The Night Before Easter — Living in the "Until"

Mark 16:1-6

It's Sunday—The first day of the week. Today we celebrate the glorious resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

But, for a few moments, let's reflect back to a few days before Christ's resurrection to that awful Wednesday when Christ was betrayed, arrested, beaten, humiliated, and crucified on a rugged cross for our sins.

It was dark day... painful... ugly... sorrowful. There was no rejoicing, except among the Pharisees who plotted Jesus' death.

Before you can really appreciate the celebration of Easter, you must consider the night before Easter.

Think about His disciples. Put yourself in their place—To see the Man you believed in and followed for 3½ years is now dead! Every hope they held has suddenly bled down the side of a hill.

How do you believe in a Savior who is now dead and buried? Confused? Devastated? Bewildered? What do you do?

YOU WAIT! Wait until when? You wait, until Sunday. As S.M. Lockridge used to preach in his famous sermon—SUNDAY'S A'COMIN'!

- On Wednesday—Christ was crucified and was buried. His disciples were hiding in fear. <u>But wait</u>—SUNDAY'S A'COMIN'!
- On Thursday—It looked like Satan has won. <u>But wait</u>—SUNDAY'S A'-COMIN'!
- On Friday, it looked hopeless, but wait SUNDAY'S A'COMIN'!
- On Saturday—it's dark and quiet—It's the night before Easter.

The night was so different from all the rest
And a silence covers the Earth;
The stars have no glimmer, the moon tries to hide,
For in death lies the man of their birth.

Think of Mary, the mother of Jesus. How did she feel on that night?

In a room filled with sorrow, a mother now cries

For Jesus, her Son now is gone;

Her Child sent from heaven was taken away, Heart broken she feels all alone.

Think of those children He took up in His arms, but now He is dead.

At the feet of his mother a little boy cries Saying "momma I don't understand;"
I remember the look of love in His eyes,
That I saw, by the touch of His hand.

It's Saturday, but Sunday's a'comin'...

The King of all ages, the Giver of life,

For a moment lies silent and still;

But a power sent from heaven comes breaking the night,

And death must bow to His will.

It's Sunday morning!

And a stone moves, the Earth shakes and birds start singing,
The sun shines, the Earth warms for new life it's bringing;
A little boy stops crying, and a mother is smiling,
For death could not hold their King

▶ Praise God—He's Alive today! And He promised to come again and receive us unto Himself (John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11).

There is another "Sunday" a'comin'!"

In a sense, <u>we are living in "Saturday" today</u>—We are living between Christ's first coming and His second coming.

Philippians 1:6— "...he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it UNTIL the day of Jesus Christ."

▶We are living in the "UNTIL."

In Isaiah 62, the prophet is living on "Saturday" waiting "until" God fulfills His promise concerning Lerusalem. Isaiah 62:1—For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, UNTIL the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

The context is the Lews returning from captivity to Lerusalem—a city in ruins—Temple is destroyed and the walls are broken down. God promised to restore Lerusalem, but that restoration has not been fulfilled... yet.

Israel is still living in "Saturday," "... **UNTIL** the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

Today, **it's "Saturday" for us also**. We are waiting for the "Sunday" of Christ's coming—The rapture. Sometimes, it feels like Sunday will never get here. Sometimes we feel like the scoffers, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Pet. 3:4).

▶But, believe me, Sunday's a'comin! It really is—No matter what day it is today, Sunday is 'a-coming!

But, what do we do "until?" What do you do on Saturday...

- ...when life ain't fair and all we hoped for seems like a dream?
- ...when you pray your heart out, and hear only silence.
- ...when all you get is bad news... and more pain... and another disappointment... and more (you fill-in-your-own-blank-here).

What do you do "until" He comes again? Twiddle your thumbs? Watch TV? Read a magazine? Crochet?

Jesus answers, "Occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13). We keep on, keeping on, because we know how the story ends. We know God keeps His promises. He will come again! Perhaps today!

Don't quit, Christian! Sunday's a'comin'!

#28- UNTIL THEN, My heart will go on singing
UNTIL THEN, with joy I'll carry on!
UNTIL the day, my eyes behold the city,
UNTIL the day, God calls me home!

Are you ready for a new Easter morning. This could be a new Easter for you—A day of new life and new Hope!