

Watching, Waiting, and Preparing

2018-12-02 - Year C - Advent 1 - The Rev. Christopher M. Klukas

Zechariah 14:1-9; Psalm 50:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13; Luke 21:25-33

- I have been known to be a procrastinator from time to time.
 - Sometimes my best work is done under the pressure of a deadline!
- The return of Jesus can seem like a distant event, way out on the horizon, we know it is going to happen, but it seems far away.
 - This can lull us into a sense of spiritual laziness.
- My father once had a t-shirt that said: “Jesus is coming...look busy!”
 - It would be better to say “Jesus is coming...be busy with the work of the kingdom and with growing in holiness.”

Growing in Holiness

- Luke 21:34-36 - “watch yourselves...stay awake at all times”
- Advent is a time to remember that this day is coming and to stop and take stock of your spiritual life.
- What corrections is God calling you to make?
 - v. 34 “dissipation and drunkenness” - specifically refers to overindulgence of alcohol, but more broadly, these are the obvious sins which are very real challenges for some people, even for Christians.
 - Bishop J.C. Ryle “The exhortation before us should teach us the immense importance of humility. There is no sin so great but a great saint may fall into it. There is no saint so great but he may fall into a great sin.”¹
 - v. 34 “The cares of this life” - This is in many ways more insidious. We can become so consumed with busyness and unimportant things that we lose sight of the most important things.
 - Stephen Covey - Important vs. Urgent
 - The advent season leading up to Christmas can be one of the busiest times of the year. Slow down. You may have to fight for it!

Encouraging One Another

- 1 Thessalonians 3:6-7 - Paul is comforted in his affliction by a visit from Timothy bringing encouragement on behalf of the Thessalonians.
- We can and should do this for one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11).
- We can also do this for other believers who are distant from us.
- This is one of the interesting things about our trip to Parker, FL last week. We brought supplies, and people appreciated this, but we also brought the gift of encouragement.
 - I think we were also an encouragement to the people of Apostles by the Sea Anglican Church as we shared with them in their work.

¹ J. C. Ryle, Expository Thoughts on Luke (vol. 2; New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1879), 383.