

+WEEKLY SERMON

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Be prepared

Luke 12. 32-40

You don't have to be a Scout to know that a key phrase of the organisation is 'be prepared'. Indeed, given the longevity of that phrase it is a very early example of what we might now call a strap line. 'Be prepared' is partly a reference to being equipped with certain life skills to prepare for what comes.

However, the scouting movement's origins are rooted in the Christian faith and it might just as well be a reference to today's gospel.

Jesus' words to his disciples and through the generations to us is a call to be ready for action as Christians. Be ready for the fact that he will come again one day in glory. Be ready to travel lightly and to move as quickly as is possible. Be ready to give account for yourself and your faith.

The gospel uses several images from the everyday life of first century Palestine which we know well if we are familiar with the Bible. They were images that would have spoken clearly into the generation to which they were originally spoken.

We may, if we were coming up with similar images, use different language now. However, fundamentally the message is clear. Jesus will return and will come to bring all things to completion. Whilst nobody would suggest we don't plan for the future, assuming the diary commitments for the week and month ahead will take place, we are also very much put on alert that we may not see those commitments.

It is right for the Christian to carry into their everyday prayer life the expectation that God's grace goes before us and supports us in all that we will face. Yet there is also the sense in which the prayer that we regularly invoke in advent should be the prayer of our everyday.

Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus!

Archdeacon David Picken, Archdeacon of Lancaster

HEALTHY CHURCHES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES