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*"Christ caring for People
through People"*

Nov.28, 2010 (Advent 1)

Romans 13:11-14 (The Message)

11-14 But make sure that you don't get so absorbed and exhausted in taking care of all your day-by-day obligations that you lose track of the time and doze off, oblivious to God. The night is about over, dawn is about to break. Be up and awake to what God is doing! God is putting the finishing touches on the salvation work he began when we first believed. Get out of bed and get dressed! Don't loiter and linger, waiting until the very last minute. Dress yourselves in Christ, and be up and about!

Matthew 24:36-44 (The Message)

36 But the exact day and hour? No one knows that, not even heaven's angels, not even the Son. Only the Father knows.

37-39 The Arrival of the Son of Man will take place in times like Noah's. Before the great flood everyone was carrying on as usual, having a good time right up to the day Noah boarded the ark. They knew nothing—until the flood hit and swept everything away.

39-44 The Son of Man's Arrival will be like that: Two men will be working in the field—one will be taken, one left behind; two women will be grinding at the mill—one will be taken, one left behind. So stay awake, alert. You have no idea what day your Master will show up

The Season of Advent: Anticipation and Hope

The word Advent means "coming" or "arrival." The focus of the entire season is the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Christ in his First Advent, and the anticipation of the return of Christ the King in his Second Advent. Thus, Advent is far more than simply marking a 2,000 year old event in history. It is celebrating a truth about God, the revelation of God in Christ whereby all of creation might be reconciled to God. That is a process in which we now participate, and the consummation of which we anticipate.

Advent also symbolizes that Christ has come, that He is present in the world today, and that He will come again in power. That acknowledgment provides a basis for holy living arising from a profound sense that we live "between the times" and are called to be faithful stewards of what is entrusted to us as God's people. So, as the church celebrates God's in-breaking into history in the Incarnation, and anticipates a future consummation to that history for which "all creation is groaning awaiting its redemption," it also confesses its own responsibility as a people commissioned to "love the Lord your God with all your heart" and to "love your neighbour as yourself."

Advent is marked by a spirit of expectation, of anticipation, of preparation. It is the hope that God will rule with truth and justice and righteousness. It is that hope that anticipates anew the reign of an Anointed One, a Messiah, who will bring peace and justice and righteousness to the world.

Most important of all we need to remember the future is now. In Christ we are all redeemed and reconciled to God. The spirit of expectation, anticipation, and preparation is now become a time of rejoicing and peace. The hidden presents of Christmas as laid open before us in the truth of salvation by grace and the prime emotions have become joy and thanksgiving.

May you rest each day in these truths and find joy and peace filling each and every hour.

Amen.

(Rev.) John McGurrin