

12/4/18

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

You may not believe it, but some people are afraid of Christmas. There's even a fancy-sounding name for this. It's called: "festivalisophobia." A fear of festivals.

You might be wondering, "Why would people be afraid of Christmas?" For some, it may be Christmas trees or flashing Christmas lights. More serious are those who are afraid of the message of Christmas. Think about it: If you don't understand who this holiday is about and why his birth is such a big deal, Christmas and everything that accompanies it can be confusing, even scary!

[Jesus said] "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." Luke 21:25-28

If Christmas celebrates Jesus' first coming into our world; can you imagine how afraid those same people might be at Jesus' second coming on the Last Day? Jesus' words are startling and scary: "Nations will be in anguish and perplexity...People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world" (vv. 26-27).

But Jesus encourages a very different kind of reaction to the signs of his second coming: “When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads.” (v. 28). Jesus doesn’t want us cowering, but confident. He doesn’t want us afraid, but anticipating and ready! Why? “Because your redemption is drawing near” (v. 28).

When you know who Jesus is and how his blood made amends for you sins, there is absolutely nothing to fear, and certainly not Christmas! Not even the scary-sounding events described at the end of this age! Jesus gives us hope in the face of fears!

Prayer: *Dear Lord Jesus, you came to this world to give us hope. Draw us close to you. Quiet our fears and comfort us with your coming. Remind us that you are coming back for us to take us to be with you forever in heaven! Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Amen.*

(From the WELS)

This Week In God’s Grace

Today: 9:30 a.m. Bible Class at Christ the King – Romans
10:30 a.m. Mary/Martha
11:30 a.m. Barefoot Bookies
Pastor at Christ the King

Wednesday: 9:30 a.m. Bible Class at Bethany – Biblical Love
10:30 a.m. Women’s Ministry at Bethany

Thursday: 1:00 p.m. Midweek Advent Service
9:00 a.m. Decorate Church for Christmas at CTK
Pastor at Christ the King
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Friday: Pastor at Bethany

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. Church Council Meeting at Bethany

Sunday: 8:30 a.m. Worship Service at Bethany
9:30 a.m. Fellowship at Bethany
9:45 a.m. Bible Class at Bethany – The Christmas Story
9:30 a.m. Bible Class at Christ the King – Hell
10:30 a.m. Worship Service at Christ the King

...See you in worship.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

Pastor Alan W. Gumm

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