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| **Baptized Believers, Beware!**  *Promise: God’s warnings help us to receive His generous gifts* Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg Jeremiah 33:14-16; Ps 25:1-10; 1Thess 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36 (Frist Sunday in Advent), 12/1/24)  *“But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap.”* – v 34  **Lead In –** Some years ago I took a Youth Group to camp and canoe on the Bois Brule River in Northern Wisconsin. This adventuresome excursion involved white water canoeing and kayaking, shooting one and two grade rapids. Now there are certain dangers and precautions involved in negotiating whitewater. As typical among High School Youth, there was limited interest in the instruction and warnings at the beginning of our trip on the river. But I had learned from experience a good way to handle the inattention…   1. **Negotiating Life Can Be Like Canoeing a River**    1. A river has a beginning and an end…    2. Challenges and calamities along the way…    3. End of life or age is a double-edged sword… 2. **Signs, Deciduous Trees, Changing of Seasons**    1. Jesus speaks of a crescendo of signs…    2. A salutary reminder: What is enduring…    3. The maturation of fall and the dead of winter… 3. **Confidence In Standing Before the Son of Man**    1. The Power of the Gospel, righteousness by faith!    2. No masking that the way is fraught with danger!    3. The warning is part of God’s work of completion…   **Final Word –** So, what the main danger and warning of our Lord Jesus concerning His return at the end of the age? Jesus uses three words: Dissipation. Drunkenness. And Cares of This Life. Perhaps that could be summed up as Distractions. Distractions that lead to spiritual complacency. In the Parable of the Sower this is the seed planted in thorny soil. Devoid of prayer, meditation on God’s Word, and gathering with other believers for Word and Sacrament. This is called the end coming upon you as a trap. Conversely, by heeding the warning with alertness (read prayer), we can straighten up, raise our heads, and know our redemption is drawing near. That’s what Jesus is working in us. Let Him work. Don’t resist!  **Mt 25:31-34** “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’.”  **Mt 25:41** “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”  **Mk 13:7-8** “And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the beginning of the birth pains.” | **Luke 21:25-36 ESV**  *Watch Yourselves*  25“And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, 26people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”  29And he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. 30As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. 31So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. 32Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place. 33Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.  34“But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap. 35For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”  **He 12:28-29** Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.  **Ps 90:10** The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.  **Ps 90:12** So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.  **Ro 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.  **2Co 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.  **Ph 1:6** And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.  **Mt 7:14** For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life.  **Lk 8:14** “And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature.” |