

First Advent Sunday

△ Ps 25:1-10; Luke 24:25-36

Intro

First Sunday of Advent

Preparation for Christmas

Time of waiting

Focus on the first Sunday

The Second coming of Jesus

Waiting for that.

But what do we wait for?

In-between times

This period


Between the Jesus death,
resurrection, ascension

And the return from Jesus

Sounds like book of Revelations?

Yes Major theme

But also 1 Thess 4:17

- ▶  **16** For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. **17** Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain

on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. **18** So encourage each other with these words.

Jesus:

²⁷ At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

[^] Luke 21:25-36

And we live in between those two events

Gift Holy Spirit to help us, sustain us and equip us, to prepare for that time

Jesus sermon on the end-times

Starts 21:5 - The disciples commenting on the greatness of the Temple

Jesus speaks about the future

The near and far future

Near

Wars, insurrections and calamities


Jerusalem and the temple will be destroyed (AD70)

And then there will be a time that Jesus (The Son of Man) will return


Futher, but how much further

I do not know if Jesus know the time scales

He left this to the Father

- ▶  **36** “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, ^f but only the Father.

And the disciples, as Paul in Thessalonians, says just before the earlier quote

- ▶  **15** We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died

And the first Century Christians were very disappointed

And now we are 20Cs further

Signs

△ v25-28

Natural signs

sun, moon, stars and earth causing distress and confusion

people signs: fear, foreboding,

the heavens: powers are shaken

Some of these things have happened and are continue to happen

As they did already in the time of Jesus

And every century since

Sign of the fig tree and all the trees

△ v29-31

People can see the signs in the trees to see when the seasons are changing

And so can we from looking around us at

the world

Fig tree, symbolic for Israel?

All the other trees, symbolic for all the nations?

All these are the signs that the Kingdom of God is near

This generation

^ v32

The Kingdom of God is near

^ v31

The Kingdom of God is here and still to come

Jesus has already come, as he said in Mark 1

“The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

^ Mark 1:15

But not yet fully: Jesus has not yet returned

So the Kingdom of God is still near

But not fully fulfilled

Be on guard

^ v34-35

do not be disheartened by all that you see

do not let yourself be disheartened by giving in

wild parties, being drunk or anxious

Because when that day comes, you are not

because when that day comes, you are not prepared and you are trapped

So guard yourselves

Be always on watch

Praying to God that he will save you through that time

So that we may stand before Jesus when he comes

But what of today?

Urgency for our own safety and salvation

Living 20 centuries after Jesus said these words, we have lost a sense of urgency

Jesus has not returned for so long, surely I will see it out in my life time

But what it this generation means literally that: this - our generation

We do not know when we die

We do not know when it comes like a trap

Be on guard, be alert?

Are you OK with Christ Jesus?

Or are you falling in the trap of laissez faire or the opposite: anxiety

Now is the time to give your heart to Jesus

Do not wait!

Be ready!

Urgency for saving others!

How about all these people who do not

How about all those people who do not yet know Christ?

IF we have only this generation to help Jesus to find them

Then we have a lot of work left to do

And not much time to do it in

our families, our friends, neighbours,

visitors in the Oasis Café,

people who we meet on the streets

the homeless person sleeping outside in the porch

Jesus wants all to know him and to make a decision for him

Are we visible enough?

Or are we hiding behind our four walls of a safe church building?

Paul wrote

^ 1 Cor 9:19-23

¹⁹ Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. ²⁰ To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to

with the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.²³ I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

But he also knew the urgency, that Jesus indicated, as he then wrote:

²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

For Paul his life was a race, to convert as many people as possible

Last week, which was echoed yesterday, the disciples prayer

²⁹ Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness.³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

There is also the same urgency, leading them to ask for great boldness to speak God's word

Do we have that same sense of urgency?

Are we becoming convinced in our hearts, that this urgency comes from God?

He has limited time - to save as much as he can

And he has chosen us to help him with it!

So:

Let us be on guard.

Let us be on watch for Jesus to come

And let us be bold to proclaim his good news!

Amen!