

Jesus Is Coming...

Are You on the Alert?

Saturday, 11/28 at 4:00 ✦ Sunday, 11/29 at 9:00

First Sunday in Advent – 2020

Advent Wednesdays: Service at 11 & 7

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: When a person is **on the alert**, *he is PREPARED and PAYING ATTENTION!* For example: If a person is **on the alert** about getting sick, then **he is** ♦eating healthy, ♦exercising, ♦getting enough rest, ♦taking vitamins, and ♦ready to contact his doctor – *if necessary!*

We don't know if we will get sick or not, *BUT WE CERTAINLY KNOW JESUS IS COMING!* Therefore, let us be **on the alert** – *thus PREPARED and PAYING ATTENTION!* In today's gospel reading, *Jesus will inform us and encourage us!*

- The Terror of Jesus' Return:** ²⁴ **“But in those days, after that tribulation, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, ²⁵ AND THE STARS WILL BE FALLING** from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶ Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory.”

- a. Tribulation: Earlier in [Mark chapter 13](#), Jesus spoke about “[tribulation](#),” *thus trouble and distress*. Then He told us what He meant: ♦Some men would falsely claim to be the Christ, ♦wars, earthquakes, and famines would take place, and ♦believers would be hated and betrayed. Those things *have been taking place and are continuing to take place* today!
- b. Terror: We live in a very *orderly* world – *because God made it that way and is keeping it that way!* However, *just before people see Jesus’ coming, the sun and moon – normally so bright – will stop shining, and the stars – normally so fixed – will begin falling!* If we are alive at that time, we have no need to worry – *because Jesus is coming to take us home!* However, for everyone else, ♦they won’t understand, ♦they will be terrified, and ♦they will have no opportunity to repent!
2. **The Gathering of the Elect**: ²⁷ “**And then [Jesus] will send forth the [holy] angels, and will gather together [God’s] elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven.**” // The Bible makes it clear that God – *before the creation of the world* – **chose** certain ones to be His own ([Eph. 1:3-4](#)). Then – *in time* – God has been **calling** and **justifying** those people ([Rom. 8:30](#)). Then – *on the day of Jesus’ coming* – those people will be **gathered** and **glorified** – *thus given a high status* – forever, *much higher than they deserve* – pointing to God’s great goodness to those who trust in Jesus! When we – *by God’s work and power* – are continuing in Jesus; then we ♦are ready for Jesus’ return and ♦should be excited about Jesus’ return!

3. **Our Awareness of Jesus' Return:**

- a. He is near: ²⁸ **“Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ Even so, you too, when you see these things happening [*✓men claiming to be the Christ, ✓wars, earthquakes, and famines, and ✓believers being hated and betrayed*], recognize that He is near, right at the door.”** // Jesus' journey has ended, He has arrived, He is right at the door – *ready to knock!* **ARE YOU READY?**
- b. These things will continue: ³⁰ **“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.”** // People ✓are born, ✓live, and ✓die; *generations come and generations go.* So what is **“this generation”**? That refers to people who teach and/or live in opposition to ✨God, ✨God's Word, and ✨God's elect. **Bad news:** *such people will continue until Jesus returns.* However, there is also **good news:** *whenever times are tough for believers, they will have God's Word to ✨assure them, ✨instruct them, and ✨bless them! Let's study, learn, and grow!*

4. **The Necessity of Being Prepared and Paying Attention:**

- a. Remain ready: ³² **“But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father *alone.* ³³ Take heed [*watch*], keep on the alert; for you do not know when the *appointed time will come.* // Yes, God has **set** or **appointed** a particular time! The Bible says, in Acts chapter 17, that God “has **fixed a day** in which He will judge the world in righteousness (v. 31 NAU).**

- b. An Example: ³⁴ *“It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. ³⁵ Therefore, be on the alert-- for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning-- ³⁶ in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. ³⁷ What I say to you I say to all, ‘Be on the alert!’”*
- i. Who is the man who went on a journey? *Jesus, He went to heaven to prepare a place for us!*
 - ii. What did Jesus do before He left? *He assigned a task to each of His followers (Eph. 2:10)!*
 - iii. What are we supposed to be doing now? *Living out God’s plan for our lives!*
 - iv. When will Jesus return? *At any time!*
 - v. When should we be ready? *All the time (3rd grade)!*
 - vi. How will God keep us ready? *As He keeps working – by the Spirit through the Word – to ➡keep us repentant (sorry and trusting in Jesus), ➡keep us focused on God’s will, and ➡keep us reaching out to others with God’s love and truth (short-term mission)!*

Let Us Pray: Dear Jesus, as some in the world are too busy to ➡think about You and ➡be on the alert for Your return, PLEASE ➡keep us alert for Your coming and ➡use us to be an eternal blessing to others!

CONNECT WITH US ➡ Website: www.BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com
Podcast: Benefit from the Bible | Facebook: Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230