

- h. to distract us from and overshadow our preparations for Jesus' coming as our Savior in Bethlehem

Trans: As we await Jesus' coming we must always watch. We must also...

II. Pray (36)

A. We must pray!

1. pray to be victorious
 - a. as we await Jesus' coming, we must be in constant contact with our heavenly Father
 - b. praying that we can **“escape all that is about to happen”**
 - c. praying that we might escape the verdict
 - d. (Mt 25:41, **“Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”**)
 - e. praying that we might **“be able to stand before the Son of Man”**
 - f. and remain at his side all the way to glory
 - g. hearing that verdict (Mt 25:34, **“Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.”**)
2. pray to pay attention for Jesus' first coming
 - a. and, during this Advent season, we will pray that we might stay focused on Jesus' first coming as our Savior
 - b. amid the rabid commercialism and selfish consumerism
 - c. that surrounds and bombards us this time of year

B. For what we shall pray

1. pray to the Father
 - a. in that vein, we will pray to our heavenly Father
 - b. for the strength and perseverance to keep watching
 - c. in a world that has largely fallen asleep
 - d. for the ability to remain vigilant
 - e. in a world that has been lulled to sleep, for the most part, by Satan
 - f. we will pray for the power to keep on fighting the good fight of faith
 - g. in a world that has, in general, given up the battle
2. pray to the Spirit
 - a. and we will pray to the Holy Spirit and ask for his gifts
 - b. especially the gospel in Word and Sacrament

- c. so that we are able to resist temptation and forsake sin
- d. and remain in our saving faith
- e. and be able to stand as victors with the exalted Christ
- f. and enter everlasting glory

Trans: As we await Jesus' coming we must watch and we must pray. And, finally, we can...

III. Rejoice (28)

A. Unbelievers will be afraid

1. those who reject
 - a. when all these signs begin to occur
 - b. the unbelievers in the world –
 - c. the people who did not fear God and who mocked him
 - d. the people who did not believe in his Son
 - e. nor trust him as their Savior
 - f. the people who scoffed at and ignored the prophecies about the End –
2. they will be terrified
 - a. **“will be in anguish”**
 - b. they will **“faint from terror”** and the apprehension that will have overtaken them
 - c. because of what is happening
 - d. they will be perplexed by what is taking place around them
 - e. and they will cower in fear
 - f. when they see **“the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory”**
 - g. with all of his divine power and divine glory in full exposition

B. Believers will rejoice

1. believers look forward to this with great joy
 - a. but the situation will be very different for believers like us
 - b. when these things begin to take place
 - c. when we see Jesus coming
 - d. we can **“stand up and lift up [our] heads”** as Jesus encourages
 - e. we will not have to cower in fear
 - f. we will not have to faint from terror or apprehension
 - g. but we can rejoice and be glad
2. our Jesus is coming to take us to be with him

- a. because our Jesus will be coming back to usher in **“the kingdom of God”**
- b. that uninterrupted, unmolested rule and reign of God
- c. and his glorious, eternal kingdom
- d. in which we will dwell forever, never to die again
- e. along with all the saints and our loved ones who have come into that kingdom before us
- f. that day of our final redemption
- g. when we receive our ultimate freedom from the sin that daily dogs and hounds us
- h. and which so often seduces us
- i. and which should damn us
- j. were it not for our Savior and his first coming in Bethlehem
- k. which brought about his life, death, and resurrection as our perfect Substitute
- l. which has taken all of our sins away
- m. and allowed us entrance into his glorious kingdom
- n. that day when we will receive freedom from all suffering, pain, disappointment, tears, and whatever other negative consequence of sin can be named
- o. freedom from this sinful body and its limitations and its curse
- p. freedom from the devil and his constant temptations and harassment
- q. and freedom to enjoy the unlimited, uninhibited, unmolested glory of heaven
- r. world without end
- s. how can we not help but rejoice when that glorious day arrives

Concl: Friends as you await the coming of Jesus watch, pray, and rejoice!