

Jesus' Homecoming
Mark 13:32-37
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Eureka Baptist Church, 3/4/18

Introduction:

- When I was a child I had a friend named Franklin who lived in a really old home, I believe from the revolutionary era. It seemed like a mansion. And it had all kinds of nooks and crannies for hide and seek.
- I remember seeing the ultimate hiding spot on the roof. Franklin's mother explained to me that it was a widow's walk or sometimes called a widow's watch. The home was situated about a mile from the Potomac River. This walkway on the roof allowed for the wife to look out towards the river to see if a big ship was coming, possibly the vessel sailing the husband home. But unfortunately these wives often were watching in vain for many of the men were swallowed by the sea.
- I pray that we will have a widow's walk constructed in the heart of this church as well as in the heart of each of the members. I hope that each soul within the ears of this sacred desk is waiting on the rooftop, with anticipation for the return of Jesus Christ. I have been praying that you who are not enraptured by the thought of Jesus returning will be thoroughly convicted by the Spirit of God to question if you have repented and believed in Jesus. If you are not on the widow's walk, are you really counted as the bride of Christ?

Background:

- Our text closes out chapter 13 and the Olivet Discourse.
- It includes a parable where Jesus refers to himself as the master while the servants are those true disciples/followers of Jesus awaiting the return of the master.
- Verse 32: "concerning that day or that hour" – What day and what hour?
 - It is not referring to the same thing as the previous verses in the chapter about the destruction of the temple, for those verses refer to "days" (see verses 17, 19, beg. of 20, end of 20, 24).
 - Verse 31 speaks of heaven and earth passing away. Now concerning that day when heaven and earth pass away, Jesus speaks from verses 32-37.
 - "that day" is special phrase used in Old Testament to speak of a future day of God's judgment. See Amos 5:18-20.
- So as we read this text today, I believe we are reading about the return of Jesus in the future. And we will be challenged to be watchful.

Reading and Prayer – Mark 13:31-37

Proposition: 4 Truths

Jesus is the Master of the Home

- Verse 34 introduces us to “a man going on a journey” and verse 35 identifies this man as the master—“...for you do not know when the master of the house will come...”
- Jesus is the master. Now Star Wars fans, we must get the idea of Master Yoda out of our heads. When the Bible says master, Jesus is not merely a good teacher. He is the God-Man. Colossians 1:16 explains that Jesus is the Lord of all creation, and that it was Jesus who created the world for his own fame. It would be right to nuance the very first verse of the Bible and say, “In the beginning Jesus (God) created the heavens and the earth.”
- Jesus is the master of the home. What is the home? In a general sense, it’s the entire cosmos. But more particularly, the home is this earth. Jesus especially created planet earth to house people created in his image. He especially took on human flesh and died for the sins of the world on planet earth. And he will especially return to the third planet from the sun to set up his eternal kingdom.
- Similar to the imagery of master, Jesus refers to himself in other parables as the king. And where there is a king, there is a kingdom. Eureka Baptist Church, this master/king has authorized us in particular to be an embassy of his kingdom. Just like there is a universal organization called the Future Farmers of America, but then you can find a local chapter of the FFA at Randolph Henry, Eureka, we are a local chapter of the church, which is the outpost of the kingdom of God. Jesus is master of the cosmos. He is master of the earth. He is the master of the kingdom. And he is master of this church.
- Application:
 - This is a Baptist church. Baptists believe in congregationalism, the idea that in the governance of the church, each member, is given the authority on decisions for the direction of this local church. The strongest support for this belief comes from the texts on church discipline where it is the entire assembly that is involved in the excommunication process (such as 1 Corinthians 5). But friends, we must remember that this is a delegated authority from the master. Jesus is the final authority of Eureka Baptist Church. This isn’t Pastor Matt’s church. This isn’t the Benn’s church. This isn’t the Locke’s church. This isn’t the Ramsey’s, Napier’s, Russell’s, or Wilmouth’s church. This is Christ’s church! This church may use democratic means to vote on matters, but it is not a democracy. It is a monarchy. Jesus is King of Eureka Baptist Church. You did not elect Pastor Matt or any other pastor before me to be your pastor. No, as Baptists we believe that as we vote, we are aligning ourselves with God’s will and simply recognizing whom God has already chosen to be pastor.
 - Dear friends, as a congregational church, the worst thing that can occur is having unspiritual people voting on spiritual matters. So I ask everyone here, even the members of this church: is Jesus the master of your heart? Jesus has said in John 15:8, “By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.” Are you bearing fruit? Does your life reveal that you believe Jesus to be the master? When you sin, are you repentant? Church, do you realize that unrepentance of sin is the mark of unbelief in the Gospel? Many of us were fired up over the attack on the consulate in Benghazi. But if you are a member of this church and your life does not display that Jesus is the master, then the embassy is already compromised. Have some of you been playing the prodigal? It’s time for you to come home.

Jesus is Coming Home

- In verse 35 it states “Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come...” Jesus is coming home!
- Yes, I know Jesus says in John 14:2, “In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?” So we often talk about going home to heaven. But we talk about this to the neglect of understanding what God is going to do with the earth. Jesus is coming home, that is, he is coming back to earth!
- The overarching story of the Bible and of the Gospel is not just how you can individually be redeemed, but how the world is going to be redeemed. By the end of the Bible, something extraordinary happens. Not only are souls redeemed from sin, but the world is redeemed from sin. The old earth passes away and a new earth is created where Jesus will rule from a New Jerusalem. This celestial city in Revelation is depicted as a return to the Garden of Eden. Heaven and earth are back together again in perfect harmony.
- Do you know the song lyrics, “This world is not my home, I’m just passing through”? Well, those lyrics are half right but half wrong. This world as we know it is not our final abode. But this world redeemed is our home. Heaven is coming back to earth. The kingdom of God will be established on this earth forever. The Garden of Eden will be restored. We are sojourners in this present age, but in the age to come heaven is coming to a renovated earth!
- The Gnostics were an early heretical group in church history, influenced by the teachings of Plato. They taught that salvation is being freed of the physical, that your soul is trapped in flesh and trapped on this material earth, and Jesus came to free your soul into the spiritual realm of heaven. This was rejected by early Christians, because it is not taught in the Bible. The Bible teaches that God has always intended for man, composed of body and soul, to live on the physical earth forever with God. This is the promise of the resurrection. Just as the body of Jesus was resurrected, so also will his followers be resurrected physically from the dead to enjoy the new earth forever.
- Friends, we may have different views on how the world is going to end. In evangelical circles, there are about four different views of how to interpret the events of the end times such as in the book of Revelation. But here is where all views agree. Jesus is coming back and he will reign forever on the new earth. This is Christ’s homecoming. As Isaac Watts wrote in “Joy to the Word”, this world’s curses will be reversed, “Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found, far as, far as, the curse is found.” For Revelation 21:3 exclaims, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.”
- Application:
 - St. Augustine wrote a book called “The City of God”, in the early 400s AD. In it he quotes the angel in Luke 1 who says of Jesus, “And of his kingdom there shall be no end.” Then Augustine wrote, “They who have promised this to earthly kingdoms have not been guided by truth, but have lied through flattery.” Augustine witnessed the demise of the Roman Empire. And friends, it would be only flattery for us to pretend that the United States of America is a kingdom that will never end. We should respect our country (and I would argue the flag as well), give honor to where honor is due. But friends, the United States of

America is not the kingdom of God. Jesus is coming back! Jesus is coming home! There will be a day when the USA will be no more, and every other earthly nation. All national sovereignty will be eradicated before the Sovereign God! We have much more in common with our Christian brethren over in Guatemala and Ghana than we do unbelievers in our own land: kingdom citizenship. It was spectacular to witness Billy Graham's funeral this past week and hear many foreigners delivering eulogies. The nations will give way to this kingdom that is coming!

- Jesus is coming back. This truth should stabilize you. We are not to be frantic in these last days when the culture erodes around us (By the way. Christianity is exploding in other parts of the world). The pipe may have burst, but don't worry, the master is coming home to fix it. Concerned...yes; but not frantic! "Whatever my lot, thou has taught me to say, it is well, it is well, with my soul."

Jesus is Coming Home at Any Moment

- In a theology book, we would call this the imminence of the return of Jesus. Look at the verses that speak of his imminent, unknown return:
 - The end of verse 32: "...no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." Notice Jesus doesn't just call himself the somewhat enigmatic "Son of Man" but the "Son."
 - The father holds the divine secret of when Jesus will return and heaven and earth will pass away.
 - Acts 1:6-7 states, "So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.'"
 - Yes, Jesus is God. But when he became a man, he laid aside aspects of his divinity, and depended upon the Father to reveal truth to Him.
 - John 15:15 states, "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you."
 - Verse 33: "For you do not know when the time will come."
 - Verse 35: "...for you do not know when the master of the house will come..."
 - Different watches of the night in verse 35: "...in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning."
 - These watches will be highlighted in the events of the crucifixion.
 - The Last Supper will be in the evening.
 - The Garden of Gethsemane, arrest, and trial will be in the middle of the night.
 - The rooster will crow during Peter's denial of Jesus.
 - The trial before Pilate and sentencing to the cross will happen in the early morning.
 - Jesus tells us to stay awake and alert for his coming, and in the next chapter we are given the example of the disciples not staying awake in the Garden when Jesus was arrested.
 - Verse 36: "...lest he come suddenly..."

- Application:
 - If Jesus did not even know when he would return, you don't either! Harold Camping was a false teacher on Family Radio that broadcasts to about 150 radio stations around the country. He prophesied that Jesus was going to come back on May 21, 2011. Billboards advertised Judgment Day was upon us. Camping's followers went around the country warning of the return of Jesus. I once ran into one of his followers street preaching in St. Augustine, Florida on vacation. My father had listened to Camping for years and watched his steady fall into false teaching, and when he had cancer, his goal was to stay alive until May 21, 2011 just to listen to Camping on the radio that night have to give an explanation on why he was wrong! My father passed away on April 24th. So four weeks later Leslie and I tuned in to Harold Camping to hear his foolish explanations and shock that Jesus did not come back. We don't know when Jesus is coming back. If someone claims they do, they are a liar. I can guarantee you that he will not come back on the day a false teacher predicts it; God would not validate such foolishness!
 - Too many Christians spend too much time speculating on when Jesus will come back or if there are signs of the return of Christ in our present day.
 - First, remember that many of the traditional "signs" that people point to such as rumors of war, come from our text in Mark 13, which may not even be about the end of the world, but signs of the coming of God's judgment on Jerusalem and the temple in the first century!
 - Second, remember that it does not help our unbelieving neighbors for us to spend time speculating about the return of Christ when they are not ready for the return of Christ. How do we stay alert? How do we stay ready for the return of Christ? Not twiddling our thumbs but doing what Jesus commanded for us to do until he returns: Make Disciples!

Jesus Requires Us to Be Ready for His Homecoming

- There are lots of words that imply the readiness of the servants in the text.
 - Verse 33 states "Be on guard, keep awake..."
 - Verse 35 states that the master "commands the doorkeeper to stay awake." Like Motel 6, we need to keep the light on for the master.
 - Verse 35 again states, "Therefore stay awake..."
 - In verse 36 he states that the servant must stay awake for the master may come "suddenly." Therefore the servant must wait with anticipation. About a year ago or so Gracelynn and I were waiting with anticipation and alertness for Leslie to come home from work. We hid in the SUV in the carport with nerf guns. They were cocked. They were pointed out our respective windows. And the moment she came to the door in the carport, we unloaded on her. We need to be ready at the door for the master.
 - Finally in verse 37 as if we didn't hear it already, Jesus says again to conclude the chapter, "stay awake." Are we awake?
- Spurgeon compared our eagerness for the coming of Jesus to the eagerness of a dog for the return of his master: "I feel rebuked, myself, sometimes, for not watching for my Master when I know that, at this very time, my dogs are sitting against the door, waiting

for me—and long before I reach home, there they will be, and at the first sound of the carriage wheels, they will lift up their voices with delight because their master is coming home! Oh, if we loved our Lord as dogs love their masters, how we should catch the first sound of His Coming, and be waiting, always waiting, and never happy until at last we should see Him! Pardon me for using a dog as a picture of what you ought to be, but when you have attained to a state above that, I will find another illustration to explain my meaning!”

- Application:
 - Are we alert? Or are we texting as we drive through this life? There is a Geico commercial out right now that has a sloth playing Pictionary. He is drawing on the board so slowly that the team can never guess before the time is up. Eureka Baptist Church, in God’s wisdom, the time will be up someday, “when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed...(2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).” There are many things we should be slow in. We should be slow to anger and slow to speak but we should not be slow to anticipate the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - When my mother would give me a chore list during the summer days she was at work, I would wait until five o’clock and rush through the chores in the last hour before she came home. But I knew when she was coming home. Christians, we do not know when Jesus is coming home. You can’t put off the chores. Why are you waiting to join a local church? Why are you waiting to share Jesus with your neighbor? Why are you waiting to read your Bible on a regular basis? Why are you waiting, unbelieving friend, to follow Jesus?

Conclusion:

- We see in the last verse of the chapter that the warning to be expectant for the return of Jesus is not just for the disciples. It says, “What I say to you I say to all: stay awake!”
- So does your heart have a widow’s watch? Are you eager for the return of Christ? Are you faithfully keeping the home kept until he returns?
- Friends I want to remind us that the bride of Christ will never be a widow. We will never look out from the roof and have to fear our Christ drowned in the sea. He was already buried in death but he has been raised back to life! Yes, we are waiting. But Christ is coming home. Only the Father knows the arrival date. But he will return.
- While our earthly marriages terminate at death, we have a greater marriage that will last for all of eternity. We have entered this marriage covenant by repentance and faith, and death will never do us part. Heaven and earth will pass away as we know it. But a new earth is coming!