Sunday, November 30, 2025 - Meditation

With the season of Advent comes the admonition to be ready. What for? For the coming of Christ. The decorations, the lighting of the Advent candle each week are meant to direct us to Christ's coming at Christmas. But today our Scriptures center not on the birth of Christ, his first coming, but on his second coming. We are instructed to be ready for Christ to coming again in glory to judge the living and the dead, as it says in our Collect and the Nicene Creed. The collect is so concise: “Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal."

In short, we're told to put away the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Or as the apostle Paul wrote,

"For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near: Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light."

So to be in a state of readiness for Christ's return is not passive but active. Elsewhere the Scriptures call us to wait or be watchful for the coming of Christ. We tend to think of waiting as passive activity: waiting in line at the grocery store, waiting in traffic, waiting for Christmas Day so we can open presents. That's idle waiting. There's nothing to make time go slower than passive waiting.

Think back to when you were a child. Or if you are a child, think about this. When does time go by the slowest? Isn't when you're just waiting for something to happen? Like waiting for the school day to be over. I can picture myself in 6th grade just watching the clock on the wall while the minutes seemed like hours. Or more recently when I get

behind a slow driver, hoping and waiting for them to turn - and it usually doesn't happen.

And we may wonder, when is Jesus coming back? We've been waiting a long time. The world continues as it has. Wouldn't we love to see the day when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Don't we long for peace among nations? Among our own families and friends? We long for that day. Elsewhere Paul says, “we groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as children, the redemption of our bodies.

But when think about Christ’s return, we are not to focus on the when but on the what: what do we do now as we wait? "But about that day and hour no one knows". That's really not our concern. Rather, we "must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."

To be ready is to live honorably as Paul says, or as Isaiah says, "Let us walk in the light of the Lord." Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ "who came to visit us in great humility." In that day, says Isaiah, "Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."

So, what are we waiting for?