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Written by Nathanael Vissia

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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for Sunday, December 1, 2019

First Sunday in Advent

Lectionary Year A

Scripture: [Matthew 24:36-44](#) [**Summary:** *Advent and Jesus Keep Us Awake*]

Supplies Needed: No supplies needed.

ASK (a.k.a. *The On-Ramp*)

- Good morning!
- In a little less than a month, Christmas will be here.
- Even if that sounds like that is a long time from now, I have a question for you about Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.
- Here it is: Do you ever worry that you might not fall asleep on the night before Christmas Day until it is so late that you would then sleep ALL THE WAY through Christmas Day? [*Wait for answers – lots of “Noooo” answers, probably*]
- Now, it seems *really* unlikely that you would ever sleep through all of Christmas Day, but let's *pretend* that you did. What would you miss out on? [*Wait for answers*]
- That's right! You wouldn't be able to open your presents. You wouldn't get to see other people open their presents. You wouldn't get to eat fancy holiday food. And if friends or family were only visiting on Christmas day, you wouldn't get to see them.
- In other words, if you slept through Christmas, you would miss out on a whole lot of good stuff, wouldn't you?
- So here's my advice to you, *just in case* you need it – don't sleep all the way through Christmas!

TELL (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- I bring this up because in today's scripture story, Jesus is warning his disciples about something that sounds a lot like sleeping through Christmas day.

- But instead of saying, “Don’t sleep through Christmas,” Jesus is telling them to stay awake so they don’t miss the gift that Jesus brings.
- And the gift that Jesus brings that Jesus wants the disciples to stay awake for is: the good news of how we can live God’s better way.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- As a church, the time of the year where we practice “staying awake” to the gift that Jesus brings is called, “Advent.”
- Advent means to await and prepare for the arrival of something.
- For the next few weeks we will do things that will help us get ready to receive the gift of the good news that Jesus brings.
- Because, just like we don’t want to sleep through Christmas, we also don’t want to sleep through the Good News that Jesus brings and shares with us.
- And that’s the Good News for today – let’s pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,

Dear God,

Thank you for Jesus

Thank you for Jesus

...who teaches us...

...who teaches us...

...to stay awake...

...to stay awake...

...to your better way.

...to your better way.

Thank you and Amen