

## **Always be ready**

Fall has fallen upon us - again. It does that every fall. And yet, somehow, it always manages to surprise us. Not so much that we did not think that fall would fall upon us, as it always does, but that it would happen so soon, and be so cold, and make so many leaves lie around on our lawns, and have to be raked off.

For me, and, I think, for most, fall comes with an atmosphere of melancholy, that summer is over, finally and for real, and life will in some ways be a bit more difficult for now.

In Church, fall is the season when we look toward the end of this world, when our Lord Jesus will come in glory to judge the living and the dead, and toward the life His Christians shall share with Him in the world to come.

We look to that day, not so much to predict when it will be, for our Lord Jesus has taught His Christians not to, and to pay no attention to those who do, but rather so as to always be aware that He really shall come in glory to judge the living and the dead, and, more importantly, to be prepared, so that we can stand righteous and right before His judgement when He comes, and have a place with Him in His Kingdom rather than in the cold and darkness outside.

It is for this purpose, also, that our Lord Jesus has told us about the signs of His coming: wars and famines and natural disasters - all that which has always been characteristics of the life of this world, and constant reminders that this world is not and can never be our eternal home.

To be ready for the day of His coming does not mean to know a short time in advance when it will be; rather it means to be in Him: to live in His love, in the Word and worship of His love and what His love has done for us, that He who shall come in glory to judge both the living and the dead has Himself borne all judgement for us with His sufferings and death so as to win for us full and complete forgiveness for all our sin and shortcomings and full and complete righteousness before His judgement, so that we shall live and be with Him forever in the fullness of His goodness and His glory, and that He promises and gives this to all sinners who hear His Word in faith and take it to heart. When we live in His Word of salvation, the day of His coming may very well still come as a surprise, as fall does every fall, but it will not come as an unpleasant one!

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