

³⁶“*But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*
³⁷*For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.* ³⁸*For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark,* ³⁹*and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man.* ⁴⁰*Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.* ⁴¹*Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left.* ⁴²*Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.* ⁴³*But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.* ⁴⁴*Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.*

Brrring, brrring, Hello – Jesus – you are coming to my house?..... Soon? I am so excited. See you in just a little bit. Bye.

Jesus is coming to my house – I’d better tidy up a little. (Knock, knock, knock) – Oh! Is that Jesus already?

Hi,..... you are the new boy next door? You want me to play catch with you? --- I am expecting an important guest – maybe some other day.

Brrring, brrring.....I wonder if it is Jesus calling back. Hello. Sally? you need a ride to the doctor’s office? Your daughter was going to take you but she got sick? Sally, I would love to help you but I have a very special guest coming today.. Sorry. Bye.

I wonder when Jesus will get here. What will he look like? What will he dress like? Will he kind of glow or have a halo?

Brrring, brrringHello? Paul. Today is a month from the day Mary was buried?the hardest month of your life.....Paul, any other day I’d be glad to have lunch with you but I’ve got a special guest coming today.Yeah, some other time. Bye.

I wonder what is taking Jesus so long. He said he would be here soon. Maybe this is the moment he is coming again – could be taking a little longer to get everything just so for his entrance. (waits)

Brrring, brrring Hello? (Confused) Jesus? I thought you were coming soon.You did? The little boy? And Sally?..... And Paul?I know that you said you would be here soon but I thought it would be more special.....the little boy and Sally and Paul are special to you.....and me too....You will be coming soon?I will be waiting and watching. Bye.

The very last Sunday of the church year, November 23, 2008 these are the words we will hear: “When did we see you, Lord, hungry or thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick or in prison and ministered to you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘As you did to one of the least of my sisters or brother, you did it to me.’”

And today we hear that the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

These two words are like bookends around our year of hearing God’s word and living in response to that word. Today the warning about the Son of Man coming at an unexpected hour and almost a year from now the picture scene when he has come and taken his place on the throne to judge - today a call to be ready – at the end of the year a great big hint about what being ready means.

“As you did to one of the least of my sisters or brother, you did it to me.”

From the day that Jesus ascended into heaven those who love him have been waiting to see him come again as he went. Sometimes the world is full of words about what his coming again will be like – around the year 2000 a whole series of speculative fiction was written – the “Left Behind Series” it was called. And people were busy shining up their faith the way someone might shine up the silver platter before an honored dinner guest arrives. Are you ready? Do you have all of your “faith ducks” in order? Have your eyes on the sky was the message – and on the great battles and events foretold in scripture. But Matthew suggests that our eyes need to be focused on the stranger that shows up at our door and our ears tuned to the voice that asks for help – that our Lord will be coming to us in these.

It is really about who God is – is God a god that is sitting above it all moving the events of history according to a great dramatic plan waiting to see who will spy out the clues and be pure and unstained and get to fly up into the air and escape all the trials God has planned for all those miserable sinners? Or is God a god that comes in Jesus to be with sinners – to be counted as one of them – and to suffer their death? Is God a god that chooses to come to us in the naked ones and the homeless ones and the children who simply need a friend.

This is what Jesus said: “But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”

No one knows about the day and the hour. No one not even Jesus. If anyone tells you they know about the day and the hour, be sure of one thing – they are lying. Do not trust them in anything.

Jesus said, “For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man.”

Nobody know – life will go on just the way it has.

Two will be in a field, one will be taken and the other left. Two will be grinding - one taken the other left. “Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.”

You do not know. So what does it mean to keep awake? Get to know a young person, ask how things are going.

Take someone out to lunch that has lost a loved one recently.

Volunteer at an agency where the hungry are fed or prisoners visited.

And keep on trusting in Jesus. He will be making a visit soon.