JUST DON'T KNOW exactly when that will be. THREE times Jesus makes that point in these verses. ***"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Watch! Be alert and pray, because you do not know when the time will come. Therefore keep watch, because you do not know when the owner of the house is coming."*** Jesus POINT BLANK tells you and me and **all** people, "I'm coming – AGAIN! So be watching!"

NOBODY can say exactly when Jesus is **coming again** but Jesus has given us SIGNS of His coming. Jesus gave some earlier in this chapter. ***"Wars and rumors of wars – nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines."***

Listen to this list from 2 Timothy 3. ***"In the last days there will be terrible times. For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemous, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, not able to reconcile with others, slanderous, without self-control, savage, haters of what is good, treacherous, reckless, puffed up with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to an outward form of godliness but denying its power."*** That sure sounds like today, doesn't it?

Jesus has another telling description of LIFE BEFORE He comes again. ***"As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be when the Son of Man returns. In the days before the flood people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the very day Noah entered the ark. They did not realize what was coming until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be when the Son of Man returns."***

What's Jesus' POINT? People will be so wrapped up in their **daily lives** that they'll be totally unprepared when Jesus **comes again**. There's nothing wrong with ***"eating and drinking, marrying, etc."*** That's all a part of LIFE NOW **as God created** it. But did you notice how they had just PUSHED GOD OUT of their lives? They were too busy to **have time** for God and His Word. Their priorities in life were **not God's priorities** for their lives. Can you see that happening **at times** in YOUR life? Do

you know some people who are **living like** that – WHO CARES what God says or **wants**? We all need to TAKE TO HEART Jesus' call, ***"Be alert! Be watching!"***

There's only one way for ANYONE to be prepared for Jesus to **come again** – that's trusting in Jesus as your Savior. The whole purpose of Jesus' **first coming** at Christmas was so that we could be ready for His **second coming** on Judgment Day. IF we didn't have Jesus' **first coming** – if we didn't have Christmas, Good Friday, Easter – we'd be sunk – DAMNED! – on Judgment Day. But we have Christmas – the **eternal Son** of God born our Brother – born our Savior and Substitute under God's law. We have Jesus growing up and living for us the life of **perfect love** and **obedience** that we owed God. We have Good Friday – the **sinless** Lord Jesus punished for the sins of the whole world – Jesus dying in our place to PERSONALLY PAY for **all** our sins **in full**. We have Easter – Jesus coming out of His grave alive and triumphant. We have Ascension Day – Jesus returning home to heaven MISSION ACCOMPLISHED. **And** we have Jesus' promise to ***"come again and take us to be with Him"*** forever in heaven. Jesus is coming – AGAIN! – so ***"be watching – be alert"*** so you are not caught **unprepared**.

We are to be ***"watching – alert"*** for Jesus' SECOND coming. But that doesn't mean SITTING AROUND **doing nothing** or STARING UP into the sky. Jesus has given us work to do…

II. So get busy!

Get busy! That's just what we WANT TO HEAR, isn't it? We're already busy **enough**. There's the BUSYNESS of **day-to-day** life and now add to that the **busyness** of GETTING READY for Christmas – decorating – **shopping** for and **wrapping** the presents – baking the cookies – mailing the Christmas cards, etc. We're busy enough – yet Jesus tells us, **"Get busy!"**

Jesus explains our lives now. ***"It is like a man going away on a journey. When he left his home, he put his servants in charge and assigned what each one was to do. He also commanded the doorkeeper to keep watch. Therefore keep watch, because you do not know when the owner of the house is coming. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping."***

This **work** is OBVIOUSLY NOT baking Christmas cookies, etc., but sharing God's Word with others. ***"As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you,"*** Jesus tells us. ***"You will be My witnesses to the ends of the earth. Preach the gospel to all creation. Make disciples of all nations – baptizing them and teaching them."*** That's NOT JUST the job of pastors, teachers, missionaries. EVERY **Christian** has the RESPONSIBILITY and PRIVILEGE of telling others about Jesus, starting at home with parents ***"bringing their children up in the training and instruction of the Lord."*** Peter tells us, ***"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."***

Jesus is coming – AGAIN! – so get busy! ONE WAY we **do this work** is with the example of our own **every-day Christian** lives. As Christians we are the ODDBALLS in this world. **As Christians** we have different morals and **values** – different priorities and goal in life – a **different** attitude and work ethic, etc., than the unbeliever. **As Christians** we have a DIFFERENT SOURCE of peace and **security**, contentment and **comfort** than the unbeliever does. Being the **oddballs** will draw attention to us. It may make us OBJECTS OF RIDICULE but it can also give us opportunities to **share our Jesus** – to explain why we **live** and **act** SO DIFFERENTLY.

Showing others CHRISTIAN LOVE – **concern** – **courtesy** – **respect** – can also open doors for us **to share** our Christian faith with others. Praying for others **can open doors** for us to tell them about Jesus. We can invite people to church or encourage them to **watch them** on the website. We can do that for the SPECIAL HOLIDAY services but there's no need to wait until then either! Can you think of somebody who DOESN'T KNOW about Jesus – or who has fallen away from Jesus – who doesn't go to any church? Is there **somebody** YOU KNOW who doesn't believe in Jesus or isn't very close to

Jesus? Jesus is coming AGAIN! – so get busy! PRAY for them. TALK to them. SHARE your Jesus with them.

We also do **this work** with our OFFERINGS. The **collection plate** isn't simply about PAYING the church bills. It's about sharing Jesus with others – living our **faith** – giving our children and grandchildren a **solid Christian** education – training future pastors and teachers – sending out and supporting missionaries. The simple fact is all that COSTS MONEY to do.

How important is this work? Nobody will GO TO HELL if they **don't have** their Christmas cards mailed on time. **Nobody** will go to hell if they just don't get **whatever** for a Christmas present. But EVERYONE who doesn't believe in Jesus as their Savior WILL GO to hell if they **don't repent** and believe. Isn't sharing God's gift of a Savior the MOST IMPORTANT THING we can do for anybody – including our own family and friends. Jesus is coming AGAIN so let's get busy TELLING AS MANY people **as possible** about their ONLY Savior.

The master TRUSTED his servants to **faithfully** be doing their jobs while he WAS GONE. God trusts us to be BUSY LIVING for Jesus and SHARING Jesus while we wait for Jesus to come AGAIN. Paul encourages us, ***"Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is."***

This master ***"assigned what EACH servant was to do."*** Each one of us has jobs – RESPONSIBILITIES God trusts us to **faithfully** carry out. Check out that "TABLE OF DUTIES" in your catechism at home. There with Bible passages the catechism SPELLS OUT the different tasks and **responsibilities** God has GIVEN IN PARTICULAR to husbands and wives – parents and children – pastors and congregations – young and old – employers and employees, etc. These are not jobs God asks us to do IF WE FEEL like it or can FIND THE TIME. God trusts **each one** of us to be faithfully working for Him. ***"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know when the owner of the house is coming. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: Keep watch!"***

Yes, Christmas is coming again. But HOW WE NEED the message of this **first Sunday** in Advent. Jesus is coming – AGAIN! So be watching – and get busy! Amen.

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