

## *Greetings!*

I sense a stirring in the air.

Things are changing.

Could this be the day?

## *The Ice Cream-Man Cometh!*

I asked my sister, who was visiting from Florida, to step out on the porch and listen. The tune echoed from the end of our street over and over without delay, ***Do Your Ears Hang Low?***

"What is that?" she asked.

"The ice-cream man" I replied.

"You're kidding me, at this time of night?"

"Sure, who wouldn't want an ice-cream on a Sunday night at 9:30?"

9:30 on a Sunday night. I assume there are no rules that regulate the hours that ice-cream can be sold on the street.

I thought my wife would know that maddening tune and she did. Bursting out in song, she sang:

Do your ears hang low?  
Do they wobble to and fro?  
Can you tie them in a knot?  
Can you tie them in a bow?  
Can you throw them o'er your shoulder  
Like a Continental Soldier?  
Do your ears hang low?

I'll spare you the next six verses (if you're still reading this). I'm just thankful that the ice-cream man dropped the Christmas tune sometime around June.

Our grandson, Devin, (though he can't hear you call him to come clean up his mess) can hear the ice-cream man from blocks away. Out of breath, ripping through the house, hollering ***"Grandma, Grandma, the ice-cream man is coming!"*** he's ready any time, day or night, for a double dipper.

Anticipation and readiness are the traits of a five year old looking for the man in the big truck, plastered with pictures of ice-cream, playing that irritating tune over and over. His ears are not only tuned in but, throughout the hot summer days, he asks, "Is the ice-cream man coming today?"

Are you ready for His coming? No, not the ice-cream man's... but Jesus'? Jesus said, "Therefore, you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." Have you lost that sense of anticipation and readiness in your life for His coming? We work and plan our lives

as though His statement were merely idle words meant only to stir religious fervor among His followers.

Our hearts are no longer in tune to hear the sound that alerts us to His coming. Sermons seldom reflect the urgency of being prepared. Why should they? We've heard it all before and He hasn't come, has He? So, we settle into our daily routines with little thought of eternity. We allow those around us to dictate our priorities and there we sit, with our lamps out of oil. The cry, "***The Bridegroom Cometh, The Bridegroom Cometh***" is being heard in the distance and still we continue to play, thinking, "He's not on our street yet." "There's plenty of time."

Read these words from Jesus . . . "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Take heed, ***watch*** and pray; for you do not know when the time is. It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to ***watch. Watch*** therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming--in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning-- lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: ***Watch!***" ~Mark 13:32-37

Four times Jesus says to "watch," and then, as if He feels we're not getting the point, He ends the fourth time, emphasizing it with, "***I say to all: Watch!***"

When was the last time you began your day thinking, "This could be the day He comes."? Would He dare to interrupt our lives with His coming? Doesn't He know that we've made plans for today?

I once told Devin, "I think I hear the ice-cream man.", just so I could watch him jump to his feet and run to the door.

***JESUS IS COMING!*** So, did you run to the door?

***And that's just a thought . . .***



"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.

~1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 (NKJV)

### *My Final Word*

I just couldn't get that thing with the ice-cream man out of my head. I still wonder why he was out on the streets at 9:30 on a Sunday night. Times must really be hard, even for an ice-cream salesman!

I wonder even more though, as to what Jesus thinks about our lack of preparedness for His coming. I mean, is it really so strange that the ice-cream man would be out so late on a Sunday night or, was it just that I wasn't expecting him at that time of the night? Who am I to dictate the timeframe for selling ice-cream?

Even more, who are we to say when Jesus can and can't come back? Jesus said that at a time "we think not" He will return. Only His Father in heaven knows the day and hour that His Son will come back. Why? Because Jesus is building a house for His Bride, and according to Jewish culture, only the bridegroom's father can say when the house is ready for the bride. We're looking at the conditions on earth as the determining factor, while the Father is looking at the house Jesus is building. Who knows when the Father will say it's finished?

Watching with anticipation,

Chris

