

**Monday, December 3** – *“For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.” (1 Thessalonians 5:2)* Advent is a season of expectation. We are expecting the baby born in the manger and we are expecting the second coming of Christ. We live in the middle. We have experienced the baby born in the manger, but we don't have any idea when Jesus will return. All we know is that we are one day closer to Jesus showing up than we were yesterday. How you live in this time of expectation is your faith. You live by faith and walk by faith because you believe not only in the baby in the manger, but also in the second coming of Christ. Faith is a verb, an action word. Faith is who you are, your being. You act in faith because of what you believe. Someone who claims to believe something and doesn't act on this belief has no faith. It has been said that faith without works is dead. Today, think about this saying: Faith without works is belief.

**Tuesday, December 4** – *“Beware, keep alert, for you do not know when the time will come.” (Mark 13:33)* There is not one New Testament author who doesn't deal with the end times. Being prepared for the second coming of Jesus is an essential part of your faith. Notice I didn't say belief, because you have moved past just simply believing in the second coming of Christ and you are now living a life of preparation for the second coming of Christ. This living is your faith. Remember, faith without works is belief. For a long time, I believed that smoking caused health problems, but I kept on smoking until I had a stroke. I believed, but I had no faith. It is the same in your relationship with God. If you believe in the second coming of Jesus, what actions are you taking to prepare yourself and others? These actions (or lack thereof) represent your faith. This week the question moves past just simply believing. Believing is good, but our question for this week is: Do I have faith?

**Wednesday, December 5** – *“Let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy.” (Romans 13:13)* Okay, you get the whole faith without works is belief. You do believe in the second coming of Jesus, so how do you live out that belief? How does this belief become your faith? “Live honorably as in the day”. Which means in everything you do make sure you remember that you are doing it out in the middle of everyone and everything. Nothing is secret in the daytime because everything can be seen. So, living in faith of the second coming of Jesus means that you will not do anything in your life in which you need to hide. If you would be ashamed of your actions or worse yet, get into legal or ethical trouble because of your actions, than don't do it. Always remember that Jesus is with you 24/7. If you are doing something that you wouldn't want Jesus to know about, stop it!

**Thursday, December 6** – *“Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.” (Luke 3:8)* This was Jesus' message to the people of Israel. No special treatment anymore. Salvation now comes through faith and not through blood line. The same is true for you and for me. Just because you go to church doesn't mean that you are saved. Going to church makes you a follower of Jesus just as much as going to McDonalds makes you a hamburger. Being a follower of Jesus not only means that you believe in Jesus it also means that your actions reflect that belief. These actions are your “fruit”. Is your fruit worthy of repentance, meaning is your fruit worthy of Jesus? What does your fruit reveal about what you truly believe? Remember, faith without works is belief.

**Friday, December 7** – *“Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.” (Luke 2:9)* This faith thing is terrifying because it requires you to change. Why were the shepherds terrified when they saw the angel? In seeing they knew they had to believe and in believing they knew that they would have to live differently. Their actions, their lives, would be forever changed by this one encounter and change is scary for everyone. This is the terror that you feel when you have to make a big decision, when you have to stretch outside of yourself and actually live as if you truly believe in something. This is the same terror that every activist who ever took a stand for what is right and just and kind has experienced. This is a holy terror, which isn't a child that is misbehaving, but a realization that what you believe must now become what you do. Remember, faith without works is belief.

Faith = Moving from “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” to “ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

“Don’t go to \_\_\_\_\_ !”

You will need \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

Faith without works is \_\_\_\_\_