**Prepared for the Coming**

Based on [Matthew 21:1-9](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Mt21.1-9)

Preached on December 1, 2019

First Sunday in Advent ~ *Ad Te Levavi*

Pastor Nathan Fuehrer

And so begins another church year, and another year of waiting. The true faith has always been about waiting. The Jews were waiting for the messiah to come; then he came and his own did not know him; now we know him and are waiting for him to come again.

Consider this: waiting for the messiah is indispensable to our faith. There are fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and this is one of them: “he will come again to judge the living and the dead.” Those who do not wait for Jesus to come again are not abiding in Jesus’ word. They are like the foolish virgins who didn’t prepare by securing oil for their lamps. So how do we wait? First, we do not put our trust in this world. Second, we daily reflect upon what the day of his coming will look like. Third, we approach him in his ministry now, so that we are ready when he approaches us in his glory.

First, do not trust the world or anything in the world. All the warnings in scripture of foolish behavior with regard to the coming have to do with a false sense of security in this life. There is true security with Christ, but there is also false security. We create a false security when we suppress the knowledge of the activity of Satan. There is a conspiracy of lawlessness, and dear christians, people who live in a prosperous society scoff at conspiracy theories, and people who present them so “matter-of-factly.” Our tendency is to naturally abhor any information or theory that might threaten our present feelings of safety. But there is an evil spirit in the world. There is an evil person at work here. He is pulling the strings of the world to make it look like everything is going fine. He is at work to disguise his activity and to train people to call good evil and to call evil good.

But there is true security also. God cares for his people, and he warns us to know “the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him firm in your faith.” The apostle warns, “The coming of the Lawless one is by the activity of Satan, with all power, false signs and wonders.” The knowledge of the consipracy of satan and his angels ought to keep you sober in this world of techonlogy, and medicine, and travel, and entertainment. You are not just an average person, waiting for science or the government or big business to tell you what new knowledge or wonder will make your life easier or more entertaining. You are a child of the light, and heaven is your home. May the lord grant that, in the many and sundry changes of this world, we may fix our hearts where true joys may be found.

Second, we wait for Christ by reflecting daily on his coming. We live in a vale of tears, a world of temptation and insecurity. It is this fact that the activity of Satan is at work to cover up. And it is this that would anesthetize our senses from anticipating the second coming of Jesus Christ. We all know we are not perfect, we all know that we will die someday. But to preach that at any moment, the Son of Man could return on clouds of glory and literally and figuratively catch you unprepared is something I rarely hear christians talk about in polite conversation, even with one another. But the prayer of the church, from its inception has always been “Lord Jesus, do not tarry, come quickly.”

Let us, then prepare our hearts for the coming of the Messiah. He promises that nothing will remain hidden, and that all will be revealed. All will be put to rights, and he will save his people forever. Let us prepare for the marriage feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom which has no end. In the end, he will come to us. In the meantime, let us come to him, and we will find with Him rest for our souls. Let us approach the throne of grace without fear, when it is within our reach to do so.

Being the pastor of a small church, I am able to keep in regular contact with most of you. I see you Sundays anyway...others it is admittedly less frequent. At my former parish, there was officially 700 plus members on the roster. There was no way I could keep up with all of them, even the ones who came to church occasionally. In fact most of them had either moved, or lapsed long before I got there. But those who I was uncertain about, I would try and call. And some were gracious, some were elated, some were wondering why I didn’t call sooner. And some were shocked. When I called and asked to meet up, they would say “Why, did I do something wrong?”

God doesn’t call you regularly to check up on you and ask how your doing. He sets a time and a place where he will be regularly. And he communicates with you in the Scriptures that can be accessed or ignored. You can pray to him whenever, but to receive his gifts and His ministry on earth, you need to go to church and consult the scriptures. Keeping regular contact with Him, you won’t be shocked or scared when he comes in glory, because you have kept in touch. But those who neglect the gift of God, who ignore him on earth will be shocked at his coming. Their conscience will accuse them the minute they see Him in the clouds, and will regret not having used the time wisely and secured an extra flask of oil for their lamps.

But those who call upon the Lord regularly, will rejoice at his coming as an answer to prayer. Those who approach his throne of Grace, the mercy seat of His body and blood given and shed for you, will not be embarrassed having spurned his sacrifice as a worthless snack of crackers and juice. Christ is coming; do not ignore it, prepare for it. Repent and believe the Gospel. Call upon the name of the Lord, and feed your faith with His Word and Sacraments. And just as the lungs must breath to live; faith must busy itself with works of love for the neighbor. Do not concern yourself with what to eat or drink or what to wear...for the pagans chase after these things and your heavenly Father knows you need them. Instead, seek ye first the kingdom of God, then you will be prepared when His kingdom does come to you...only not on a donkey this time, but on clouds of Glory with a myriad of angels attending. O happy day!