“The Hour Has Come” – Pr Jim Sprengle – Advent 1
November 30, 2025

I. **Romans 13:11-12** – [11]Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. [12]The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

II. **Think about a sound that you hear all the time**, and now you barely hear it.
   a. No, husbands I’m not talking about your wives, or kids, I’m not talking about your parents.
   b. Sometimes we are so familiar with a sound that we might only notice it occasionally, rather than every time it makes noise.
      i. We used to have a clock that sat on our mantle and struck every 15 minutes… and it was rare that we remembered hearing it because we were so used to it.
      ii. We also used to live by the train tracks while we were in Seward, Nebraska, and even the sound of trains and that air horn could be ignored somehow.
   c. I read an article about a man who decided to use an alarm clock to figure out where to drill a hole in his living room.
      i. He set an alarm clock to go off in ten minutes, tied it on a string, and lowered into the air vent… but the string broke… so his alarm clock was stuck in the wall.
      ii. He heard it go off just like he planned and drilled the hole in the right place, but decided to leave the clock in there rather than damage the wall and ducting.
      iii. He figured the clock’s batteries would die eventually, but the batteries did not die… for 13 years… and every evening at 7:50pm, the alarm went off for one minute.
      iv. They finally had enough and paid to have it removed, and they now have it on the mantle, set for 7:50pm.[1]
   d. That seems funny, but we are incredibly adept at sweeping things under the rug… ignoring the things around us that are pressing.
      i. Some of you might suffer from procrastination that keeps you from getting up and doing whatever is needed…
      ii. Others suffer from anxious thoughts that keep them from taking action…
      iii. Yet, every now and then, the sound or the reminder becomes too hard to ignore, and we finally respond in some way.
   e. The things a person puts off in life can cause all kinds of trouble, but that is only part of the problem.
      i. You see, there is a spiritual battle going on that cannot be ignored.

ii. Being a Christian believer means that we have faith in Jesus Christ, repent of our sins, and that we walk in the path that Jesus showed us in His Word.
    1. Unfortunately, we will sweep certain sins under the rug and just ignore the damage they are doing… and also ignore the call to repent.
iii. Advent is a time of year that we are filled with anticipation of the coming Savior, but it's also a time to consider the cost of sin.
    1. We see the blessings of the holidays… but underlying it all is the Christ Child who came into the world to save us from our sins.
    2. Many times, the sins we ignore… or figure we will get to later… are the reason Jesus was sent.

III. **Our Bible reading in Romans is a wakeup call**.

a. All along, Romans is developing this wonderful story of God's redemption through Christ and how we are baptized into that gift.
    i. The amazing grace that God gives through faith is the power of God to release us from the bondage of sin and death.
b. Yet, the fact remains that sin still comes out of us… which can easily be justified and ignored… but it's time to "wake from sleep". (v 11)
c. The darkness is always close at hand, but Paul says we walk in the light… not in a spiritual stupor where we ignore our sins and keep on going.
d. Another spiritual illustration that Paul likes to use is putting on and taking off clothing… as we put on Christ… put on armor… and cast off darkness and sin.
e. It's difficult to know if Paul was dealing with some incident or situation that came up where these sins needed to be addressed, but these are temptations that still go on today.
    i. Whether various forms of sexual sin or the dysfunction of arguing and jealously, the world hasn't changed much.
f. The answer is to go back to Romans chapter 6, as it focuses baptism and says, "We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:4)
    i. A relationship with Christ through baptism means that we put on Christ, just like it says in Galatians 3, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Galatians 3:27)
    ii. In putting on Christ, the old darkness we walked in… especially when we were unbelievers before having faith… is cast off.
    iii. And yet, for some reason, we keep trying on sinful behavior and walking in the darkness for size.

1. Before we get too comfortable with this lifestyle, the alarm goes off – “the hour has come for you to wake from sleep” (v 11) – and we can expect Jesus to return at any time.

IV. **Let’s go back to the alarm clock stuck in our ductwork**.

a. Just imagine if the alarm clock was a ticking time bomb and was set to go off in ten minutes.
   i. How motivated would you be to do whatever was needed to tear that thing out of the wall and throw it in your neighbor’s shed…? (or, maybe throw it in a safe place for it to detonate…)
   ii. No hesitation, no waiting, no procrastination – just do it.

b. Jesus is calling us to action… repenting and living for Him rather than the darkness and spiritual stupor… and ultimately death.

c. Is there some sin in your life that every time you come to church you hear the alarm go off?
   i. We may forget about it as soon as we walk out the door, but then Sunday comes back around and we are told to wake up and turn away from those things… again and again.
   ii. Whatever sin and brokenness are a struggle for you, give glory to God that He sent an answer to it… and a payment that would cover you.

V. **It’s fitting that we heard the story of Jesus** entering Jerusalem like a king.

a. The people were celebrating the Messiah, the one who would save them.

b. It wasn’t the kind of saving they expected, because it was much bigger than a military uprising and new king… it was saving them from their sins.
   i. The very Son of God had come to be a sacrifice that would be enough… enough to pay for the sin that condemned us… but also through His resurrection… the power to clothe all believers in the forgiveness of sins and righteousness.
   ii. The most amazing thing came out of this event… the ongoing gift of salvation for all who come after.
      1. Here we sit today, children of the heavenly Father, baptized into Christ and wearing the righteousness and forgiveness Jesus won on the cross and through the empty tomb.
      2. When that first Christmas came and the Savior was born, who could have imagined the gift He became for so many?
      3. We owe it all to Jesus, who bought and paid for our very souls.

c. Each year, we spend the first few weeks leading up to Christmas pondering the gift of a Savior who came 2000 years ago… but also who promised to come again.
   i. Sure, many have speculated on when He will come back, and it may not seem urgent… but night is far gone, and the day is near… the Day of our salvation and the return of our Savior Jesus.

d. In this season of Advent, prepare your hearts and minds to wake up and throw off anything that might hinder you… that would harm others… and put on the armor of light.
e. The hour has come… to get up and do something… the hour has come to walk in the light… the hour has come to wake up. Amen.

[1] *Source: Nancy Coleman, "An Alarm Clock Stuck in a Wall Has Gone Off Every Night for 13 Years" CNN (7-23-17)*