

Text: Mark 13:24-37

Theme: Stay Awake!

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our mediation this morning is the Holy Gospel, according to Saint Mark, the thirteenth chapter verses twenty-four through thirty-seven.

Good morning, ladies! How are you doing this morning? Good? Excellent! Have you ever had problems staying awake? You had a lot of fun playing outside, or with friend inside, and near the end of the day, what do you want to do? More than likely go to bed and sleep. It is hard to stay awake after a long and busy day, whether a day of work or a day of play. Yet, our Lord tells us to stay awake for His return, even in the middle of the night. How can we stay awake and resist the devil until Jesus comes again? Ponder this question, as you hear the rest of the sermon. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

### **Need to Stay awake because time is short**

To fall asleep is to be unprepared, unready for our Lord's return. It is of vital importance that we stay awake. We need to stay awake because the time is short until our Lord's return. It is not something that is off in a distant future which means that we can be lazy and rest until it gets here. Rather, Jesus says that it can be at any time. He says that no one, not even the Son, knows the hour or day. We know that it is a set day and hour, known to

the Father alone. Thus why, we need to stay awake and not fall asleep. We know that it is coming for sure, but we do not know when.

### **Hard to stay awake**

Yet, it is hard to stay awake. It is hard precisely because we do not know the time. Satan, and our sinful nature, uses that very fact to tell us that it is in fact a long way off. After all, it's been over two thousand (2,000) years since Jesus walked the earth, surely you have enough time. Because it is so far off, you can go ahead and do whatever you want. Satan says, 'Go ahead and sin. Jesus has not returned yet. You have the time to ask for forgiveness later. Go ahead, be mean to your neighbor, take what he has. You can have what you want right now and ask for mercy whenever wrongs you have done at a later date.' Satan even lulls us to fall asleep in our outreach and mission work. He says, 'You do not have to actually go tell your friends and family about Jesus and what He has done for them. You have plenty of time.' There is no sense of urgency for anything to do with the Christian life, either outreach or forgiveness, or much more.

Satan lulls us into a false sense of security in thinking that because it has been so long since Jesus walked the earth, that maybe Jesus' return will not happen at all. He attacks us that we can then make our own heaven here on earth. We can be the rulers and the ones in authority. We can be the ones who make the rules. Therefore, we can do whatever we want to do. We can indulge every single one of our sinful passions because after all,

“He’s not coming back.” Therefore, we do not stay awake. We fall asleep, lost in the nightmares of our sins.

### **Can stay awake because we know Who is Returning**

Our Lord calls upon us not to fall asleep but to stay awake. Like a doorkeeper who must watch because he does not know when the owner will return, they too must be on guard (v. 35). Evening, midnight, rooster crowing, and dawn are the names of the four watches of the night the Romans used. The Greek adverb *exaiphnēs* (NIV, “suddenly”) emphasizes the suddenness of the Parousia (v. 36). “The element of surprise is ineradicable from the parousia expectation. Signs, like the fig tree, are an indication of promise, not a clock” (Beasley Murray, *Mark Thirteen*, p. 117).<sup>1</sup> He could return this very moment, day, or hour. We do not know. Because we do not know. We resist the attack of Satan that Jesus is delayed so we can sin. We reply with a resounding no. Jesus is returning. Jesus has promised it and He who promised is faithful, He will do it.

We can stay awake because we know Who is returning again and why. Jesus Christ Himself, God in the flesh for us. Jesus who was pierced for our transgressions, who hung upon the cross, bleeding and dying, shedding His blood as payment for all of our sins. He who rose from the dead for our justification, ascended to the right hand of the Father, now and forever ruling and reigning. He, who was pierced with nail, spear, and thorn, is returning, not in a state of humiliation.

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<sup>1</sup> Wessel, W. W. (1984). [Mark](#). In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 753). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

Rather, in power and glory, with angels and archangels, for you. Jesus tells us that his purpose in coming is to gather the elect to himself. That removes all fear of the judgment for us. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. No matter where we are or where our bodies or bones or dust or ashes may lie, the Lord's angels will find us and bring us to him. While verse 27 does not expressly mention the resurrection, it is certainly implied.<sup>2</sup>

Stay awake dear Christian, firm in your faith, because your Crucified, Risen, and Ascended Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ is returning for you, that you may be with Him and all the saints around the throne of grace, forever and ever.

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>2</sup> Wicke, H. E. (1988). [Mark](#) (p. 189). Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Pub. House.