

**Keep Watch!**

1. You don't know when Jesus will come back.
  2. But you do know what you need to be doing until he comes back.
- 2 Cor 13:14. Well, pretty strng, isn't it, wtchng serm on screen at frnt/ch, or seeing serm recrdd by your pr at his own home. Been strange yr! Reason for diff serm format today: my wife Sarah recntly tested + Covid-19. Don't worry: doing just fine. Other than some nasal congstn & feeling little tired, just about back to 100%. And my test: neg. But does mean: Ls going be spndng some time at home in qrntn; and I'm not going be able be w/u at ch for awhile. Now we certly aprct your loving cnrn, and we're grateful/God: good hlth given us. And Crnvrs certly imp topic on many ppl's minds these days.
  - But I think today we have smthng more imp talk re. That is: J is coming back. Smday J, who ascndd into hvn 2k yrs ago: smday J'll come back, return to this earth. That's what said would do; will keep word; always has. When J comes back: will be Last Day, J-Day, end/wrld. On that day, just like talkd re couple wks ago: seprt shp/gts, bels/unbels, send hvn/hell; that jdgmnt based solely on whether/not trust in Xp, faith in Xp as Sav. And that jdgmnt: final. And on that day that J returns, hvns/earth as we know them: all be destrdyd. And as Xians, we'll be w/J in hvn forever. But none of that begins until J returns. In gos for today (1<sup>st</sup> Sun Adv), J assures us: he will return, is coming back. And he therefore urges us: KW. 3x, KW. **Vs. 34-he tells; 35a; 37.** J is coming back; means you have KW!
  - KW, 1<sup>st</sup>, bec you do not know *when* J'll come back. Spcfcly: **vs. 32.** No one knows when J'll return. Even in state/humltn, while not makng full use divine pwr, even J doesn't know. Now J knows, of course, bec he's in state/exltn; he's risen, in hvn, ruling wrld, as king (last wk). But no one among us, no one in wrld, knows or can know, when J'll return. Very clear on that! **Vs. 33b.** Even tells mini parble re man going away on journey, puts servnts in chrg hshld; says: **vs. 35.** J is owner/house; we're servnts; and we have no way knowing when our mstr'll return. His arrival: sudden/unexptd.
  - Few wks ago, teaching Cat one afrmn; students & I right over there in Mtg Rm. All sudden, all kids' phones started go off; all getting warning msgs from Nat Wthr Srvc, saying under tornado warning. Hap'd all sudden. They: Pr, look, we've got bad storm coming, maybe tornado heading our way. So I quick glanced out window; sure enough: sky turned pitch black, heavy rain started fall, wind howlng. So all headed bsmnt/chrch, took shelter there. (In fact, finished class down there in bsmnt.) But that storm came out nowhere. I'm glad we got warnings on phones; if there were warning sirens sounding outside, I couldn't hear them. Perhaps some of the wthr stations had forstd this storm. But I didn't look at wthr that day, so I had no idea. Blew in, just like that!
  - That's what'll be like at end/wrld. Happen just like that. Except: no sirens; no phone alarms; no forecasts. Just gonna happen, all of sudden – and J'll return, and you're not going be able guess when. **Vs. 32a.** It's always shocked me, when I've studied Xian/wrld hstry: that there are ppl from evry genrtn, try predict when end/wrld will come. In early ch, there were ppl tried predict date; in middle ages, during Luther's day, more prdctns. In modern era, ppl thought 1736, then 1836; then mvmnt, ppl thought 1988, then another 1994. I remem was in HS during big Y2K frenzy, when calndr turned over to yr 2000 – ppl thought end/wrld come then. Then just few yrs ago in Dec 2012: it was last day on some ancient Mayan calendar; ppl thought end/wrld come then. But for 2000 yrs, evry single date-setter, every single end-predictor has been dead wrong.
  - J was perfly clear: **vs. 32;** again, **vs. 33b.** So, you need KW! You know he's coming back. He says he's coming back right here. Angels said same thing when he ascended: **“Why do you stand here lookng into the sky? This same J, who has been taken from you into hvn, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into hvn” (Ac 1:11).** So he's defntly coming back; but you do not know *when* come back.
  - However, you do know, what need be doing, until comes back. You know exactly what need be doing; you need KW, which means: need be prepared, be ready. J: **vs. 33a.** You have make sure, in hrt & soul, you ready to stand before J when he comes again.

- In this mini-prbl J tells today, says: **vs. 34abc-task**. As servnts of Lord, you/I have assgnd tasks. When I kid, both parnts workd; so during smmrtime, bros/I had really fun bbysttr, Keke; she watchd us #yrs. Just about evry day thruout summer, my mother'd write out daily list chores for bros/me do: do laundry, hang clean clothes on line, vacuum carpet, wash dishes. Always found list on counter, evry morn. And our bbysttr Keke always made sure we got those chores done before mom got home. Evtly got old enough, didn't need bbysttr anymore; but we still got that daily list/chores, our assgnd tasks – only now we didn't have anyone making sure got those chores done. (And I remem few times: mom got home from wrk early, and we hadn't even started on that list. None too happy!)
- Well, during this time that J away, btwn ascnsn & return, J has **put vs. 34bc**. We have assgnd tasks: not written out for us on counter, but recorded for us in Scrptr. And you know what those tasks are; you know what you need be doing until comes back:
  - 1<sup>st</sup>, most imply: need cling to Xp in faith; trust in J as Sav from sin. Don't let anything seprt you from Sav. J once: **“The one who stands firm to the end will be saved” (Mt 24:13)**. We need make our Xian faith our top priority & trust in J above all things, for our entire life, until day we die. Crnvr is really frstrng to all of us, & it's making it hard for Xians, even prs, come ch, worship tog. Don't let Stn use this virus: pry you away from Sav. If you can get to ch, get ch; if can't, at least watch videos & schdl priv Com. But undrstnd: Stn going do whtvr can to exploit this sittn & leverage this virus vs your faith. Don't let it happen; trust in Xp. Nothing more imp in life than this! J is your king; he's in charge, not this virus.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> (hand/hand): turn away from sin. Do not let self become comfrtbl w/sin, or think lightly of it, or excuse it away. Rather, turn from your sin and repent of it. Turn to Xp for forgiveness. We're all going sin, bec all sinful ppl. But we cannot continue in it & purpsfly persist in it, bec unrepntd sin kills faith. Instead, turn away from sin. **2 Pt 3** talks re end of wrld: **“Since evrythng will be destroyed in this way, what kind/ppl ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day/God” (11-12)**. So make it your priority to turn from sin and live a Xian life to the glory/God.
  - Smthng else you need do: live w/realztn: you don't know how long you've got, don't know when your day'll come. J promsd you hvn; but didn't proms tomrw. Evry day you live could be your last. And I've heard this said humrly: evry morn, get up, check obits, see if listed there. But sersly, God knows day your death, but you don't. I've held dead bby b4; mournd death teengr; I've condctd funrls for 20-smthngs & young moms in 40s. We are mortal; will die; long life not grnte. And I think we need live w/that urgncy. We have this short sliver/time on this earth to do what's really imp, like: trust in J, turn from sin, use our gifts/ablt/financs to serve others in love, spread gospel, live gospel. This is what we need be doing right now.
  - Finly, it's our assgnd task: look forward to J's return w/ joyful viglnc & eager expctn. In parbl: **vs. 34d-tells; 36**. In a sense, we're all doorkeeprs; all there at front gate/castle, lookng out into drknss/nght, watchng for our Lord to return. And we've been waiting for so long; it's been 2k yrs. But at any momnt, his figure will emerge from shadows of nighttime drknss, & he will be back. How will he find his doorkeepers? Will he find us asleep? To be asleep in this parbl means: to not be ready, not be prepared, not have saving faith. Don't let that happen to you. Let your master find you awake & alert at door, vigilantly keeping watch.
- **Vs. 37**. So, my dear sis/bro in Xp, KW! You don't know *when* J will come back. But you do know, what need be doing, until comes back. KW!

### Mark 13:32-37

<sup>32</sup> “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup> Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. <sup>34</sup> 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. <sup>35</sup> 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. <sup>36</sup> If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. <sup>37</sup> What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”