

“The Hour No One Knows”

Matthew 24:36-44

2 December 2007

the Rev. Todd R. Goddard, pastor

Zion West Walworth United Methodist Church

Matthew 24:36-44

“But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man.

Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

Prayer.

Advent

Is all about anticipation.

It is a reflection of the past

Coupled with a recognition of the present

To whet the appetite for that which is to come.

The liturgist sums it up

“Christ has come

Christ is come

Christ will come again.”

(There is a short sermon for you, Ken!)

Christ has come.

Few can doubt the historical fact

That Jesus Christ

Was born 2,000 years ago,

Lived and died

In the region of modern day Israel.

We Christians,

Known as disciples,

Or Christ’s followers,

Have come to believe more.

Belief: We know more,

but we can’t prove it.

We believe Jesus was God’s Son,

Born of the virgin Mary.

We believe he healed the sick,

Cured the diseased,

Reunited the lost

And raised the dead.

We believe Jesus also rose from the dead,

Ascended into heaven

And now sits at the right hand of God.

Christ is come.

We believe Jesus

was preparing his followers

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For the time when
 he would be physically absent.
 Jesus taught by word and example
 How we are to live,
 believe,
 and remain faithful.
 We believe Jesus
 is present in our midst
 By means of his Spirit,
 Called the Holy Spirit.
 We believe the Holy Spirit
 Guides us, directs us, tells us what to do.
 We believe we experience
 The Holy Spirit
 Through our thoughts,
 Prayers,
 Reading of scripture,
 And fellowship with other disciples.

Christ will come again.
 There are many different beliefs
 about how Jesus Christ will return.
 Some believe,
 Like the prophet Isaiah,
 Christ will return
 To a peaceable kingdom
 Where nations will be drawn together.
 Nations will be judged
 War will be no more
 And all will walk in the light of the Lord.
 Other disciples of Christ believe
 Like the authors of Daniel, Ezekiel, and
 Revelations,
 In an apocalyptic
 Cataclysmic end,
 With wars,
 And earthquakes,
 One taken
 and one left behind,
 Sprung upon us
 Like the cleansing flood
 Of Noah and his Ark,
 Like a thief in the night

Victimizing the unprepared.
 All that we do know
 Is what Jesus said,
 "But about that day and hour
 no one knows,
 neither the angels of heaven,
 nor the Son,
 but only the Father."

So,
 We don't know when
 And we don't know how.
 But we do know
 That Christ has promised
 to come again.

Every year
 Advent rolls around
 And we are begged to make preparations
 To keep the anticipation at its peak.
 Do we?
 Or are we
 As quick to forget
 As we are anxious to haul the
 Dead tree out to the curb?
 Are we so attention deficit
 That we are looking for
 The greatest
 The most awesome
 next best thing
 as soon as it is December 26th?
 Every month
 The Eucharist rolls around;
 We taste and see,
 We experience the salvation of our Lord.
 But do we live as changed people
 As soon as we leave
 By the front, side, or back doors?
 Do we live
 As disciples prepared to die?
 as followers of Christ
 prepared for his return?
 Or has the First Amendment

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Paralyzed our whole body
Driven by fear
into inactivity?

Wake up!
The apostle Paul speaks,
"For salvation is nearer
to us now
than when
we became believers."
(Romans 13:11b)

Wake up!
Jesus cries.
Don't be caught unprepared!
Live today
As if you will face
Our Heavenly Father
In the very next moment.

Wake up!
This season of Advent cries;
For
Christ has come,
Christ is come,
And Christ will come again!

Amen.