

Good morning,

I want to tell you a story... So, I had this friend in seminary, and one of the things we liked to do to decompress after all of our studying, and praying, was to watch this tv show each week.

We did it every week. Then I had a class schedule change so I had a class right at the same time as that show, so I could never watch it when it was new.

Total bummer, my friend developed a new favorite activity from then on, they would come find me after I got out of class and tell me some major plot development of the latest episode.

Hey you really have got to see this episode because...Insert spoiler.

I used to get so upset, you are ruining the show for me!

Remembering this story gave me inspiration for the sermon today, I want to title this sermon Spoiler Alert.

Spoilers are an interesting thing and how we respond to spoilers are even more interesting. One possible way we can respond is that we can become upset, something has been taken away from us, the surprise, oh the surprise. Or, we can become excited because now we have something to look forward to.

But this leaves me with a question, that I want to ask you, about knowing the end of the story. How does knowing the end change the way that you experience the watching, the living, the journey?

You know who really loves spoilers? God! God loves spoilers.

Let's look at our gospel reading from Luke this morning. Jesus said, "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth, distress among nations, confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding, of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then, they will see, 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Jesus is talking about the end of days here. He is painting a picture, offering a roadmap, signs to look for, before the coming of the son of man.

He then teaches them this parable "Look at all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

Truly I can't read these passages on one hand ...knowing that they weren't written to me... but on the other hand I can't read them without seeing similarities to the world around us.

What does this mean you may wonder? When I turn on the news sometimes it is like reading these passages or reading out of the book of revelation. What does it all mean?...

Well I can't tell you that the second coming is upon us...but if we work every day, surely, the kingdom of God is closer today than it was yesterday. Certainly, if we stay diligent and focused... and faithful, it will be nearer—tomorrow! than it is today.

How do you feel about knowing the end of the story before it happens? How does knowing the end change the way you experience the journey?

God loves spoilers, I mean he's been told us all that we are his beloved. He's been told you that he cares for you, and that he wants you to seek after him in faith. In faith... How does knowing the end of the story affect your faith? Does it make it make it waver? How could we have faith because we know? Does it grow stronger?

Does knowing that in the end we will all be one in God, does that make us more generous in our daily lives? Does it make us hold the conflicts that we have with our friends and our families lighter?

Oh I know you have conflicts with your friends and your family...I mean it was just thanksgiving.

I'm kidding, I had a lovely thanksgiving.

But my point is as Christians, as people of faith we know the end of Gods story for us. We know those truths that God has revealed to each and every one of us. We know that God calls us all to something better, something larger than just ourselves.

So, what do you do with this information? What do you do?

How will it change you?... Hopefully for the better?

Here we are on this first day of advent. Advent is about waiting for God to be born into this world on that Christmas morning and watching for that same God's second coming again with power and great glory.

But we also watch for those tiny second comings in all of our lives. Those places where God has shown up time and again, in those darkest of nights. In the loneliest of moments, we look for our God. And each time God finds us, God renews our faith and so we are able to extend our faith to others through generosity...

So maybe spoilers aren't always a bad thing. Maybe what becomes important is not just how the story ends, but how that end, changes us today.

Amen