

58. Mk 13:32-37**“Watch!”**

(GCC—1/19/25)

Mk 13:32-37—“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. 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. ‘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!’”

Introduction

Watch can mean several things, right?

1. Watch can mean a wrist watch, that tells the time for us.
2. Watch can mean to see, to look, to notice.
3. Watch can also mean to be alert, to be on guard, to be prepared.
 - Of course, today’s message will be about the third meaning of the word, watch.
 - So, let’s watch how God’s word is meant to minister to us through today’s passage.

About that day or hour

Mk 13:32—“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”

- What exactly are we talking about, when we say about that day or hour?
 - This is about Jesus’ second coming, when He returns to earth to gather His people to enter our eternal home.
- God’s word teaches us about Jesus second coming, so let’s watch what He says.
 - **1Thes 4:14-17**—“For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him. According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”
- Let’s summarize these verses into 4 highlights.
 1. The Lord Jesus is coming back to earth a second time—He is really coming back riding a cloud, with a loud trumpet call signaling His return.
 2. The people who have fallen asleep—are the people who died on earth, and they will be lifted up first, to meet the Lord in the clouds, in the air.
 3. Then, the people who are still alive—will also be lifted up in the clouds, to meet the Lord.
 4. Lastly, all God’s people—will live with our Lord forever.

In all of these amazing events, does it sound a little strange to you that Jesus would not know exactly when His return will be; after all, it is He who will be coming?

- Could the reason why Jesus does not know is because the Son is lower than the Father, for that is how it is with our human relationship?
 - So, just as the son is lower than the father on earth, is God the Son lower than God the Father, which is why, the Son does not know what the Father knows?
- Here, may I caution us to not impose our human standards to understand God's word.
 - In the doctrine of the Trinity, we are clearly taught that God the Son is equal in power and glory and authority to God the Father, as is with God the Holy Spirit.
 - So, Jesus not knowing which day and hour is His return, is not about God the Son being lower than God the Father.
 - The reason why Jesus does not know the day is because that's not the function of the Son, for that function is the Father's, and no other.

We are told—to watch

Mk 13:32, 37—"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. ...What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

I. After telling the people that He did not know which day or hour He will come, Jesus then tells the people listening to Him—be on guard, be alert, keep watch.

- The function of the people waiting for Jesus' return, is not to try to figure out when the day of His return is, but our focus must be, to be watchful, to be on guard, to be alert.
 - This is a mindset and an attitude that prepares for anything, to anticipate for everything, and not be surprised or be caught off-guard when unexpected things suddenly explodes.

II. To help us do this better, Jesus gives us an illustration.

- **Mk 13:33-37**—"Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. 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. '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 says the people needing to be watchful are to be like the servants of the house, assigned with our task, but most importantly, to learn to wait well for the coming of the owner, at whatever the hour of the day or night his return should be.
 - Thus, even if the owner should come at the most unlikeliest hour, still, the duty of the servant is to be watchful, alert and ready to meet the owner.
 - Said it differently, if the servant was not ready, then it proves he was not watchful and alert and on guard, and that is, inexcusable.

- This explanation sounds a bit similar to the Parable of the Ten Virgins.
 1. Five foolish virgins—did not get ready to meet the Lord, by not preparing the oil for their lamps to last all night long.

2. Five wise virgins—prepared extra oil for their lamps to last the night, and so when the Bridegroom came unexpectedly very very late, their lamps still burned because they had prepared extra oil.
 - By being prepared, is how these five virgins were on guard, alert and watchful.

Let's apply this to us, how are we to be watchful for Jesus' second coming?

- What is the oil we need to prepare to be watchful for Jesus' second coming?
 - The oil that prepares for Jesus' second coming is our lives—that is, how we live our lives, either prepares us to be like the five wise virgins or if we choose to live as we want, then we will belong with the five foolish virgins.
- What kind of life is a life that will make us belong with the five wise virgins?
 - **1Cor 10:31**—“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”
 1. Simply said, everything we do and say and think, should be driven by this one thought, and that is, “How do I glorify our God in all things, at all times.”
 2. On the contrary, whenever a Christian is not living for God's glory in all things at all times, then we are not living after God's design for us.
 - So, the best fellowship among God's people, the best small group discussion in God's church, the best prayer request from God's people have this concern—how do I, how do you, how do we, as God's church, learn to live seeking for God's glory in all things, at all times?
- Did you know, this concern, this question is truly applicable in everything we do, at every and all situations and times?
 - Let me offer a few practical applications.
 1. When we drive—more important than our safe arrival to our destination, our greatest concern should be, how I do glorify my God as I drive?
 2. When we go shopping for anything—more than getting what I need or want, our question should be, how do I glorify my God as I shop?
 3. When we eat—more than our satisfaction, we should ask, how I do glorify my God as I eat?
 4. When we go to help someone—more important than to help the other person well, is to seek to glorify our God as we help them.
 5. When we work or when we worship—the question is the same, how do I glorify my God as I work or as I worship?
- As you can see, the purpose is very simple, it's always, “How do I glorify my God?”
 - Of course, we know, simple does not mean it's easy.
 - But, did you know, it actually becomes easier, if we learn to apply God's purpose for us more and more into our lives?
 - We have a saying, practice makes perfect—it really does become better and easier, as we do them more frequently, more regularly, more often.
- So, if you are asking, why is it so difficult to live after God's purpose in our lives at all times, for all things?

- It is because, we are not trained enough to live in God’s way.
 - It’s like learning a new language or trying to master a new skill or to play a new sport, the less you practice, the more difficult it will be.
 - Conversely, the more you practice, the more often you do them, the better you become, and the better you become, the easier it gets.
 - So, if your heart wants to complain that God’s way is too difficult for you, then let me encourage you—please, learn to rebuke yourself, and tell yourself, “Stop whining. Let’s practice every chance I get.”
- Do you see?—the more difficult you find living after God’s glory in all things, is a sign that is telling us, we are not seeking God’s purpose for our lives often enough.
 - So, don’t get too discouraged when it is not going well; rather, learn it as a sign to teach you, let’s make a deeper commitment to keep applying God’s purpose for our lives in all things.
 - So, let’s keep asking, let’s keep seeking, how do I glorify my God in whatever I may be going through, every time, all the time.

Now, about the fruits

Now, living for God’s glory in all things is not just a lot of self-disciplining.

- May I lovingly inform you that there are delicious fruits that we will get to taste, as we live for God’s purpose.
 - Though there are more, allow me to present two fruits we will enjoy as we live for God’s glory.

I. The more we learn to live for God’s glory in all things, our lives will experience **God’s love for us** more.

- Let’s watch how beautifully God’s love for us works in us and through us.
 1. Let’s first behold how beautifully God’s love for us works in us.
 - God’s love always begins with Him; it is Him who first pours His love to us, abundantly.
 - So, we don’t look inward or outward for greater love, rather, we must always look up, upwards, for God’s love.
 - Now, for anyone who has ever fallen deeply in love, you know, it is irresistible, irrepressible, it just overwhelms you and takes over your lives.
 - Any good things we see, like the sky, the mountains, a pretty house, babies, laughters, food, and many others, they are all reminders, pointing us to this amazing love we have fallen into.
 - Allow me to help you to taste God’s amazing love for us with this golden chocolate.
 - Please feel free to peel it and taste it, and experience how delicious God’s love for us is, for His love is sweet like this chocolate, even sweeter.
 - Can life be any better?—we taste God’s love abundantly, and we fall in love with our God deeply.
 - If there’s nothing more, this is enough, right?—but, there’s more.

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2. Let's behold now, how beautifully God's love for us works through us.
- When God's love is in us, and our love is freely offered back to Him, then His love in us spills over to the people around us, so that people near us, will become intoxicated with His loving fragrance through us.
 - Imagine your life being a fragrance of Jesus' love to others—wouldn't our family and people near us, also fall in love with Jesus?
 - Wouldn't the people near us find us irresistibly beautiful because of Jesus' love in us pouring out to them?
 - Wouldn't we also delight to see ourselves in light of God's love for us—oh, imagine loving yourself as God loves us, that's how we will see ourselves?
 - What an amazing life and love that is, isn't it?
 - Tell me, is there anything as awesome as it is to behold our lives filled with God's love?
 1. God's love in us, completely changes us.
 2. And God's love through us, changes the people around us.
 - That's how God's love for us flows through us to the people around us.
 - That's life well lived; that's love well traveled, isn't it?

The fruit of God's love for us is truly more than enough, but God says, "No, I want to give you more of My goodness."

- So, let's watch what the second fruit God delights for His people to taste, when we live for God's glory alone.

II. The more we learn to live for God's glory in all things, besides experiencing, falling deeper in love with God, our lives will delight and joyfully desire **to grow more and more after the likeness of Jesus**.

- The more we live for God's glory, in love with Him, the more we will desire and seek and hunger to grow more like Jesus because He is simply the most beautiful image we want to hold on to, and reflect in our lives to others.
 - We will no longer desire to be our best versions, for we are not content to simply be our best selves.
 - The most attractive and beautiful ways of the world will pale in comparison to the beauty we find in Jesus, so we will sell everything if we have to, if only we can see and attain more of Christ-likeness in our lives.
 - **Matt 13:44**—"The kingdom of heaven (with King Jesus reigning) is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field."
 - Jesus is so good, we will delight to sell everything, if only we can gain Him, because He is a hidden treasure the world does not know.
- With John, we want to learn and pray and joyfully shout, as he did.
 - **Jn 3:30**—"He (Jesus alone) must increase, and I must decrease."
- And the amazing ways of our God is, when He sees that we want to decrease so that He alone will increase, watch what our God delights to do for us.

- **1Pet 5:6**—“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s might hand, that He may lift you up in due time.”
- Did you know, our God is like that?
 - Our God does not want to receive all the glory for Himself, which is why, He will make every single one of His people who will enter into His kingdom—**glorious**.
 - **Rom 8:30**—“And those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified.”
- God loves to share His goodness with His people.
 - That’s why, sharing our goodness with others, truly reflects our God in us, proving we have grown more into the likeness of Jesus, our God.
 - That’s why, we love to give generously and even love to give more than to receive, because that’s how our God is.
 - That’s why, we will pray for our enemies, because that’s what Jesus does.
 - That’s why, we will serve the undeserving, we will love the unlovable, because that’s how Jesus is, and we want to grow more and more like Jesus.
 - We will never be perfect like Jesus in this world, but our greatest desire, our greatest delight, our greatest pleasure will be, “I want to grow more and more like Jesus.”

In closing

Did you catch, did you learn the humble key that delights our God?

1. Our God loves when we delight to decrease, in order to see our God increase.
 - Our purpose is not to decrease, but it is to see our God increase because of our decrease.
 - We don’t lower ourselves to become low, but we want to lower ourselves so that we can see our God shine more brightly, so that our God will receive all the glory, not me but Him.
 - Remember Jesus, He humbled Himself to raise us up.
2. On the other hand, when we try to exalt ourselves, then the reversal happens, for then, we will experience our decrease.
 - King Nebuchadnezzar learned this lesson the hard way.
 1. When he tried to exalt himself, God humbled him to live like a beast in the field.
 2. But when he acknowledged that he was no better than the beast, God exalted him to the throne again (Dan 4).

Let’s watch carefully God’s word and learn to live our lives His way and not ours.

- The most beautiful part about our lives is **our ending**, even if we have failed here and there, the ending God has wrote for us is truly magnificent.
 - **Rom 8:30**—“And those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified.”

Responsive Hymn

All the way my Savior leads me

Prayer Time (Robert Wall)

1. Pray for our nation and our new leaders—President Donald Trump, Vice President JD Vance, Governor Tony Evers, Mayor Daniel Bukiewicz (Mayor Dan B).
2. Pray for our church family— for physical and spiritual wellness.
3. Pray for our worship—that we will taste God’s goodness in our worship.

Church News

1. **Welcome**
2. **Coffee with Pastor Joshua**—do you want to meet and talk with Pastor Joshua over coffee? If so, you can reach him—by phone or text @ 408-205-1182, or over email—joshuanlmc@yahoo.com
3. **2024 Contribution Statement**—Contribution statements are available upon request. Please contact our Finance Ministry Leader, Joanna Kim (joannakim70@gmail.com) to receive yours.
4. **Outreach Ministry**—our apologies for cancelling-postponing our outreach. We are praying and searching for opportunities to serve our community. If you know one, please speak with Elder Frank. Our desire, if possible, is to serve a ministry on a Sunday after our worship, so that many of our members can join us in our serving with Christ’s heart.
5. **Church Clean-up**—today, after our worship and a short fellowship time, we want to help keep our church building clean, especially our chapel and our fellowship hall. If you are able, let’s help clean up together. We appreciate everyone’s loving service.
6. **Wednesday Bible Study** (6:40-7:55pm)—sorry for the technical difficulties this past Wed. I believe we have corrected this, and so we should be good this coming Wed.
 - We will study the 4 short chapters of Ruth, one chapter at a time, for two weeks each.
 - This coming Wed (1/22), we will read the chapter first, and then have you share your understanding, your thoughts and your questions.
 - Then on the second week (1/29), I will share from my study, and discover wonderful truths that our God deposited in this beautiful story chapter.
7. **Prayer Warriors**—meet on Wed evenings from 8-9pm at our individual homes. Though all of us will be in our homes, yet, we pray together at our designated time. For questions, please speak with our sister Katy Krauter.
8. **Prayer-Letter for 2025**—will you pray and write a prayer-letter to our God. We will collect the letters by 1/26 (or you can give to Pastor Joshua sooner), and unsealed them on the last Sunday of 2025.
9. **Joint Worship with LCC**—will be on 2/2. The worship will begin at 10am.
 - The worship will be followed by lunch and a special praise time by the different groups in LCC.
10. **New Membership Class**—will be a 4-weeks class, from 11 am-12noon (on 2/9, 2/16, 2/23, 3/2). Please speak with Pastor Joshua for more information.
11. **Devotion Time**—will resume on 2/9/25 (11:10am-12noon), as we read one chapter each week and discuss from Levi Lusko’s book, “Take Back Your Life.” Join us. Let’s learn together

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