

Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, Nov 15th 2015

I struggled writing on today's scriptures. I was just coming off retreat, had a deadline and was not in a "2nd Coming" frame of mind. As I continued to think of ways of getting out of this "assignment" I just kept reading the scriptures over and over, waiting for something to start bubbling that I could write about. What has risen to the top is the encouragement to wake up or be awake or remain awake. We know not the time. For me, this thought is much larger than being vigilant for the tribulation and the 2nd coming of Christ. We are invited and encouraged to be awake, be present, to Christ every day and every part of our day. We are invited to recognize, be awake to, the Christ within us all the time. If we can do this, it won't matter when or if Christ comes again in our lifetime because we will be united with the Christ within us already.

A retreat story.

As I mentioned, I just finished my annual retreat, 8 days of silence, prayer and rest. Well, that is what it was supposed to be. A couple days in, the heat in my accommodations quit working. I let the staff know and they called the furnace man. He came out and assessed the situation and soon, the director of the retreat center and the furnace man were in my quarters discussing the problem. A different company was going to need to be called and they would probably not respond too quickly.

Translation, I was going to be without heat. I could have responded in many different ways.

Having been on the other side of these conversations as the director of Creighton's retreat center, I have encountered many different responses. But, I think partially because I was praying, my response was simply ok, it will be fine. The serviceman and director were just quietly stunned. I think they were expecting a different, possibly more angry response or maybe they were hoping I would volunteer to go somewhere else. As I reflected later on that day that was anything but silent, peaceful and prayerful, I realized I was having my own small, personal tribulation. The grace though, is that I can see how I was responding from a place of centeredness in Christ. The staff was doing what they could but they didn't have much more control over the situation that I did. There was no reason to be angry at them. I wonder how I changed their day by ensuring them that I would be fine and things would work out.

Let us take time today to ask ourselves "How am I awake to the Christ within me?" "What is keeping me from waking up or being awake?" "How can I prepare and respond from a place of Christ centeredness to my trials and tribulations?"

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