

Last Sunday of the Church Year 2021
Mark 13

Mark 13:24–37 [Jesus said:] “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree *learn its lesson*: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you *know that he is near*, at the very gates. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. *Be on guard, keep awake*. For you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore *stay awake*—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock crows, or in the morning—lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: *Stay awake*.”

In the Name of Jesus.

Even I can figure out that Jesus wants us to ‘STAY...AWAKE!’ So much so, just a couple-three days later, He’s back on His hobby-horse:

³⁵ And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.” ³⁷ And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? ³⁸ Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” ³⁹ And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. ⁴⁰ And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. ⁴¹ And he came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest?...”¹

Ah! When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, begging His Father to find a way out of the cross—FOR HIM!!!—He was acting as if what was happening to HIM was ‘the end of the world!’ And that the ‘stay awake’ He was all about in THIS lesson was HAPPENING THEN! Happening now.

He gets us. He is with us. And...He is never dismayed.

Our King, Jesus—y’know, we kicked kings out a couple centuries ago, didn’t we. Let’s update our language: Our PRESIDENT, Jesus; our Governor, Jesus; our Mayor, Jesus—He is NOT like our President, our Governor, our Mayor, past, present, or any who will come before the End. For OUR Ruler is TRULY with us. Meaning: the LAW...applies...to...Him! It does not apply to our lords and masters in this age. ‘Laws for Thee, but not for me!’

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mk 14:35–42). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

The Small Catechism of Doctor Martin Luther: ‘Our Father Who art in heaven.’ What does this mean? ‘With these words, God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father, and that we are His true children, so that, with all boldness and confidence, we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear Father.’

‘With ALL boldness and confidence.’ Ask your Father; speak to your God; beg Him, WITH...JESUS...to spare you, if possible, a cross that may sink you once and for all. But then, with all boldness and confidence, ‘Not as I will, but as you will. Thy will be done.’

If the Father, then the Son.

Jesus is FULL of commands today! ‘Learn! Know! Stay awake! Keep on guard!’

Your poor pastor is going to teach you boldness and confidence today. Whenever you hear from your King any command, DEMAND of Him what you MUST NOT expect from any of our betters in this age: ‘You want me to do what, Jesus? Ok. But, YOU FIRST!’

“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross...’ You FIRST, Jesus! Oh. ‘Deny yourself, take up your cross, as you FOLLOW....ME. I DO go first!’ ²

“If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.” ³

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mk 8:34). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mk 9:35). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

You first, Jesus.

But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” ⁴

Well, this is getting a little embarrassing, isn't it? He HAS gone first, in all that's laid on us. Even this:

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” ⁵

His prophet, John, called all men into the water to admit what they are deep down. And Jesus got into the water with them, with us. He cannot be MORE ‘with us’ than being baptized with the sinners. Heaven is well-pleased.

So, my dear ones, you are free. Free to behave in a misbehaving world; but freed from counting that cost or adding up who puts in more effort and who less; free from fretting that those who pass the laws exempt themselves from any more than a show of decency.

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mk 10:43–45). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁵ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mk 1:9–11). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

We are free, my dear ones, to admit what we are deep down. WITH Jesus, we may pray to our Father with all boldness and confidence, ‘The bad news I have heard from the world, I do not want to take any longer. I ask you to take it away. The next man who is hard to bear with, I feel nothing in me able to bear with him any longer. I need you to rescue me, sooner rather than later. When will you wrap up this age and bring the age that does not end?’

Jesus is with us:

But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

How can the Son of God NOT know the Father’s plans? I beg you not to miss the Gospel here! The disciples wanted to know the future—WE lust after it as well. But our KING...Who certainly COULD know the future, I would be bold to say He DOES know everything that is to come to His Church—

HE...SAYS... ‘I go first! I don’t want any of Y’ALL to worry about the next day. Just live weird TODAY! TRY to be good. TRY to forgive as you forgive, even as if the pardon YOU need hinges on the pardon YOU bestow! But I...GO...FIRST! Your dear Father in heaven will NOT burden you with more than just this day. And so, I live, now, and forever, with you. You don’t know the Last Day. So, that is how I live too!’

So, what did He do, living as if the End of the World was at hand?

²² And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.” ²³ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. ²⁴ And he said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” ⁶

When will that be? Ask Jesus that question, and here is His reply: Take, this is My Body. This is My Blood, poured out for you and for many. My vow to you.

My dear ones: we live in an age of scoffers. But I tell you today, from the Word of the Living God, that a Day of Judgment is coming. God expects an utterly different world from the one we present Him. The threat of the coming judgment is not a fantasy or nightmare we can wave away when we wake. Jesus tells us that those who are think they are MOST awake, are sound asleep.

Bad men crucified Jesus. But the BULK of the words about Jesus’ crucifixion are about the pretend ‘good men’ mocking the King on the cross.

Your Baptism into Christ calls you to live the Last Day today. Let no good remain undone, as if the judge is standing at the door.

But your Baptism into Christ calls on you to live, as He lived, as He lives! GROUND those you meet who are

⁶ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Mk 14:22–25). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

not awake today, but only dreaming of
tomorrow....GROUND them in their sinful state TODAY!
The Last Day!

How? Eat His Body and drink His Blood. And go
from here rejoicing that His Blood was shed for you and for
so, so many in the Name of Jesus.