

The discourse on the last things, Pt. 7.

“Always Be Ready.”

Mark 13:32-37.

Sunday morning, November 23, 2008.

I. Of that day and that hour knows no one... Vs. 32.

A. Not even the angels in heaven.

1. Although they stand in a very close relationship with God. Isaiah 6:1-3 and Matt. 18:10.
2. Although they are intimately associated with the progress of the kingdom of God at both the first and second coming of Christ. Luke 2:10-14 Matt. 24:31.
3. Although they are desirous to understand the progress of the unfolding kingdom. 1 Peter 1:12.

B. Not even the Son.

These words we must understand from the perspective of the human nature of Christ. Phil. 2:7 tells us that the Lord “emptied Himself” in coming to earth in His incarnation. He laid aside His divine glory and privilege to become the Son of Man. One of the things He laid aside was the precise knowledge of the timing of the second coming.

C. Much less shall fallen man know about the precise time.

1. A looking and a living and a longing for that day are necessary.
2. An undue nosiness and intrusiveness and impertinence has no place.
3. There is a fine line between these two things, but the spirits from which they flow are worlds apart.
 - The one flows from a meek and quiet spirit.
 - The other from a demanding and impatient spirit.

II. Take heed, watch and pray... Vs. 33.

- A. Watchfulness is a theme in Mark 13. See vs. 5, 9, 23, 33, 35, 37. The same is true in Luke 21 and in Matt. 24 followed by a whole other chapter devoted to the theme in Ch. 25.
- B. The addition of the words “and pray” show us that it is not in us to effect such watchfulness. We are like the disciples while the Lord prayed in the garden. We find it impossible to watch with the Lord for even an hour.
- C. The words “and pray” also show us that there is help for us to find with the Lord. His throne is still the throne of grace.
All things necessary for life and godliness are there for us.
The Lord is willing and able to save to the uttermost... Hebr. 7:25.

III. Watchfulness illustrated. Vs. 34.

- A. It is like a man who went to a far country leaving the affairs of his house in the hands of servants whom he held accountable for the work entrusted to them.
- B. The timing of the master’s return is characterized as uncertain; even more than uncertain, unlikely. The four times given are the names of the four watches of the nighttime hours in the culture of that day.

1. "The evening" 6.00 - 9.00 PM.
2. "Midnight" 9.00 - 12.00 midnight.
3. "The crowing of the rooster" 12.00 midnight -3.00 AM.
4. "In the morning" 3.00 - 6.00 AM.

The nighttime hours were not traveling hours and therefore not hours you would expect the master to come home. Only nighttime hours are given, underscoring the unexpected nature of His coming.

IV. What is it like to be watchful?

A. Both watchfulness and sleepiness are conditions relative to spiritual things; relative to the kingdom of God; relative to your walk with the Lord and with His people.

B. Both watchfulness and sleepiness are conditions that have to do with the placing of the affections or the love of your heart. To the extent that you set the love of your heart on this world, you will be alert and watchful about the things of this world, but you will fall asleep or die spiritually.

To the extent that you set the love of your heart on the Lord and His people you will be watchful and alert to the things pertaining to the Lord and His people, yet, you will fall asleep or die to this world.

C. Here the principle goes into effect that no man can serve two masters. One will always get the upper hand.

1. You must make a choice whom you will love and serve.
2. You must guard against affection thieves; the world is full of them.
3. Your life, and your money, will follow your affections; they always will freely follow the love of your heart.

D. Consider the life of David a model as it is recorded in 1 Chron. 29:1-9.

1. David sets his affections on the house of God. Vs. 3.

- This explains how and why he made all the preparations for the building of the temple. Vs. 1,2.

- This also explains why he invested his personal treasure of gold and silver in the Lord's house. Vs. 3, 4.

2. David asks the assembled leaders of Israel, "Who then is willing to

consecrate

himself this day to the Lord?" Vs. 5.

- This is asking them to set their affections with David on the Lord's house.

- The leaders of Israel respond to do so, and their money follows. Vs. 6-8.

3. Then David and the people have great joy. Vs. 10.

- The people had great joy because they had a loyal heart; that is they set the love of their heart on the Lord and His house.

- They had great joy because they gave willingly; not from a legal obligation. Their money freely followed the love of their heart. They had true Christian liberty, and enjoyed true fellowship with the Lord.

4. David was watchful and alert to spiritual things; he set the love of his heart on the things of God and His people. Many others were inspired to do the same in Israel. David died at the end of this chapter. This was a blessed end of David's life indeed.