Advent 1B 2020 Jesus is coming again

Jesus is coming again. He said so. His words will never pass away. Jesus will come with great power and glory. He will come not by wood of his manger or wood of his cross, but on the highest throne of the highest king.

When He comes, His power will be on full display. When all look up to the see the sun, its light will stop. As will the light of the moon. Gone! Stars will fall and planets shudder at his coming. All that God did on the fourth day of Creation, He now undoes.

Is there any power on earth that rules over the countless lights of the sky or commands the planets to stop dead in their orbits? This king will then command his army of angels to gather his own people out of all the nations from every generation. Who will be able to resist? There will be no protests or any counterattack with nuclear capability.

Everyone will bend the knee to Him. All will praise Him but not all are of Him. Some have spent their lives ignoring his words and attacking his people. Some have given themselves to devilish lies and false gods. All their hope will come to an end when Christ sets everything right.

Many that belong to God have begged for His coming. They have suffered much for his name and have endured to the end. They have longed to see their Lord and enter into His joy.

But underneath their pleas for vindication lies a double-edged sword. To ask God for justice, for vindication, and for His severe judgment to be cast upon all who hate his Name, would mean that all would be judged according to what they deserve. That is a deadly game to play.

Asking God to be rewarded is to overthrow what Jesus came for in the manger and why he was nailed to the cross. Our Lord’s First Coming by way of suffering and death was to bring God’s kingdom of mercy. He came for sinners. His life for the life of all.

How foolish for sinners to ask God to get what is coming to them? Those who ignore or reject Christ the King in his manger, cross and tomb, will not belong to him when He comes on his powerful throne of glory.

So, what shall we do until He comes again?

Are you not his servants? Has he not given you work to do? Each one is called by him to do their task. What has Christ called you to do? Look at your station in life and you will know. You have been called by him to honour your parents, nurture your children in the faith, work for your employers as you would for your Lord, treat your employees as fellow heirs of eternal life, and all the rest of the Table of Duties in Luther’s Small Catechism.

Every calling can be brought to a common denominator of Love. Love your neighbour as yourself. Love is the fulfillment of every command of God. For those who wait upon the Lord’s return, there is much work to do.

But whatever our individual calling, Jesus makes us all gate-keepers to watch for his return. Everyone who believes in Him is to stay awake for His return. That is the way of faith. It is symbolized by our baptismal candles that are lit after the washing of regeneration and new birth has happened.

Ethan Henock was welcomed into the family of God yesterday and his baptismal candle was lit. His and ours, is a candle that shows we are vigilant and waiting for our Lord’s glorious return. We stay awake by hearing His words, rejoicing in His forgiveness and by loving those who persecute us. We pray for them as our Lord Jesus prays for our forgiveness.

Jesus came to die for sinners. He came for you. No one who receives him is short-changed by God. In having Jesus you already have everything. What could you possibly lack? He will uphold you through this pandemic and the coming dark days when earthly powers will try to snuff out His light. They will try but will fail. All they can do is kill the body. They cannot take your faith. They have no right or power to do that. For the faith that God has given you, no one can take away.

God is faithful. He keeps his promises.

Therefore we don’t need to know when Jesus comes again. Leave that to the Father. No one else knows. No angel, or prophet not even Jesus knows. If Jesus can leave when the exact moment of his return will be, to His father, then surely you can too.

In the same way and for the same reason, you don’t need to know the moment of your death. You can safely leave that to your faithful God. As Jesus will speak up for you when He returns in judgment so He will keep you safe when He calls you home. He will keep you guiltless at His coming. Now patiently watch for His return with joy!