

## “TAKE 10”- Worship While Away! (Sunday, December 3, 2017)

Share: We begin the season of Advent with expectant and believing hearts.  
During Advent, we confront the darkness that so often exists around us.  
During Advent, we confront the doubt that so often resides within us.  
During Advent, we confront the division that so often occurs between us.  
During Advent, we wait upon the Lord and place our hope in God’s word.

Read these words from a hymn today: *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*  
*Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;*  
*from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.*  
*Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;*  
*dear desire of every nations, joy of every longing heart.*  
*Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,*  
*born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.*  
*By thine own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts alone;*  
*by thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.*

Read this scripture from worship: Mark 13:24-37 (*The Message*)

<sup>24-25</sup> “Following those hard times,  
Sun will fade out,  
    moon cloud over,  
Stars fall out of the sky,  
    cosmic powers tremble.

<sup>26-27</sup> “And then they’ll see the Son of Man enter in grand style, his Arrival filling the sky—no one will miss it! He’ll dispatch the angels; they will pull in the chosen from the four winds, from pole to pole.

<sup>28-31</sup> “Take a lesson from the fig tree. From the moment you notice its buds form, the merest hint of green, you know summer’s just around the corner. And so it is with you. When you see all these things, you know he is at the door. Don’t take this lightly. I’m not just saying this for some future generation, but for this one, too—these things will happen. Sky and earth will wear out; my words won’t wear out.

<sup>32-37</sup> “But the exact day and hour? No one knows that, not even heaven’s angels, not even the Son. Only the Father. So keep a sharp lookout, for you don’t know the timetable. It’s like a man who takes a trip, leaving home and putting his servants in charge, each assigned a task, and commanding the gatekeeper to stand watch. So, stay at your post, watching. You have no idea when the homeowner is returning, whether evening, midnight, cockcrow, or morning. You don’t want him showing up unannounced, with you asleep on the job. I say it to you, and I’m saying it to all: Stay at your post. Keep watch.”

Talk together, responding to these questions:

- What expectations do I have of others? What expectations do others have of me?
- What expectations do I have of God? What expectations does God have of me?
- What are our expectations in this season of Advent?
- How will I “keep alert” for God amid so many seasonal responsibilities and distractions?

Pray together:

Thank you, God, for the gift of life today. I give thanks that your face shines upon me – for you are my salvation. Lead me like a shepherd through this day. Strengthen me for whatever lies ahead. Grant me the gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love, for I want to share these gifts with others, in word and deed. In Christ’s name. Amen.

Bless one another:

Take each person's hand and say. "God's grace is for you, God's love is upon you, God's call is within you. Be kind to yourself and others this week as a child of God."

Resources Used: *Glory to God*, The Presbyterian Hymnal  
*Feasting on the Word*, Year A, A Worship Companion