

WATCH FOR HIS COMING

Saturday, August 26

Reading: Mark 13:24-37

Mark 13:32 *"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.
33 Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.*

The events leading up to the Second Coming of Christ will be accompanied by incredible changes to nature. These changes to the sun, moon, and stars will cause people to look up. What they will see is Jesus Christ coming in the clouds. Unlike His first coming, He will come in power and glory to deliver His people in the nick of time (see Zechariah 14:1-4, 6 & 12:9-10; Revelation 1:7).

This gathering in verse 27 is not the rapture of the Church. The Church has been in heaven and is returning WITH Christ at the Second Coming (Revelation 17:14; 19:11-14). Here the angels gather those who have accepted Christ during the Tribulation and have been scattered and in hiding because of the Antichrist's persecution. They will enter the Millennial Kingdom in their natural bodies and enjoy the presence of Christ as He reigns from Jerusalem.

Mark records two parables Jesus uses to close His discussion. First, He uses the fig tree to show the Jews they can have confidence in His return. Just as the appearance of the fig tree's leaves means that summer is near, so when the Jews see all these signs they will know that Jesus will come to deliver them soon. "This generation" refers to the Jewish people. Despite all the persecution, they will survive to see their Messiah.

The second parable is a reminder to watch because no one knows when Christ will return. While He has given general 'signs' of His coming, only the Father knows the exact day and hour. Believers are to be like the servants who were left in charge when their master went on a long journey. They were not to be idle while he was gone but be busy doing the work he had assigned to them. Since they didn't know when the master would return, they were to be constantly watchful and ready. So should we!

POINTS TO PONDER:

1. "My Words Will Never Pass Away." We can have confidence in the Word of God. It will never falter! It will never fail! The world has tried for centuries to "snuff out" the Jewish nation with no success. Jesus promised they would endure until He comes – and they endure. God's Word stands sure though the nations crumble. What promises of God do you hold on to during the tough times?
2. "But About That Day or Hour No One Knows." If Jesus is God, why didn't He know the time of His return? When He came to earth, Jesus gave up the independent use of His divine attributes and became submissive to the Father. Thus, while on earth, Jesus did not know the time of His return. The focus is not Jesus' lack of knowledge, but the truth that no one knows! It is a secret the Father will reveal at the right time.
3. "Watch." What does it mean to watch? It does not mean to sit around with our eyes glued on the skies. It means to live for Christ every moment so when He returns He does not find us lazy or living in sin, but faithfully doing what He has called us to do. Can you say that is true of your life?