

Sermon #1906 — Miscellaneous Sermons

Title: **NO ONE KNOWS WHEN.**

Text: Mark 13:31-37

Subject: *The Second Coming — Judgment*

Date: Sunday Evening — May 22, 2011

Tape # AA-16

Readings: Allen Kibby and Bobby Estes
 Revelation 20:11-21:8

Introduction:

Illustration: Rupert Lewis (April 1939) Jackson to Vicksburg MS. Clear Creek Bayou Bridge — “I’ve got to warn people that the bridge is out.” (10 cars, 2 trucks, 8 injured, 14 dead)

It is my responsibility, once more, to speak to you, immortal souls, eternity bound sinners, in the name of Christ, as God’s ambassador to your souls, to tell you once more that soon you must meet the thrice holy God face to face in judgment. Soon, you are going to cross over that river that will carry you out of this changing, temporal world of time and sense into that world in which all things are unchanging and eternal. Soon, you and I are going to meet God in judgment.

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Like Amos the prophet, I urge you, “**Prepare to meet thy God!**” When Paul knew that the time of his departure was at hand, he said, “**I am now ready.**” Are you? Are you ready? Are you prepared to meet God?

The title of my message is — **NO ONE KNOWS WHEN.** My text will be Mark 13:31-37. Read it with me. This is the last part of our Master’s Olivet discourse.

Mark 13:31-37 “Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. (32) But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. (33) Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. (34) *For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. (35) Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: (36) Lest*

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coming suddenly he find you sleeping. (37) And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.”

Proposition: No one knows when Christ will come or when he is going to meet God in judgment.

Divisions: There are four things in these verses to which I direct your attention.

1. A Promise (v. 31)
2. A Problem (v. 32)
3. A Parable (v. 34)
4. A Post (vv. 33, 35-37)

1. **A PROMISE** (v. 31)

First, our Lord here makes a promise, actually two promises, we would be wise to lay to heart.

Mark 13:31 “Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.”

Here is the first promise. — “*Heaven and earth shall pass away.*” All creation, and all things connected with this present creation, all things

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involved in the curse, all things affected by and infected with sin, shall pass away. This present heaven and earth shall soon be dissolved, burnt up with the fire of God's holy wrath.

Mark 13:24-25 “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, (25) And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.”

2 Peter 3:10-14 “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (11) *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, (12) Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? (13) Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens

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and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (14) Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

2 Corinthians 4:18 “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.”

We live in a world in which everything is temporal and passing away. — We are all going to a world in which everything is permanent and eternal.

- The Bliss of Heaven
- The Horrors of Hell

Our state in the unseen world of eternity depends entirely upon our relationship to the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, in this world of time.

If you are washed in Christ’s blood and robed in His righteousness now, you will be clean and holy forever. If you trust Christ as your Savior now, He will be your Savior forever. If you are one with

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Christ now, you shall be one with Christ in eternity. If you love Christ and are loved of Christ now, you shall love Christ and be loved of Christ forever.

If you meet Christ in judgment as an unbeliever, you will be an unbeliever forever. If you are unclean when you leave this world, you will be unclean forever. If you are a rebel when you draw your last breath, you will be a rebel forever. If you are cursed of God, and hated by God, and damned by God when you go out to meet Him in judgment, you will be cursed of God, hated by God, and damned by God forever!

Your only hope for eternal life is the free, sovereign, saving grace of God in Christ, the sinners' Substitute.

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see

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That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Christ's flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme
And shall be 'til I die!

“Heaven and earth shall pass away.” Will you? Will you pass away into everlasting hell?

Here is our Lord's second promise. — *“But my words shall not pass away.”*

Isaiah 55:11 “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.”

Psalms 119:89 “For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.”

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Isaiah 40:8 “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.”

Isaiah 46:9-11 “Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else; I *am* God, and *there is* none like me, (10) Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: (11) Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed *it*, I will also do it.”

Our text (Mark 13:31) and all these passages referring to the immutable, absolute certainty of God’s Word are applicable to God’s Word in every place.

- His Words of Inspiration
- His Words of Decree
- His Words of Doctrine
- His Words of Grace
- His Words of Promise

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- His Words of Wrath.

He who is the omniscient, holy, perfect, omnipotent, unchangeable God never needs to alter His word, and never will! God's word is never yea and nay, but always yea and amen.

2. **A PROBLEM** (v. 32)

In verse 32 the Lord Jesus makes a declaration which presents a problem to many.

Mark 13:32 “But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.”

Here is the problem. If the Lord Jesus Christ is Himself God the Son, equal in all things and one with the Father and the Spirit, as the Scriptures universally assert that He is and the doctrine of the Trinity demands, if He is God all-wise, all-knowing, omniscient, before whom darkness is light, from whom nothing can be hid, — **How can He be ignorant of the day and hour of His second**

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advent? Now, you must admit, that is a pretty big problem to deal with. But the answer is both simple and obvious when we compare Scripture with Scripture. In fact the problem is no problem at all, but merely a demonstration of the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ is exactly Who and what He claims to be — both God and man — as truly and completely God as if He were not man, and as truly and completely man as if He were not God.

As a man, our Savior was no more omniscient than He was omnipotent or omnipresent. When He hungered, it was not God who hungered, but man. When he thirsted, it was not God who thirsted, but man.

In the four gospels, sometimes He speaks of Himself as a man (as here), and sometimes He speaks of Himself as God, in order to show us that He is fully both. As God He said to His disciples, “*Our friend, Lazarus, is sleepeth,*” though no one had informed him of Lazarus’ death. Yet, when He came to Bethany, He asked as a man, “*Where have ye laid him?*”

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The same thing is true in our text. Obviously, as the Son of God, He knew and always has known the precise second of His second advent. But as the Son of man, He was altogether ignorant of it. Now, let me make application of this text to us. As the old Puritans used to say, I will improve the text, improve it in the sense of putting it in shoe leather.

THREE THINGS

1. **He who is our Redeemer must be both God and man in one glorious person.**
2. Learn this fact and learn it well. — **NO ONE KNOWS WHEN THE LORD JESUS IS COMING AGAIN.**

The language of Scripture in this regard is crystal clear (Mark 13:32; Acts 1:4-11).

Mark 13:32 “But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.”

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Acts 1:4-11 “And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. (5) For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. (6) When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? (7) And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. (8) But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (9) And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. (10) And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; (11) Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into

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heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

No one knows, or even has a hint of an idea, when the Lord Jesus will come again to this world. Not only do the Scriptures tell us this emphatically, we have a glaring proof of the fact in our text. If the perfect, holy man Christ Jesus, that man Who knew the Book of God like no other man, did not know it, if He did not figure out the day or hour of His appearing, you are not about to do so!

3. **No one knows when Christ is coming to take him out of this world, to meet God in judgment.**

I find it utterly amazing that we so blatantly ignore this fact. David said, *“There is but a step between me and death.”* We all say we realize that; but very few people seem to me to live like they realize it. There is but a step between you and death. O my soul, hear and learn — *“There is but a step between me and death!”*

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Illustrations: The Boulder
The Airborne Boat
The Frozen Pond

- God has, from eternity, fixed the moment and the means by which He will take you out of this world.
- As soon as God takes you out of this world, you are going to stand before Him in judgment.

I know, there is a Day of Judgment at the end of time. Following the general resurrection, there will be a general judgment (John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:11-15). But you will meet God in judgment as soon as you draw your last breath (2 Corinthians 5:10-11; Hebrews 9:27). “**How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?**” (Jeremiah 12:5).

2 Corinthians 5:10-11 “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. (11) Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made

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manifest in your consciences.”

Hebrews 9:27 “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”

3. **A PARABLE** (v. 34)

Third, in verses 34-35, our Master puts forth a parable in which He explains our present position and responsibility as His servants in this world.

Mark 13:34-35 “*For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. (35) Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning.*”

There are several things in this parable which we ought to lay to heart.

- **The church of Christ is His house.** — He alone is the Master of His house.

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- **The Lord Jesus left His church, His house under the care, authority and rule of His servants.** — His servants are men counted worthy by Him to preach the gospel and to rule His house with the authority of his Word.

Acts 20:28 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

Hebrews 13:7 “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation.”

Hebrews 13:17 “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.”

1 Peter 5:1-3 “The elders which are among you

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I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: (2) Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; (3) Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.”

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 “And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; (13) And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves.”

- **The Lord Jesus has appointed to each of us a specific work to do.** “*He gave to every man his work.*”
- **The Master has not abandoned His house.** — He is coming back to it.
- **The Master's coming will be sudden, without warning.**

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4. THE POST

Look at the text one more time; and let me remind you of the post assigned to each of us in this world (vv. 33, 35-37).

Mark 13:33 “Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.”

Mark 13:35-37 “Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: (36) Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. (37) And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.”

Ever be watchful of your own soul. Ever stir yourself up to renewed consecration to Christ. When the Master comes, I pray that He will not find me sleeping at my post.

- Watch
- Pray
- Work

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One of the old, old writers said, “Be doing something, that the devil may always find you engaged.”

When **John Calvin’s** health was failing him and his friends urged him to rest more and do less work to preserve his health, he responded — “Would you want my Master to find me idle?”

Illustration: *The Preacher and The Business Man*

Amen.