

FROM LUTHER'S PRAYERS:

Help us to remain so steadfast that your coming kingdom will include and complete your kingdom begun here. Lead us out of this sinful and dangerous life. Help us to hate this life and to long for the life that is to come. Enable us not to dread death but to welcome it. Release us from the love and attachments of this life, so that your kingdom may be totally completed in us. Amen.

FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM:

The Apostles' Creed:

The First Article: On Creation

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

What is this?

I believe that God has created me together with all creatures. God has given me and still preserves my body and soul: eyes, ears, and all limbs and senses; reason and all mental faculties. In addition, God daily and abundantly provides shoes and clothing, food and drink, house and home, spouse and children, fields, livestock, and all property – along with all the necessities and nourishment for this body and life. God protects me against all danger and shields and preserves me from all evil. God does all this out of pure, fatherly, and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness of mine at all! For all of this I owe it to God to thank and praise, serve and obey him. This is most certainly true.



Stir up your power, O Lord and come, Protect us by your strength and save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN ?

Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

Matthew xxiv. 42.

No man is rightly prepared for the Last Day except he who desires to be free from sin. If that is your desire, why are you afraid? For on this account you are in agreement with it. It comes in order to set free from their sins all who desire it, and you too long to be thus free. Give thanks into God and continue in that opinion. Christ says that His Advent is your redemption.

But take care that you do not deceive yourself when you say that you would be free from sin and do not fear that Day. Perhaps your heart is false and you do fear it. Perhaps you do not truly desire to be free from sin. Perhaps you are deterred from sinning freely and confidently because of that Day. Take heed that the light that is in you not be darkness. For a heart which truly desires to be free from sin rejoices in the expectation of the day when this desire will be fulfilled. If it does not rejoice in it, then is there no true longing to be set free from sin.

Therefore we must, above all, lay aside hatred and fear of this Advent, and be diligent and earnest in our desire to be set free from sin. If we do that, we may not only await that Day with confidence but pray for it with great joy and with ardent hope.

Sermon on the second Sunday in Advent, 1522

W.A. 10.I (ii). III.

Taken from the book:

Day by Day We Magnify Thee by *Martin Luther*

GOSPEL: Matthew 24:36-44

[Jesus said to the disciples] 36 “But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 37 For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, 39 and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. 40 Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. 41 Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. 42 Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. 43 But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. 44 Therefore you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour”.

Second Reading: Romans 13:11-14

Besides this, you know what time it is, now it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; 12 the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; 13 let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14 Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.