

Mark 13:32-37 - "Stay Awake! Watch Out!"
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Mark 13:32-37

³² "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. ³⁴ It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. ³⁵ "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. ³⁶ If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. ³⁷ What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

Introduction

Do you ever get sleepy when you're driving? A recent AAA study that showed roughly 29% of people surveyed admitted driving while they were so tired that they had trouble keeping their eyes open. Driving down the highway at any speed, let alone, high speed is not something one wants to do when sleepy. It's important that drivers stay awake. It's also important to pay attention. Distracted driving – cell phone use, adjusting climate controls or entertainment systems, looking a scenery, and day-dreaming – have resulted in the deaths of thousands. It's important to watch out!

Jesus advised the same thing as we live in the end times. So today we think about those directives but not in respect to driving, but living in the end times. ***"Stay Awake! Watch Out!" ...realizing that Jesus could come any day... and ... being ready for Jesus' return every day.***

...realizing that Jesus could come any day

One of the great curiosities for many Christians has to do with the end times, Jesus' return, and eternity. Such curiosity also affected Jesus' disciples. They had asked Jesus about the destruction of the temple, Jesus' second coming and the end of the universe. One aspect of the disciple's question was **"when"** - ***"When, Lord, will this happen."***

Jesus' answer was, ***"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father ... "(v.32,33)*** The angels know a lot of things. They have to in order to keep straight their ministry to God's people. But they don't know when Jesus will come. Jesus said that even he, in his humiliation, didn't know the time of his return. Sometimes this is puzzling to people. After all, if Jesus is God, then he knows all things. And if he doesn't know all things, how can he be God? The truth is that Jesus Christ is true God and true man in one person. From eternity, Jesus' divine nature has had all knowledge including the time of his return. When God the Son took on the human nature the divine nature of Jesus shared the knowledge of all with his human nature. But according to Philippians 2:6,7, in his humiliation, Jesus chose not to use those qualities including his knowledge. So Jesus chose not to know the time or day of his return. Now he does.

But not only did the angels in heaven and the Son of Man not know the time of Jesus' return when he spoke of it in our text, you and I do not know it either. ***"You do not know when that time will come."***(v.33)

Jesus said that his return will be like that of the rich man who travels to a far away place, leaving his house and property to the management of his servants. The owner doesn't tell the servants exactly when he will return, but the owner will come back. So they should be ready for the owner to come

home any day. This is so appropriate because we don't own ourselves, our time, our belongs – we are managers. Jesus wants us to be faithful until the time he comes.

While we don't know when Jesus will return, the long-range signs of his return have been here for a long time. Jesus said signs will signal his second coming. He said that there will wars and rumors of wars; famines, earthquakes & pestilence; false teachers and fake Christs; people falling from faith and love fading away; persecutions and great problems for the Church. Such signs are here and have been here for some time. These signs tell us that Jesus could come any day. Jesus said of his second coming, *"...The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens."*(MK13:24-27)

Realize that Jesus could come any day. Jesus might come today. The problem people sometimes battle is thinking that Jesus' return is way in the future – 2100 AD, 2500 AD, 2800 AD, but not today so that should Jesus come soon, we are not ready for his return.

Jesus IS coming and could come any day. Therefore be ready for Jesus return every day.

2. ... being ready for Jesus' return every day!

"Be on guard! Be alert!.....Therefore, keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back - whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

Jesus mentions **sleeping**. We need sleep on a daily basis to keep our minds alert and our bodies productive. Regular sleep at the appropriate times is good. There are times, however when people physically sleep, but shouldn't be doing so - in class, on the job, while driving a car, etc. Spiritually speaking, there is also good sleep and bad sleep. Jesus invited people to come to him in faith for rest from the burden of sin's guilt and the law's damnation and through that faith he would give them rest, a spiritual sleep that's good – forgiveness and life. But here, Jesus uses the idea of sleep to refer to something bad.

When Paul wrote to the Romans, God told the Roman Christians *"...wake up from your slumber...So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature."*(13:11-14) God said that when believers are busy thinking about how they can satisfy the sinful nature, they are falling spiritually asleep. Does this happen to us? Do we desire to get rich? Do we lust and or engage in sinful sex? Drink illegally and get drunk? Complain about seeming unfairness in our blessings verses those of someone else? Worry over things we should entrust to God? Stir up controversy rather than seek peace? These things serve the sinful nature and are signs of sinful spiritual sleep. Jesus says to us, *"Don't be found sleeping when I return."*

Rather than being spiritually asleep, be spiritually **awake**. This comes by using the word of God and praying persistently. They are like spiritual caffeine. As we use the Word of God, through that word the Holy Spirit awakens us to the awareness of sin. He shows us that our righteous acts are as filthy rags before a holy God. He shows us we deserve the wages of sin - death and hell. But at the same time, the

Spirit through the Gospel awakens us to our Savior and the blessings which one finds in him. He awakens us to see that the holiness that we don't have by ourselves, we have through faith in Christ because he was holy for us. He awakens us to see that the judgment we deserve was taken from us because the Son of God, Jesus, suffered and died for us on the cross. He moves us to repent of sin and cling to Jesus in faith. He awakens us to see that we, through Jesus, are not enemies of God, but rather sons and daughters of the King for time and for eternity. The Holy Spirit awakens us so that with continued use of God's Word coupled with persistent prayer, *"He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."*(I Cor 1:8) Use God's word and be awake!....

Watch! When Jesus said this, he used words that include the thought of being able to decide what is good and what is not in the eyes of God. Sometimes we Christians make decisions that may seem alright in our eyes, but are sinful in God's eyes; seem good for us, but hurt others; may be right in part, but not as a whole. We live in a world where we are bombarded with all kinds of messages, many of which are not pleasing to God or good for us. Therefore, know well God's word so that you have sound, God-pleasing principles with which to decisions for God's glory, your good and the good of others. Then you will be able to catch the devil when he is sneaking up on you or your sinful nature when it is rising up on you. God's word reminds and reinforces what we need to be watchful so that we are ready for Jesus' return.

When you awaken in the morning, say a little prayer thanking God for getting you through the night. Ask him to help you use and think about his word. Ask him to help you see your sin, but also your Savior. Pray that he gives you a stronger faith. Ask that he help you carry out the tasks he has given you, to discern between good and evil, and to enable you to live that day as if it is the Last Day. If it is, it's no problem, not with Jesus as your Savior. When you go to bed at night, be spiritually awake in Jesus. Then, should you physically awaken to the sound of the trumpet call of God and the shout of the arch-angel gathering God's people from the ends of the earth, you will be ready - ready IN JESUS to live WITH JESUS forever. Stay awake. Keep watch. Amen. (DRS)