

The Life Challenge

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10

Series: Hope Is On The Way

Title: Be Ready

Speaker: Steve Berg

Text: Matthew 24:36-44

Date: December 2, 2018



WARM-UP

So, you had a scheduled exam, or you'd made an appointment, or you had some project that you'd completely forgotten about - and you were not ready. How did you respond? What did you learn about being ready?

DISCUSSION

Through Advent we look back with joy at the first coming of the humble baby Jesus. We look forward with hope to the second coming of the exalted Christ the King. As we celebrate the meaning of His first coming, we also have to "be ready" for His second coming. Jesus' words in Matthew's gospel exhort us to be ready because we don't know when He will come, but we do know what will happen when He does come.

1. Why would we want to know when Jesus will return again? What good reasons are there for us NOT to know the exact time of Jesus' return? Why is it significant that not humans, not angels, not Jesus Himself - but only the Father knows the time of His second return?
2. What insights do you have when Jesus parallels His return with the example of Noah's flood? In Noah's flood, who is taken away...and who is left behind? What insights does Jesus give with the other examples of those who are "taken" and "left behind?"
3. Why might it matter if Christians are "taken" - or if Christians are "left behind" when Jesus comes again?
4. The word that Jesus uses for His arrival ("parousia" in Greek, "adventus" in Latin) would stir the disciple's memory of the people running out to meet the king arriving in a city (1 Thessalonians 4:17). How does this image of Jesus' second coming encouraged you with hope?
5. Read and reflect on these verses - Hosea 10:12; Matthew 25:1-13; Romans 13:11-14; Revelation 3:3.
6. How can we "keep watch" and "be prepared" for the second return of Christ? How might we change our "be ready" preparedness from apathy to attention; from fear to hope; from distraction to action?