



"Do you think the world will end this month - like the Mayan calendar says?"

This seems to be quite a popular question these days. The 21st of December, which also happens to mark the Winter Solstice, the day when the sun will appear at noon at its lowest altitude above the horizon, has long been believed by some to signify the end of the world, based on the Mayan calendar. The ancient civilization composed calendar cycles that encompassed hundreds of years, with the last cycle, the 13th one, ending on Dec. 21, 2012.

This whole "Mayan Apocalypse" thing strikes me as being quite similar to what I've been reading this fall from some of the baseball "bloggers" that follow the Twins. Lot's of totally unfounded speculation by people who apparently have way too much time on their hands. For example, one blogger posed the question, "Will the Twins sign A-Rod?" If you know anything about baseball, you know the chances of that happening are about the same as New London being chosen as the sight for the next Winter Olympics.

I'd rank the possibility of both of those things happening 'right up there with' the end of the world coming this December 21. Here's why I say that: Jesus said in Mark 13:32 *"No one knows about that day or hour - not even the angels in heaven."* So to those who claim to "know" that December 21st is the last day I would say, "What part of 'no one knows' don't you understand?"

Jesus said elsewhere that the end will come *"Like a thief in the night."* In other words, it will come unannounced and unexpected. So, since December 21 has been announced globally as the end, and since lots of people are expecting it, I'd have to say there's virtually no chance that God has chosen this December 21st as the last day of the earth's existence.

So what can we say with certainty about the end of the world? As always, instead of spouting our opinions, thoughts and ideas on the subject, we need to see what the One who actually created of the world has to say. And God *is* quite clear in the Bible about many things regarding the end. Here are just a few:

- 1) The world *will* come to an end.
- 2) It will come at a time when *God* - not anyone else - says it will.
- 3) We need to *always* be ready for that last day, simply because we won't know in advance when to expect it.
- 4) We stay ready by keeping our "lamps filled with oil" (our lives filled with faith in God's Son).

I find it interesting that this hype about the end of the world is happening during the season of

Advent. Advent is that time in the church year when we focus on preparing for Christ to come. In addition to preparing to celebrate His first-coming at Christmas and preparing for Him to come into our lives daily, Advent is a time when we prepare for Jesus' second-coming at the end of the world.

I'd invite you to join us the Sundays in Advent as we learn more about what the Bible says about Jesus' second coming and how to keep ourselves prepared for that great event.

Thanks for asking (and answering),
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net