

Stay Awake

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Date: 17 September 2023

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[0 : 0 0] All right. Thank you, Lisa. Good morning, everybody. Those who are listening online, I want to say hello to you. If you're new with us today, so glad that you are with us. Just so you guys know, if you're wondering where Elliot and Freddie are, they're the two other pastors or elders at this church. They go on this, like every two years, they go on this special trip, and they've been doing this for decades now, I want to say. But they go to New York City, and they just have some fun. So they're doing that, you know, having a little boys time out.

And Phillip's with them as well. And they left me to tend to the flock all by myself, you know, so that is what I am doing now. I'm super stoked that they get away and they get to do that.

And if you are, if you got a Bible, go ahead and turn to Mark chapter 13. If you don't, don't worry. The verses are up on the screens. Fair warning, we are going to read this whole chapter. All right.

Doing a whole chapter here. We don't often do that. We don't often teach that way using such big chunks of scripture. But I think it's necessary, and we deemed it necessary, just because this is all one cohesive thought of Jesus. And so before we read it, I want to mention that this passage is considered like a genre of literature called apocalypse, or it's apocalyptic. Which just means that Jesus is speaking about mysteries that are yet to take place. He's speaking about things that have yet to happen, and in ways that aren't so obvious. So when you approach a big chunk of scripture like this, a passage like this, you can do it in different ways. You can use it to teach about end times and end time theology. And that can go in many different directions. And a lot of clever people have a lot of different viewpoints on what that means and how to interpret these things. And so clever academics have even differing viewpoints in Mark 18. And you know what? They're all going to heaven, and they all love Jesus. Just because they differ on it doesn't mean that one is absolutely right and one is absolutely wrong. These things are mysteries, in a sense. And so we hold these things. They're not like, when you think about doctrines that the church holds, there are blood doctrines, like Jesus, is the son of God who died for our sins. That is something that is never going to change.

We are going to die on that hill. Like that is central. And then there's like pen doctrines, ink doctrines that are very strong, but we can maybe disagree on, but are important enough that, you know, like some people, they believe that it's okay to baptize infants. And you know what?

[2 : 3 8] They're going to heaven. We see it differently. And those are different ways that Christians can charitably disagree on things. And then there's like pencil doctrines, which is kind of like end time stuff, where it's just like, my goodness, it is really, really tough to like say, you know what?

I see it the right way. Everybody else has it wrong. And so this is the way it's got to be. And so this is one of those humble things. We come and we say, as best as we can tell. And you that are like significant students of scripture and really dig into this stuff and geek out on this stuff, I just want to implore you, let me open these things, hold these things open-handed. Now, regarding Mark 13, we can look at this. And again, very clever people have said, you know, is Jesus, he might only be talking about the times leading up to the destruction of the temple that would happen in AD 70. Or it's only about a future time still unfulfilled as we stand today, where we're waiting for Jesus's return. Or it's a mixture of both. And people see it, different, very clever people see it one of those three ways. So while considering those things are, in itself, they're a profitable pursuit.

I'm not saying we shouldn't think about this thing seriously. Jesus intended, what he intended to do with this discourse is to give encouragement, exhortation, and hope to his disciples then and to us now. And so let's read it that way. Jesus giving exhortation, encouragement, and hope. So Mark 13, verse one, it says this, and he, as he, Jesus, came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, look, teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings. And Jesus said to him, do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.

And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished? And Jesus began to say to them, see that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name saying, I am he, and they will lead many astray. 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. But be on your guard, for they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them. And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations.

And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say. But say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.

[5 : 42] And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child. And children will rise against parents and have them put to death, and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be, let the reader understand. Very cryptic. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

Let the one who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house to take anything out. And let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. And alas, for women who are pregnant, and for those who are nursing infants in those days, pray that it may not happen in winter.

For in those days there will be such tribulation, as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be. And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days.

Then if anyone says to you, look, here is the Christ, or look, there he is, do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But be on guard. I have told you all things beforehand.

Almost there. Almost there. But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

[7 : 24] And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. From the fig tree, learn its lesson. As soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that the summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near at the very gates. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows. Not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard. Keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come.

It is like a man going on a journey when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore, stay awake. For you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening or at midnight or when the rooster crows or in the morning, lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you, I say to all, stay awake. This is God's word. Amen. So the first four verses of this chapter are the basis for Jesus launching into this very long discourse. And what we have, we open up this chapter with a disciple enjoying the beauty, majesty, and strength of the Jerusalem temple. He's outside of it, and particularly he's looking at the stones of the temple. And for good reason, they were actually, these stones were remarkable for their day. They were 15 feet thick. The largest one weighed 400 tons.

I mean, these are like big, big stones. It's quite possible this guy is looking. He's got two things rolling around in his head as he's beholding this. And the temple, the two things would probably be the temple, this temple, oh my goodness, look how magnificent this is. How impressive. And you know what? It is built so well, it is here to stay. He is geeking out, like looking at this temple. That is, that is what's going on here. So naturally, Jesus says, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down. Right? I wish the, it's moments like this. I wish the Bible came with pictures. Because I would love to have seen that guy's expression when he's just like, oh, this is then Jesus is like, you know what? Now Jesus isn't being cold and heartless. He is prying this guy's heart away from things that won't last. And regardless of what you might believe about the end times, we should all agree on this. Everything that we might think is necessary and indestructible will be thrown down. That is what Jesus is saying here. And that truth, that, that truth, that's pretty humbling. And that is also pretty scary. But that is what Jesus begins with. And it's not because he's cynical or loves being Debbie Downer. It's actually a kindness of Jesus that he gives his disciples a heads up on what is going to happen. Because that was going to happen, and it did happen.

Rome sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the temple, raised it to the ground in AD 70. That's what happened. And some of Jesus' disciples that walked with him lived long enough to see that. Now let's say you and me, we're looking at the Hoover Dam, this big concrete behemoth. I don't know if you've been there, but it is, it is a monstrosity of construction. At its base, it is 660 feet thick of concrete. Think about this. That is 105 feet higher than the Washington Monument. That's how thick it is at the base.

[11 : 23] Now if someone was to come and say that every single piece of that structure would be nothing more than rubble, at any given point in the future, your first thing would be, what in the world is capable of doing that? Right? And secondly, I better not be around when that happens.

Now that's probably where the disciples are at, right? Yeah, Peter and James and John and Andrew, and they're asking Jesus that question in verse 4. When is this going to happen? You just said something absolutely crazy, absolutely terrifying. When is this going to happen? And what's going to be the sign? That's going to give us a heads up that we need to get out of Dodge. And I can't blame them. Those are legitimate questions. I think we're all there. We're tracking with them. But it also shows that they know their nation's history and the scriptures and how God has worked.

See, in the Old Testament, God would often foretell coming judgment or salvation, and he would confirm it beforehand with a sign or signs. Think of it this way. It's like Babe Ruth calling his shot, but instead of dinking a 400-foot homer, God's overturning world powers. That's what God does.

So here's a couple of examples. King Hezekiah, he repents to God, and God then, out of his repentance, he responds to Hezekiah's repentance, and he promises to extend King Hezekiah's life another 15 years. And he says, I will now deliver Israel out of the hand of the king of Assyria.

And Hezekiah says to Isaiah, who gives him this word, he says, well, how am I going to know? How will I know that's going to happen? He says, I'm going to do this. I am going to take the shadow that's on the sundial, and instead of going forward 10 steps, it's going to go back 10 steps. And now, if you know how a sundial works, that's impossible, unless God does something really amazing. And that's what happened. And then you can go all the way back to the Exodus, where God promised to deliver Israel out of Egypt. And they all doubted, and God said, just watch me perform signs. And you know what God did? Those signs, they were cataclysmic to the power of Egypt, which is the world power of its day. God did multiple signs that basically took the power of Egypt down to nothing. So now you understand why they're asking for a sign. This is normal. Now, the rest of the chapter is Jesus answering their question without really answering their question, like typical Jesus fashion. You know, He kind of says it, but He doesn't say it clearly. Instead of giving signs and dates, He gives three warnings, right? Don't be led astray, we see in verse five. Be on guard, He says multiple times, in verse nine, and 23, and 33. And then He says, stay awake. That's the final warning that He gives.

[14:09] In verse 33, 35, and 37, He repeats that. And the reason He gives these three different warnings is because they are antidotes for three very different temptations that we will face as disciples of Jesus. So let's look at the first warning in verse five. Jesus began to say to them, see that no one leads you astray. And He goes on, to say why, in verse six to eight. Now, kind of what He's getting at is He's saying there will be people who are gonna come, and they're gonna claim to have cracked God's code, right? And be able to predict when the end will be. And the basic argument Jesus makes is this, guys, listen to the Holy Spirit rather than chase after signs. Don't live by signs. Live by the Spirit.

Don't be led by signs. Be led by the Spirit. That is the whole of the Christian life. Take this. Take this for example. This really happened. Years ago, a friend of mine told me a story about this guy that he worked with. He suddenly started coming into work, and instead of doing his work at his cubicle, he's a programmer, he would just sit there at his desk. And for days, he did nothing but read his Bible.

And so my friend, whose name is Jim, he finally, his curiosity got the best of him, and he leaned over, and he said, hey, buddy, what's going on? Why do you keep doing this? And this guy proceeded to tell him that, like, hey, you know what? Jesus is returning next week, so what's the point?

And he got that from his pastor. And his pastor got that from some book he read. Well, that day he came and went. Jesus did not return, but ironically, that man's cubicle was empty.

See, that man was led astray. Jesus wasn't telling us to look for wars, rumors of wars, famines, earthquakes, world powers being overthrown as signs that the end is near. He actually says the exact opposite. In verse 7, he says, do not be alarmed when you see those things. The end is not yet. And in verse 8, he says, these are but the beginning of the birth pains. Like, the beginning.

[16:12] He uses an analogy that we get. When a lady is pregnant, she doesn't run to the hospital every time she gets a stitch in her side. And we've all heard the stories of ladies going and thinking, it is happening. I am dilated. This baby's coming. And they get to the hospital and they say, you just had bad gas. Sorry.

In God's timeline of events, an earthquake isn't the sign that the baby is about to pop out. Rome got overthrown. It got thrown down. Nobody thought that could happen, but it did.

The Berlin Wall came down decades ago at the end of the 80s. Both of those were pretty significant world events of their time. And they were also separated by more than a thousand years. Guess what?

No baby. Just the beginning of birth pains. And that is what Jesus is saying. There are going to be cataclysmic tremors, cataclysmic events in every generation. But anyone that sees those and tries to twist them into signs to predict the end is coming is just giving everybody gas. That's what's happening. And that's what happened to the guy in this cubicle. He mistook gas for the real thing.

Now, as much as Jesus warns us not to chase after signs, he also tells us to be on our guard. He does that. And that is the very next warning he gives us in verse nine. And for good reason.

[17 : 37] Because what follows, Jesus gives about this particular warning is Jesus predicts that we will suffer in many different ways. I mean, he says some like brutal stuff there. He's like, man, Jesus, thanks for that. That's quite the pep talk. Appreciate it. But all joking aside, he really is giving a pep talk. Think about it this way. It is one thing to run a race where you can see the track and see it clearly and see the finish line ahead of you. It is another to go on a quest where you're not exactly sure how long it is going to take, where it's going to lead you, and you know it is going to be rife with difficulties and hardship. In a regular race, you need endurance. But in a quest, you need courageous endurance. Jesus calls us to courageously endure, not knowing when the end will come. Now, there is a different way to plan and prepare yourself for a quest, isn't there? And you're not putting on a spandex unitard and some thin-soled Nike shoes, right? You're planning for heat, for cold, for rain, for snow. You're thinking about shelter and food. And think about this. In a race, you run against people. In a quest, you take it up with people. It's like in *The Hobbit*, when Bilbo joins Gandalf's band of dwarves, dwarf adventurers that are going to the Lonely Mountain, right? And that Lonely Mountain is far, far away. And it's far, far away from the safety and comforts of Bilbo's little hobbit hole. Now, he goes on this journey, and he takes up that journey because there is promise of reward and glory. And every good quest has that promise waiting at the end, doesn't it? And the gospel actually promises no less. Philippians 3, verse 8, Paul says, indeed, I count everything as loss. Everything that he had come to know and be comfortable with and put his security and safety in, I count all those things as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake, I have suffered the loss of all things and I count them as rubbish. Paul left his hobbit hole. Why? So that I may gain Christ, that by any means possible,

I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained it or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own, but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Jesus Christ.

That's the prize. That's our lonely mountain. This prize, this goal, this aim is what gives Jesus' disciples' courageous endurance. And when we take up this quest for Jesus, when we answer that call to follow him, it requires us to leave behind all that we once considered safe and comfortable.

And following Jesus is an adventure. It is a faith adventure. There is no doubt about that, but it's not just fun and thrills. We soon learn that on the road of discipleship, there are no safe paths.

Jesus says in verse 9 to 13 that we will be beaten, put on trial, betrayed by kindred and friends, put to death, or just hated. All of those things. Who wants to sign up?

[21 : 25] We will face times where all we want to do is turn back and give up, but we mustn't. Just fair warning, another Hobbit reference is coming up right now. So there's this powerful moment in the Hobbit where the company of travelers comes to the edge of an ancient forest called Mirkwood.

And from that point on, they have to lose their ponies that have been carrying their burdens, and they have to travel on foot. Things are going to get a lot harder at this point. And on top of that, the forest has this reputation for being dangerous. People would go in and would never come out. And at the edge of this forest, Bilbo groans, do we have to go through it? Do we really have to go that way? And Gandalf replies, yes, you do. If you want to get to the other side, you must go through or give up your quest. See, we're like Bilbo. We, you and I, that's us.

In that story, we are tempted in persecution and trial. We are tempted as we look ahead and things look difficult and hard to just give up or to attempt an easier way, right? And Jesus knows that about us. All of us here in this room, let's just fess up and say, yeah, Lord, that's me.

That's me. I'm always looking for the easy way out, but there is no other path. That's what Jesus is saying. There's no other path but the way forward with Jesus. And sometimes that looks like going through places like Mirkwood in our lives. You know, today it is seen as courageous to deconstruct your faith. And I want to say this, is that really courageous? Or is it just simply choosing an easier path? It's easy to dismiss a doctrine that might cost you friends or social cachet or professional opportunity. But here's the thing. You and I will be tempted throughout our life to want to deconstruct and to turn back or to turn aside to a false gospel because it promises an easier road, an easier path to following Jesus. But Jesus is saying here to do that is to give up the quest altogether.

His call is to endure to the end, he says. Hold fast to the faith no matter what. And that is more than quiet endurance. We don't keep silent about the gospel. He actually says in verse 10, the gospel must first be proclaimed to all the nations. The call to courageously endure for you and me isn't hanging on in quiet desperation. It isn't starting a commune way out far away from everyone where we could be as safe as possible. It is a call for you and I to boldly go and proclaim the gospel despite the promise of suffering that will accompany it. As disciples of Jesus, that is our quest. There are no safe paths.

[24 : 24] As R.T. France commented on this portion of scripture, he says, the cross is often the gift Christ gives to his friends. So be on guard. Be on guard against any teaching or any gospel that promises anything different. But there's something else we need to be on guard for here. And it is the final warning that Jesus gives to us. He says in verse 33, be on guard, keep awake, keep awake, keep awake for you do not know when the time will come.

So while suffering can cause us to lose heart, patiently waiting has its own danger because it can cause us just to lose interest. And that's why Jesus warns, keep awake. Don't get lulled into spiritual sloth. Now you can take a passage like this and get people to do whatever you want them to do. You can manipulate them, get them to overwork, burn themselves out in service to Jesus.

And that's not the right response to this. Jesus said about himself, my yoke is easy, my burden is light. He himself pulled away from ministry to rest. So how then should we understand how to live out this call, stay awake? Well, there's a pastor and theologian, his name's Kevin Van Hooser, and I think he nails it. He says this, if the besetting sin of modernity is pride, which by that he means an inordinate confidence and know-it-all reason, then that of post-modernity, which is post-modernity is kind of what we're living in today, then that of post-modernity, our besetting sin is sloth, a despairing indifference to truth.

Someone who believes in nothing and lives for nothing might as well be asleep. Woo! Sloth is the ultimate sin of omission. Sloth sits still, unmoved by anything real.

Sleeping through a movie may not be deadly, but sitting on your hands while the cinema is burning around you certainly is. We must guard against sloth. The temptation to be lulled to sleep when there is something urgent to be done. If conversion is the moment of awakening to the reality of God, discipleship is the effort we make to stay awake. The real labor is to remember to attend to the presence of God. I love that. Question for us today, every single person in this room, are you awake?

[27 : 01] Are you asleep? Are you drowsy? Are you making an effort to attend to the presence of God in your life?

Meaning, are you fighting to stay attuned to what God is doing in you and around you? Not just two hours on a Sunday. Discipleship is life. It's how you live your life. It's how you wake up in the morning.

It's how you go into your workplace. It's how you go into the grocery store and do shopping. It's students. How you go into your schools. It's how we do everything. It's the way we move and live and have our being. The difference that constant spiritual awakeness makes in our lives is as cataclysmic as the world-shaking events Jesus prophesied about in this chapter. It changes the way we see the world, receive the world, respond to the world, and live in the world.

Now, how does spiritual awakeness do that? Well, because you become attuned to a greater reality beyond this one, the kingdom of God. And that kingdom is focused on what he is up to, about his plan of redemption that is going around you all the time and is happening in you and in your own life and in your own heart and in your own soul as well. For example, the sleeper, he sees an earthquake, hears about a famine or a war. They despair and they wonder, where is God? But the disciple who is awake can lament those things while also perceiving, ah, the beginning of the birth pains.

One day there will be no more earthquakes. One day there will be no more famines. One day there will be no more wars. See the difference. When you suffer or feel, it feels like your life is a desolate wilderness. The sleeper, they grumble and they say, woe is me. Nobody knows the troubles I've seen. Nobody knows my sorrow. God is far away. He must not be real. But the awake disciple says, ah, the wilderness. This is the place of God's salvation. This is where he meets with his people. In the wilderness, he produced water from the rock to quench his people's thirst. He poured out manna from heaven to nourish them with his daily bread. Then one day there will be no more pain or suffering or sorrow to endure.

[29 : 38] There will only be feasting. There won't be any famine. There will only be light. There won't be any darkness. All the sad things will come untrue. See the difference. The awakened disciple has the eyes to see the unseen, the greater reality. And they begin to look for what God is up to now. And while they can lament and mourn the futility and frustrations of this life of suffering and sin, they have an immutable hope to hold on to. Jesus will cause all the bad things to come untrue when he returns and brings the fullness of his kingdom. So in 8070, the temple and its 400-ton stones, they were thrown down.

But you know what? Jesus' disciples were prepared and they didn't despair. By that time, the gospel had been proclaimed among the nations. Just as Jesus said it would in verse 10. He said, all these things before this generation would pass away, all these things would come to pass. And we saw that happen. They saw that happen. They were awake. They understood that before the old temple was destroyed, God had already begun building a new one. Peter, who asked that question on the Mount of Olives, when will these things take place? He writes this in 1 Peter 2, verse 4. As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men, but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves, you believers, you disciples of Christ, you're like living stones and are being built up as a spiritual house, a temple, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through

Jesus Christ. See, they were awake. Peter was awake. He knew that the new temple was being built. And so he didn't have to fret when the old one was destroyed. Friends, stay awake to the greater realities that are ours in Christ. The promises that go beyond what we see, that we get to possess by faith. And let's consider what else might be captivating us in this life. We might be like that disciple who looked at those stones of the temple and be like, oh my goodness, these things are amazing. These things are indestructible. These things are what life is about. I want to ask us this. What are your 400 ton indestructible precious stones you've built your life on? That could be your family. That could be your marriage. That could be your career. It could be wealth and possessions. It could be your sexuality.

It could be wealth, retirement. It could be health and fitness. It could be politics. It could be any number of things. And I would say, well, none of those things are bad in and of themselves. To build your life on them is falling. A day is coming that you and I can't avoid where all those things will be thrown down. You and I will die. And none of those stones will remain. None of those stones of our life are going to carry on. What does Jesus say? Heaven and earth will pass away. There's one thing that's not going to pass away. His word, his truth, his reality, his kingdom. Those things are never going to pass away. And one day you and I are going to stand before God. All of our stones just rubble, naked and bare before him. And what will you and I do then? We have only one hope. See, there is only one precious stone that we can build our lives on. That can't be thrown down. Why? Because he's already been thrown down for us. 1 Peter 2, 6. For it stands in scripture. Behold, I am laying in Zion, this indestructible city. A stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious. And whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.

So the honor is for you who believe. But for those who do not believe, the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. And a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. As the band comes up, how can we respond? In a moment, we're going to take communion. And this meal that we're going to take, this communion, it is a sign. Jesus gives it to us as a sign. A hope to those who follow him, his disciples. And it serves as a sign of warning to those who do not. And when I say to you, if you're in the room and you're not yet a Christian, I want to ask you this. Are you asleep? Are you asleep to who Jesus is? That he is a son of God. That he is the savior of the world. The only one that can take away your sins. The only one by whom you can come to the father and be made right with God again.

[34 : 42] And to inherit eternal life. It can only come through him. And I would say to you, rather than joining communion with us, it's not for you. We invite you to consider what it means to believe in this rock of offense. This Jesus, this cornerstone, the only one that is worth building your life on. And God says you can either trip over Jesus and be offended by him, or you can believe in him and build your life on him. Those are your two choices. And in a moment, there are going to be opportunity for you to respond. There's going to be a prayer up on the screen for you to pray in response to this. And I want to encourage you to do that. If you're here, you're already a Christian. I want to say to us, before we take communion, I'm going to give us a chance to examine our hearts. And I would say to all of us in the room, how is God calling you to respond? What has the Holy Spirit been highlighting in your heart? What are the stones in your life that you've been captivated by? What are the things you've been chasing? What are the meaningless signs that you've been chasing rather than looking for what the Spirit is doing in you and around you? Have you been lulled to sleep by the cares and comforts of this life, captivated by them rather than the work of

Jesus's kingdom in front of you? Before Christ invites us to enjoy communion with him, he commands us to examine and discern our hearts. And this is a time we can come to him and repent. And you know what? He has grace to forgive us, to wash us clean, and then come to the table. And I want us to do that. So do some business with God right now, wherever you're at, in whatever way he is leading you. And then when you're ready, please come and to the table, get the bread, get the drink, but go back to your seat.

And I just want to lead us to stand. When you come back to your seat, stand, remain standing. And I'll lead us in communion. We'll take communion together, okay? So take, just take time to examine your hearts.

And then when you're ready, go get the elements.