



Nov. 18, 2018 Mk. 13: 24-32 & Dan. 12: 1-3

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ENTERING THE SCENE:

Henri Nouwen tells us that: "Jesus was truly free. His freedom was rooted in his spiritual awareness that he was the Beloved Child of God. He knew in the depth of his being that he belonged to God before he was born, that he was sent into the world to proclaim God's love, and that he would return to God after his mission was fulfilled. This knowledge gave him the freedom to speak and act without having to please the world and the power to respond to people's pains with the healing love of God."

In these times of turmoil, both in nature and in culture; with anxiety levels off the charts, the temptation to resort to end time explanations is everywhere.

Yet, Jesus himself was free to resist this dooms day escapism approach.

Instead, he says, be alert! Realize that these changes will come and bring with them the future. He knew that change and growth always comes with struggle and risk. But he also promises that we can trust God's process. How good have I been at trusting Jesus' promise this past year?

Mk. 13:24-37

24 But in those days, following that **distress**, "the **sun** will be **darkened**, and the **moon** will not give its light; 25 the **stars** will fall from the sky, and the **heavenly bodies** will be **shaken**." 26 At that time men will see the **Son of Man** coming in **clouds** with great power and **glory**. 27 And he will send his **angels** and gather his elect from the **four winds**, from the ends of the **earth** to the ends of the **heavens**. 28 Now learn this lesson from the **fig tree**: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves **come out**, you know that **summer** is **near**. 29 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is **near**, right at the door. 30 I tell you the truth, this **generation** will certainly not **pass away** until all these things have happened. 31 **Heaven** and **earth** will **pass away**, but my **words** will never pass away. 32 No one **knows** about that **day** or **hour**, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the **Father**.

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Jesus tells us that even he does not know the future. But he does know God's promise. What helps me trust the promise like Jesus trusted?

PRAYER: Lord, like the trees around me these days, my branches are becoming bare of leaves. When I look around at all the struggle and turmoil in the world, it causes that same struggle and turmoil in my heart. Help me to face all this with the same hope that Jesus speaks about, as he uses the fig tree that will endure to produce buds in the spring. Amen.