

First Sunday in Advent – 2025

Saturday, 12/7 at 4:00 & Sunday, 12/8 at 9:00

Pastors are called to equip the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12). *Let's understand and work together!*

The Church Year



Be Spiritually Alert

Text: Isaiah 2:1-5; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44 NAS 2020

Advent Wednesdays: Service 11, Meal 12 | Meal 6, Service 7

Introduction: Dear friends: **Happy New Year!** Since today begins the new Church Year and focuses on Jesus' second coming, I will expand on those two topics in this sermon.

1. **The Church Year:** It is a *man-made invention* that began in the fourth century – *when Constantine legalized Christianity* (313). As the Christians moved **from** secret house churches **to** public houses of worship, **†**the simple liturgy expanded, and **†**the Church Year began to develop. This is our current Church Year and what each season means:

- a. **Advent** – **Jesus** is coming!
- b. **Christmas** – **Jesus** is born!
- c. **Epiphany** – **Jesus** is God!
- d. **Lent** – **Jesus** gave His life!
- e. **Easter** – **Jesus** is risen!
- f. **Pentecost** – We make **Jesus** known!

About Six Months

About Six Months

2. **Be Spiritually Alert:**

a. Whenever we end the old Church Year and begin the New Church year, our focus is on **Jesus' second coming**. There are times in life *when it is important to be ready*, for example:

- i. The moment when you are in the batter's box *and the pitcher is winding-up to pitch*.
- ii. The moment when Jesus returns, *since there will not be a second chance to repent*: **1 Thess. 5:3** "While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction will come upon them..., and they will not escape."

b. Since today's Scripture readings contain some **important advice**, let's consider the highlights:

- i. **OT: Isaiah 2:1-5 – Share God's word!**
A summary: "The Lord will gather the nations to His Church through the Word. He calls you to fulfill this prophecy by sharing the Word with your family, friends, and neighbors" (TLSB). // Since we are privileged to ♦know Jesus and ♦be saved through Him, we are being called to make Him known to others. How? Let us ♦**be courageous** and ♦**speak the truth in love** as we live for and speak about JESUS!
- ii. **EP: Romans 13:11-14 – Live in readiness for Jesus' return! How?**

1. ...rid ourselves of the deeds of darkness [things opposite of God's word]

2. ...put on the armor of light [*whatever is needed for successful Christian living*].
3. ...behave properly [*decently*] as in the day, **not** in carousing [*excessive merrymaking*] and drunkenness, **not** in sexual promiscuity [*wildness*] and debauchery [*lacking moral restraint*], **not** in strife [*quarrels*] and jealousy.
4. ...put on the Lord Jesus Christ... – in thought, word, and deed.
5. ...make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts [*things forbidden*]...

iii. **GO: Matthew 24:36-44 – Jesus' return!**

1. **No one knows when** – so let us, by God's grace, *always be ready!*
2. **Stop ordinary living** – Being ready for Jesus is so critical, that we should put off eating, drinking, and marrying for **truth** and **repentance!**
3. **Many do not understand** – they are spiritually blind, *so let us share God's eye-opening truth!*
4. **Taken and left** – The context is Jesus' second coming. Is it good to be taken or to be left?
 - a. Kretzmann: "Of two men working together..., one will be accepted, the other will be left and thus rejected."

- b. Lenski: “So it will happen that two men will be in the field, working there side by side... One is taken, received, the other is left, abandoned.”
- c. Jesus: **Matthew 24:31** “And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET BLAST, and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect...” // So, those who are trusting in Jesus for eternal life will be **taken, gathered, and forever blessed!**

5. You must be ready:

- a. From **Romans 13**, we learned *how to live in readiness.*
- b. From **Isaiah 2**, we learned our *assignment to share God’s word with others.*
- c. As we live in readiness and share God’s word, **God will** ➡ keep us ready and ➡ use us to help others be ready!

Let Us Pray: Dear LORD, You have ❤ brought a Christ-focused order to our lives with the Church Year, ❤ guided us how to live, and ❤ called us to love others by sharing Your word; now, please help us to go forward unto Your glory!