

Mark 13:24-37

“Perhaps Today”

Last Sunday of the Church Year

November 25, 2018

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Vicar Otterman

Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God, Our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

**[Introduction]**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ. I don't order too many things online, but when I do, I can't wait for the package to arrive. I wake up and think, “maybe it will come today!” When I walk home from work, I strain my eyes to try to see if there is a box waiting for me on the front steps. If I'm home from work, each time I walk through the living room, I open the front door and check for the package, and if it's not there, I look down the street hoping to see a delivery truck on its way. Each day the package doesn't arrive is a little disappointing, but the next morning is exciting because my hopes rise again, and I think, “Perhaps today!”

I start daydreaming about how much fun it will be once my package is delivered. I imagine getting a new daily planner that's going to revolutionize the way I organize my life. I imagine getting a new book that will allow me to explore new worlds and new ideas. And each time I daydream about how nice it will be once I get what I ordered, I think to myself, “Perhaps today!”

**[Excited for Christ's Return]**

The problem with waiting for a package to come in the mail is that after you get it, the excitement eventually wears out, and it becomes ordinary. Things in this world usually don't live up to the hype. But as Christians, we know that there is another world on its way that will exceed everyone's expectations and won't ever become old or boring. Instead of waiting for some item that we will take for granted within a few weeks, we wait for Jesus to come back, so He can renew the earth and give us sinless bodies overflowing with life and energy.

Each of us receives God's promise of salvation and new life when we believe in Jesus and are baptized. In his letter to the church in Rome, the Apostle Paul writes, “We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.” (*Romans 6:4-5*)

Just imagine what life will be like when all your aches and pains go away. Imagine what it will be like when you are given a new body that doesn't grow weary and doesn't get sick. Imagine when you won't feel lonely anymore because you are reunited with your brothers and sisters in Christ. Imagine the beauty of the new Earth. Imagine knowing your place and purpose in God's creation. Imagine being in a perfect and loving relationship with the creator of the universe himself.

If you take the time to imagine how wonderful life will be when Christ returns, and if you realize that reality will surpass anything you can picture, you'll discover that Jesus' return is something worth daydreaming about. So go ahead let the anticipation of the resurrection life overflow in you, so that you wake up each morning and hope, "Perhaps today!"

### ***[No One Knows the Day or the Hour]***

Jesus told us that He will come back one day, but we don't know exactly when that will be. Our scripture reading says, "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." (**Mark 13:32**)

In a much greater way, our anticipation of Jesus return is like waiting for a special package to be delivered. We know it will come, and we look forward to getting it, but we're still not sure if it will be here today, tomorrow, or years from now. The best thing we can do is wonder and hope that today is the day.

But it seems like the longer it takes, the harder it is for us to look forward to the day Jesus returns. We get tired of waiting, and after a while, we start to feel like it will never actually happen. When we become weary of waiting, it is tempting to go about life as though Jesus weren't coming back at all. No more peeking out the front window, and no more checking for packages on the front steps. No more excitement and no more saying, "Perhaps today." Jesus has two words for us when we grow tired of waiting. He says, "Stay awake!" (**Mark 13:37**)

### ***[Awake vs. Asleep]***

Jesus compares us to servants whose master has left the house for a while but who will return at some unknown day and time. The servants are given work to do while he is away, and the door keeper is told to stay awake, because the master could return at any time.

The Apostle Paul shares a glimpse of what it means to stay awake. He writes, “continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard.” (*Colossians 1:23*)

That’s what it means to stay awake. Jesus wants us to trust in “the hope of the gospel” that we’ve heard. That hope is the fact that Jesus is coming back to fully restore us in the life of the resurrection, which He already has, and which we are already joined to through our baptisms and through faith. Because we are already connected to Jesus in his death, we have the promise of forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life.

When we are awake and stable in the hope of Jesus’ return, it affects the way we live. We wait with eager anticipation for our Lord to come back to us, because we know how wonderful that day will be.

We wait for Jesus like we wait for the delivery man to bring us a package, except that Jesus is giving us something far better than anything we could purchase with money. We watch with excitement for the moment he arrives, and we make sure we’re home to receive it. We spend time in God’s Word and strive to live according to His will, spreading the news of this hope and loving one another just as He loves us.

We’re awake when we look forward to Jesus coming back and when we hope for the day when He will raise us from the dead. We’re awake when we trust in Jesus and His promises. We’re awake when we live in a way that looks forward to the day when we receive those promises in full. We’re awake when we get out of bed in the morning and think, “Perhaps today!”

### ***[Perhaps Today!]***

The truth is that we don’t have any idea when Jesus will come back, but we do know that he could return at any moment. He might come back before the end of the week. He might come back before the end of the night. He might even be back before the end of this service. And we hope that he does come back soon, praying in our hearts, “Come quickly, Lord Jesus.” Because on that day, He will send his angels to gather us to Him, and because we are connected to his death on the cross, we will have new life with Him forever!

So take the time to daydream about the resurrection. Look out your window, and instead of wondering when the UPS truck will get to your house, wonder when

Jesus will come back in power and glory for all the world to see. Remember the hope you have heard and say to yourself, “Perhaps today!” Amen.

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“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

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