

11/22/09

**THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**      **Lord Jesus Christ, so govern our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may persevere in both faith and holiness of living, ever mindful of Your glorious return; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON** Isaiah 51:4–6    (*God's salvation will never wear out.*)

4 "Listen to me, my people; hear me, my nation: The law will go out from me; my justice will become a light to the nations. 5 My righteousness draws near speedily, my salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations. The islands will look to me and wait in hope for my arm. 6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail.

**THE EPISTLE LESSON**    Jude 20–25    (*God gives defense and victory over evil.*)

20 But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. 21 Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. 22 Be merciful to those who doubt; 23 snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear-- hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh. 24 To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy-- 25 to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

**THE GOSPEL LESSON**    Mark 13:24–37

(*Jesus' disciples are called to wait for the Lord's return in calm and patient hope.*)

24 "But in those days, following that distress, "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; 25 the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' 26 "At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. 27 And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

28 "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. 29 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. 30 I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

32 "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.

34 It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. 35 "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back-- whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at

dawn. 36 If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping.  
37 What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

## THE SERMON

## “Keep Watch Because the End is Coming” Mark 13

INTRO - In the Fall of 1973 to Spring 1975 I lived in a dorm with about 30 other ministerial students. They became my friends. You've met some of them.

One day in my first year in the dorm one of my friends was supposed to leave on a plane and go home. We all knew it. I got up to go to work and went by his room and . . . he was still in bed. In fact, not only was he late but his plane had already left! By sleeping he missed something he wanted to do. Luckily he was able to get on later.

I. Jesus is warning people in today's lesson not to be caught sleeping. **36 If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping.**

A. The end of the world is coming.

1. We don't know when it is. Verse 32 says, "**No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.**"
2. It could come today. Our world is turning more and more away from the Lord.
3. The end of the world could come after all of us have left this world.
4. But, we need to be ready when Jesus comes. He tells us not to be sleeping when He returns.

B. How do we ready ourselves for Jesus?

1. Ephesians 2 says, 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.
2. We are saved when Jesus comes, not by our work, but by the grace and love of God in Jesus. We are saved from death and hell by God's grace, through faith.

C. How do we ready ourselves for Jesus?

1. Ephesians 2 says in the next verse, **10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**
2. A child of God is saved by grace through faith.
3. A person lives that faith by putting God's love into action.

D. We want to be found ready when Jesus comes. We want to be found in faith, and living that faith. My friend did not want to miss his plane. We do not want to miss Jesus when He comes.

II. In 1995 we were burning wood, trash, and card board in a wood stove. Some how the card board fell back into the clean and started a fire in the wall. I smelled it and came down stairs and got everyone up and out of the house and called the fire

department. Even though I woke Andrew, he went back to bed. I found him and woke him again . . . and he went to sleep again. I took him outside. Thankfully the fire did not spread. But, if it had Andrew's sleeping could have been the cause of great tragedy.

- A. God's love gives blessings to life.
  - 1. His forgiveness and love and presence gives us strength and joy and peace in this world.
  - 2. God's love saves from death, and punishment, and hell.
- B. To miss God's love leads to death, and hell.
- C. When Jesus comes we do not want to be unready, we do not want to be sleeping, not in faith, not living our faith. The results would be tragic.

III. In the last month we have lost 4 members of our congregation, Harriett Hansen, Frances Richards, Don Petrie, and now Arlie Logsdon.

- A. None of these were perfect people.
- B. All of these people knew Jesus as their Savior, and Jesus shone in their lives.
- C. They were ready when Jesus came?

CONCLUSION - In 1979 in St. Louis I was visiting members. I came to the home of one member and the lady's husband did not attend worship. In fact, he indicated perhaps that he did not believe. I asked him about this and he indicated that, he still had some living to do and perhaps when he retired he might turn to the Lord after he retired. He wasn't sure. He was not ready. When if Jesus came when unexpected?

Are you ready, or is life keeping you from our Lord? Jesus says, **36 If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. 37 What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'**"