

Nunc Dimittis (Song of Simeon - Liturgy pg. 24)

Collect / Prayer (pg. 24)

Benediction

Closing Hymn **C.W. 616** / TLH 659 sung by the Congregation.

SERMON TEXT: Mark 13:24-28 (NIV)

Vs. 24 - But in those days, following that distress," 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;

Vs. 25 - the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

Vs. 26 - At that time men will see **The Son of Man** coming in clouds with great power and glory.

Vs. 27 - And He **will send his angels and gather His elect** from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

Vs. 28 - "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near.

GREETING: Jesus says: heaven & Earth will pass away, but My Words will never pass away. (Matt. 24:35)

How many more Spring Times will you get to experience in your life before you either die, or the Lord Jesus comes again?

This is a question to which we do not know the answer. But based upon these words of our Lord Jesus, we do know that just as Spring time comes and goes, each Spring we are closer to the Last Day, when the Lord Jesus will come again to take us and all believers to our heavenly home.

Today is the beginning of **Advent**, the beginning of the church year. The Advent season is the season in which we look at the different ways that Christ Comes.

1. Christ **comes** to us in the flesh as a humble child in the town of Bethlehem

2. Christ's **Spiritual coming** into our hearts through the work of the Holy Spirit in Word and Sacrament.

3. Christ's **coming** in glory and power on Judgment Day.

4. We pray that Christ would **come** to those who do not yet know Jesus as their Savior, that they too may enjoy the forgiveness of sins and eternal life in heaven together with us.

The sermon text for this 1st Sunday in Advent we have words of our Lord Jesus as He gives us information on His 2nd Coming – Judgment Day.

As we read these words of Jesus, He is preparing us, His holy people for what is to come. Jesus is preparing us so that we are not surprised by some of the things that we may see.

In verse 24 of our text for today, we see Jesus uses the word – *distress*. The Greek word - θλιψις - for this term can also be translated as – *trouble* – *anguish* – *tribulation*.

When we read, hear, and experience these things in our life, it sounds scary. If you are having distress, anguish or trouble or tribulation in your life now, it is a reminder that each day, is closer to the Last and Final coming of our Lord Jesus.

As the pressures mount in ones daily life, where do we turn? Psalm 50:15 directs us to: "**Call upon the Lord in the day of trouble, and He will deliver us.**"

Jesus also prepares us for the Last and Final day with the words: *'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'*

Then what happens? Jesus, The Son of Man, will come in the clouds with great power and glory. Jesus will send His angels to gather the Elect. Who are the Elect? The believers? Those of us whom Christ Jesus has known before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1:4-14).

From what places will the Lord Jesus gather His Elect? “Jesus will gather His Elect from the four winds”, from the North - South - East - and West.

All believers, regardless of gender or race, will be gathered together in heaven.

You may not have a fig tree in your back yard, but each year that you see the trees bud, and the leaves come forth, know for certain that Jesus is coming. And on those days of stress, Call upon Him, speak to Jesus in prayer, and search His Word as He has given you in the Holy Scriptures.

As Jesus said to the Apostle John in the book of Revelation over 2,000 years ago:
“Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with Me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the Tree of Life.” (Rev. 22:12-14)

Thank God that we have been washing in the Blood of the Lamb! (Rev. 7:14) AMEN

THEME: At That Time The Son Of Man Will Gather His Elect.

ADVENT MEANS COMING

The Advent season is the season in which we look at the different ways that Christ Comes.

1. Christ comes to us in the flesh as a humble child in the town of Bethlehem
2. Christ’s Spiritual coming into our hearts through the work of the Holy Spirit in Word and Sacrament.
3. Christ’s coming in glory and power on Judgment Day.
4. We pray that Christ would come to those who do not yet know Jesus as their Savior, that they too may enjoy the forgiveness of sins and eternal life in heaven.

The ADVENT WREATH.

Week # 1 – The Purple Prophecy Candle – HOPE; ANNUNCIATION; WATCH - Any Old Testament Prophecy of Christ’s First Coming as the Christ Child. – Genesis 3:15

Week # 2 – The Purple Bethlehem Candle – PEACE; NATIVITY; PREPARE – Luke 2:1-7

Week # 3 – The Pink Shepherd Candle – JOY; REJOICE – Some called this the Rejoice or Angel Candle.

Luke 2:8-20 – We hear of the Angels Rejoicing and singing praises as they announce to the Shepherds the birth of the Savior Jesus Christ.

This Shepherd Candle shows how the Shepherds were brought to faith by the hearing of the Word of God. God Creates faith in our hearts in Word and Sacrament. This also give believers a great reason to Rejoice.

Believers also rejoice because they know that Jesus will come again with glory to take all believers to heaven. Revelation 7:9-12

The pink is a dimming or lighter purple which is to represent more Joy!

Week # 4 – The Purple Angel Candle – LOVE; PRESENTATION, BEHOLD – Those who call the week three candle the Rejoice Candle will then call this the Shepherd Candle. Luke 2:8-20

Christmas Day – The White Christ Candle.

The Wreath is in a circle to remind us that God has no beginning and no end.