



From Our Vicar

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Advent is Here, and Christmas is just Half the Story!

Luke 21:8-38

Advent is about the coming of Jesus.

It culminates in celebrating the birth of Jesus. It proclaims his promise that he will come again in glory and power. It invites us here and now to prepare and welcome his coming into our hearts and lives.

Luke teaches that when Jesus comes, he does so as both Judge and Saviour. Which he will be toward us is determined by our choices and preparations now. This is a universal reality in all walks of life. There are time-framed responsibilities for us all in daily life and work. If we attend to them with diligence, we and others reap the benefit and peace that results. If we neglect them people are disappointed, trust diminishes and our opportunities narrow.

Consequences are often gradual, both good and bad. There are signs to alert us to the danger we are in or to encourage us that fruitfulness is on the way. Jesus warned his followers to be alert to the signs of impending judgment and of his coming. Many of these signs are on the increase in our day – ‘wars and rumours of wars’, ‘the roaring and tossing of the seas’ -tsunamis; earthquakes, ‘famines and pestilences’ – pandemics; increased persecution of Christians.

Some try to calculate the day, while others scoff that such things have always been so. How are disciples of Jesus to respond?

We are to be confident and resist the fear that will beset many. Jesus said, ‘stand up and lift up your heads because your redemption is drawing near.’ Does this mean we are to care only about ourselves and leave the world and others to their fate?

Clearly no. We are called to self-control, resisting the declining morals and selfish values of the world. As Jesus’ parables make so clear, we are to continue to ‘do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God’; to care for the planet on which we all depend for life and to lift burdens from the oppressed and set captives free. We are to watch and pray. Faithfulness and love are to characterise us to the end. For God in his love is patient, wanting all to come to repentance and to receive the fullness of life he offers in Christ. May we increasingly be a shining beacon and advocate of this life in a world so desperately in need.

God bless you,
Wayne