

1<sup>st</sup> S. in Advent            11/27/16  
Matthew 24:36-44        A

AS WERE THE DAYS OF NOAH, SO WILL BE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN. FOR AS IN THOSE DAYS BEFORE THE FLOOD THEY WERE EATING AND DRINKING, MARRYING AND GIVING IN MARRIAGE, UNTIL THE DAY WHEN NOAH ENTERED THE ARK, AND THEY WERE UNAWARE UNTIL THE FLOOD CAME AND SWEEPED THEM ALL AWAY, SO WILL BE THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN.

In the days of Noah, man began to multiply upon the earth. And when the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were attractive, they took them for wives. Sounds lovely, right? Sounds like the kind of thing Hollywood would make into a romantic box office smash hit.

But, it's not marvelous at all. The sons of God were those faithful to LORD, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who walked with Him. The daughters of men were those born to those who wanted nothing to do with LORD, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; they were those who feared, loved, and trusted in pagan gods. You know what God says about running after other gods, right? He says, "You shall have no other gods," but they did.

That was bad enough in itself. But what made the situation completely unbearable is that when the sons of God began to marry the daughters of men, the sons of God stopped walking with the LORD, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They went running after pagan gods and practiced idolatry. And when these unions between the sons of God and the daughters of men produced offspring, these children were not taught the Word of God. Needless to say, this did not sit well with God, so He made this pronouncement, "My Spirit shall not abide with man forever, for he is flesh" (Ge 6:3).

And, that meant the thoughts and inclinations of men's hearts were only evil all the time, so in the days of Noah, evil and violence and wickedness reigned upon the earth.

God was not pleased with their evil and wickedness. And because He is the Creator and Ruler and Judge of all, no one can really argue with His assessment of the situation. Things were so bad that the Lord God was grieved in His heart and made this pronouncement, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them" (Ge 6:7).

In the days of Noah, Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. Noah didn't go out and marry a daughter of man. Noah didn't walk with pagan gods. In fact, Noah was righteous and blameless. Noah walked with God. Noah was completely different from his generation. And because He is different from his generation, God selected him for a very special service. You see, God is getting ready to visit His wrath upon the earth.

One sign that this was about to happen is that Noah was building a gigantic boat in his backyard. This thing is huge. It was 458 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. This is one massive boat that Noah is building. You would think his neighbors would stop by and say something like, "Hey Noah, kind of a big boat you're building there, eh? Going fishin'?"

But, Jesus says no, that didn't happen. They ignored Noah and his boat. Instead, his neighbors just went about eating and drinking, marrying the daughters of men, worshipping pagan gods, and it all continues right up until the day Noah entered the ark. And on that day, it began to rain, and it

rained, and it rained for 40 days and 40 nights and they got swept away by the flood. They were not ready for God to come and visit them.

Jesus says, "As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man." It doesn't take much to look around and see that there are a whole lot of similarities. Even today, we have the sons of God marrying the daughters of men. Christians are marrying unbelievers, and those Christians stop worshipping the LORD, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and instead walk with a god of their own design. But more than that, they daughters of men are marrying the daughters of men. And the sons of men are marrying the sons of men. This in spite of the fact that God has spoken about this quite clearly. Jesus Himself said, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh'" (Mt 19:4-5). This is happening not in the days of Noah but in the days of you.

In the days of you, there is great evil and wickedness upon the earth. Police officers are being assassinated – and I don't know what other word to use – simply for wearing the badge. In our small little outback of North Dakota, rioters are vandalizing, damaging, destroying, their neighbor's property. Under the banner of Christian freedom, you are free to have your own beliefs, even your own political beliefs provided they do not conflict with Scripture, but you do not have a right to sin, because you know what God says, right? "Honor your father and your mother." "You shall not steal." Oh, and don't forget this one, "You shall not murder."

But wait a minute, before you decry how bad the world is, you should remember that you a big part of the evil and wickedness in the world. You said so yourself in the confession of sins this morning. Evil and

wickedness show themselves in your thoughts, words, and deeds, only because you do not love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and you do not love your neighbor as yourself. That evil and that wickedness show themselves when you take your achievements, your accomplishments, all your stuff and pile it high upon a pedestal for all the world to see and adore.

As were the days of Noah, so are the days of you. And so, the coming of the Son of Man is about to happen. And, the signs are all around us – every blizzard, every drought, earthquake, tsunami, school bus accident, murder, every death, every act of vandalism and revenge, every visit to the doctor's office, every ache and pain in your mortal body, every word spoken in anger and hatred is a reminder to us that this earth is not our home and the Son of Man is coming to deliver us from all the curse of sin.

Yet, people walk around like the end is never going to come. Like when Noah was building his boat in his backyard and people just went about their business – eating and drinking, marrying and worshipping their pagan gods, right up to the end. The Son of Man will come and people will be swept away, just as people were swept away in the flood.

\$ 64,000 Question: Are you ready for the coming of the Son of Man? “As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.” The only people who are going to be ready and the only people who are going to be spared are those who are like Noah, righteous and blameless.

The GOOD NEWS of the Christian faith is that God sees you as He saw Noah, righteous and blameless, not because of something you have done or not done, but because of what the Son of Man did when He first came and what He does He comes to you today.

When Quirinius was governor of Syria, the Son of Man was born in Bethlehem. He came into this world, to deal with your idolatry, your evil, your wickedness; to deal with all your sins. And He did that by taking all of your sins upon Himself and then suffering the penalty you deserve and dying the death you deserve.

He took from you your idolatry, your evil, your wickedness, and their punishment and death, and in Your baptism He comes to you to clothe you with His own holiness, so that when God looks at you, He sees you righteous and blameless, all because of what the Son of Man did when He came the first time.

And to keep you walking with Him by faith, to keep you safe as He kept Noah safe through the ark, to make you ready for the coming of the Son of Man in glory on the last day, the Son of Man comes to you even today. He comes to you by means of His Word and His Body and Body. Through these means, he brings to you all His love and forgiveness so that you are ready to welcome the Son of Man no matter when He comes.

As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. And so we cry in faith, "Thy Kingdom Come."