

# A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expositional Study of **The Gospel According to Luke**

**Chapter 12- Luke 12:41-48**

241- What Jesus Will Do When He Returns- Part 1

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June 1, 2014

**Luke 12:41-48**

**41** Peter said, "Lord, are You addressing this parable to us, or to everyone *else* as well?"

**42** And the Lord said, "**Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?**

**43** **"Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes.**

**44** **"Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions.**

**45** **"But if that slave says in his heart, 'My master will be a long time in coming,' and begins to beat the slaves, *both* men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk;**

**46** **the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect *him* and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.**

**47** **"And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes,**

**48** **but the one who did not know *it*, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.**

To the Glory of God

Jesus Christ is going to return to this earth. The Holy Bible is crystal clear about this, and I pray that His Return will be very, very soon. But as we have studied so far- even though there is much that we do not know and much that we do not understand about this glorious

Event- we *do* know two very specific things about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to this earth:

1. Christ's Return to this earth is certain and sure- it is absolutely going to happen
2. We do not know when

The Bible says that Jesus is coming back in two different ways:

- With Great Grace to all Believers
- With Great Vengeance on all Unbelievers

... which is why the Bible calls the Second Coming of Jesus:

### **The Great (good) and Terrible (bad) Day of the Lord**

God means to graciously gather all His Elect together so they may enjoy Him forever in blessed Peace and indescribable Glory that will be eternal, and God means to utterly vanquish all who are impenitent and who rebel against Him and to punish them with horrific damnation that will last forever.

And so as we have studied over the last several weeks- Jesus tells us repeatedly to:

"Be Ready!"

... and getting ready for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ does not involve selling your business and all your earthly goods and going to some high mountain to await His Return as many have done down throughout the Church Age. And "being ready" really doesn't involve adopting some particular view of the End of this Age as some would have you to believe- as though believing some specific information about the Return of Jesus is the same thing as being ready. Neither is it about being brave and courageous in a human way of thinking.

No, as we have seen over the last several weeks- being ready for Jesus to come back to this earth really only involves three things:

- ✓ **Being humbly and joyfully submitted** to the Authority of Holy Scripture in your daily life
- ✓ **Being fruitful in the Kingdom** by sowing as much seed of the Gospel to as many people as you can every day- using whatever means God provides
- ✓ **Being busy in the Work of the Lord**- hating even the garment spotted by the flesh

So as we have seen- it is those who have Jesus Christ as their supreme Treasure- who are the ones ready for Jesus to come back, those who live as though they really believe that to depart and be with Jesus is far better than to remain down here, and those who live simplified and measured lives- consciously surrendering their bodies and minds and talents and time to be used by King Jesus for His Glory. Those are the ones who are ready and those are the ones who will rejoice on that day.

Now the term "Eschatology" is a three dollar theological term for "the study of" or "the science of" "Last Things"- those particular things that will happen up to and including the Second Return of Jesus to this earth. And over the 2,000 years of Church History- there are three main distinctions on how serious and godly bond-slaves of Jesus Christ have understood what the Holy Bible teaches about this amazing Event.

- A. A-millennialism
- B. Post-millennialism
- C. Pre-millennialism

... and I want to say right off the bat that some of the most godly men that this world has ever seen have been in all three groups. My own life has been tremendously influenced for Good by men who hold to each of these views. So I am not with those who assign sinister motives to anyone who espouses any of these three views. Some of the most saved and the most honorable men of whom the world was not worthy have held to each of these three views.

And that indisputable fact of Church history has humbled me as I realize that if I hold to one view- I am consciously *rejecting* the other two, and by rejecting the other two- I am also rejecting what these godly men wrote and taught about the other two. That deeply and profoundly

troubles me and has hindered me from even getting into this subject since I am not knowledgeable about which Church Fathers to ignore and which ones to embrace as it pertains to Eschatology.

Now you will notice that each of these three views has the same ending- the word, "Millennial". This word literally means: "age", and is most universally understood as pertaining to the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ that the Bible speaks about. So these three views understand the Millennial Reign *differently*.

You see, dear friends- the problem that we have with Eschatology is that we are taking Passages and Verses of the Bible that use symbols and signs and we are trying to assign very specific meaning to them about events that have not yet happened. And while it is fairly easy to do that looking backward- it is much harder to do that looking forward- as evidence why so many godly men can respectfully disagree about what those Verses and Passages mean. And this is why many Church Leaders today simply adopt one of these three views as their own- without much personal study and without asking very many questions.

So it is good to discuss "Last Things" and it is good to seek to find out- but as we do- we must guard against a very important element that creeps up that there is no doubt about:

It is sinful to separate or to break fellowship based on disagreements about  
Eschatology

Since a correct understanding of Last Things is not a requirement for Salvation- and since *all* views of Eschatology are based on some degree of assigning meaning to vague and unclear passages- we must guard against elevating this issue to be the cause of breaking fellowship with those who honestly hold to different views.

And as I have promised you- I will not do that. As God gives me the talent and the time- I will study and pray and ask and seek and struggle to obtain the accurate and correct meaning of every single verse of every single Chapter of every single Book that we "Journey" through. I will not cut corners and I will not spare myself. So after I complete my research and I get up to preach- I may still be wrong- but I will preach what I honestly and truthfully believe is the best understanding of that particular Verse or Passage. I do not know how to be any more honest than that.

I do not seek to fit in with any religious system or any group. I do not seek to be conservative or liberal. I am not concerned with majority opinion or a "consensus". I seek simply to honor God and to please my Lord Jesus by being as Biblical as I know how- because I believe that by being Biblical- I will be spiritual, and I will be both honoring to God and pleasing to my Lord and Savior- Jesus Christ.

I also do not believe that I possess all knowledge myself and so I *do* value Tradition and I *do* value Church History and I *do* value precedent. I am in awe of those who came before me and I stand ready to be both corrected and rebuked by men who are far more Biblical than me. But I respectfully reserve the right to part ways and disagree with any man, any group, any tradition, and any historical precedent when I truthfully believe that those things depart from the integrity of inspired and inerrant and infallible Scripture- because Scripture trumps Tradition, History, and Precedent.

Now if you have attended Church in America during the last 150 years- you have been drenched and saturated with a particular view of Eschatology called "Pre-millennialism" as this view is the single most dominant view held to today by the vast majority of those who attend Church- both saved and unsaved.

Pre-millennialism (also called "Dispensationalism") is the belief that in God's Economy- there are two large issues that God is concerned with as we approach the Return of Jesus to this earth:

1. Israel as a nation
2. The Church

Pre-millennialism teaches that God is not finished with the Jewish nation and that there will be a wide-sweeping Move of God the Holy Spirit in the last days that will win the souls of Israel as a whole. Some views of Pre-millennialism teach that this general Salvation of the Jewish Nation will occur after the Church has been removed from the earth- during the Great Tribulation- and after that- Jesus will return and judge the wicked and will literally set up His Kingdom on the earth for 1,000 years- hence the word, "Millennial". The "Pre" in this word has to do with the removal of the Church before or "pre"- the millennial Reign of Jesus. Some famous (and infamous) people and groups who held to this view throughout time are:

- ✓ The Maccabeans
- ✓ The Pharisees of Jesus' day
- ✓ The Jewish High Priests after the Resurrection but before 70 AD
- ✓ Irenaeus (early Church Father)
- ✓ Tertullian (early Church Father)
- ✓ Montanus (heretic)
- ✓ CI Scofield
- ✓ The Southern Baptist Convention
- ✓ The Assemblies of God
- ✓ Orthodox Judaism (while rejecting Jesus' Messiahship)
- ✓ John MacArthur
- ✓ Jerry Falwell
- ✓ Ray Comfort
- ✓ Todd Friel
- ✓ Hal Lindsey (author, "The Late Great Planet Earth")
- ✓ Tim Lahaye (author, The "Left Behind" book series)

A- millennialism is the understanding that says that the verses and Passages of the Bible that seem to suggest a Millennial Reign of Jesus on the earth for 1,000 years were simply Jewish hyperbole and were symbolic of what Jesus is actually doing in Heaven- among those who are there now- since His Ascension and before He Returns- hence the letter "A" that precedes the word, "Millennial" which means "against".

A-millennialism differs from Pre-millennialism, also, in how they see the Jewish nation. While Pre-millennialists see the nation of Israel being co-equal with the Church- in importance in the last days- A-millennialists see no such equality and teach that all the Promises of God to the nation of Israel have been transferred to the Church.

While being the dominant view of the early Church- A-millennialism has fallen on hard times of late- especially since The Reformation and the establishment of Israel as a nation in 1948, and it is somewhat hard to even find somebody today who holds to this view. Some famous (or infamous) people and groups who hold to this view include:

- ✓ Polycarp (disciple of John)
- ✓ Justin Martyr

- ✓ Clement of Alexandria
- ✓ Origen
- ✓ Augustine
- ✓ The Roman Church
- ✓ The Lutheran Church
- ✓ The Anglican Church
- ✓ The Greek Orthodox Church
- ✓ Sam Storms

Post-millennialism (also called "Covenant Theology"), also, teaches that the millennial Reign of Jesus was Jewish hyperbole simply describing "a long period of time" where God's Power would dominate and ultimately prevail, and that we are actually living in the "Age of the Kingdom" or "The Millennial" now where the Gospel is going out to the four corners of the earth and will eventually triumph in the sense that when Jesus Returns- more people will have been saved than lost and that entire nations will have been moved by the Holy Spirit toward a Biblical framework and order. The word "Post" here means that Jesus is coming back after the Church Age or after the completion of the "Kingdom".

Post-millennialism also teaches that all of the Biblical Promises to the nation of Israel now belong to "God's people" or the Church. Some famous (or infamous) people and groups throughout history who have held to Post-Millennialism are:

- ✓ John Calvin (inconsistent)
- ✓ Jonathan Edwards
- ✓ Charles Spurgeon (inconsistent)
- ✓ The Puritans
- ✓ William Carey
- ✓ The Reformers
- ✓ The "Social Gospel"
- ✓ BB Warfield (Partial Preterist)
- ✓ Charles Hodge
- ✓ James D Kennedy (Partial Preterist)
- ✓ RC Sproul (Partial Preterist)
- ✓ Doug Wilson

It has offered me a great deal of comfort to know that both John Calvin- who is perhaps the world's greatest exegete of Scripture- and Charles Spurgeon dubbed "The Prince of Preachers" were amazingly inconsistent in their view of Eschatology- alternating at various times between all three views.

Now keep in mind that over the last 2,000 years- there have been different variations of all three views and other elements that have been added into all three views to modify them until it is very possible today for a genuinely saved person to hold some of all three views simultaneously- depending on what subject he is talking about.

For example- I personally agree with Charles Spurgeon, Jonathan Edwards, and William Carey that ultimately the Gospel will prevail and that more human beings will be saved and will enjoy God forever than will be lost- which is a Post-millennial tenet. I also personally believe that entire nations have already been moved and changed and altered by the Bible to have a more just and good society.

#### **Isaiah 11:9&10**

**9 They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.**

**10 Then in that day The nations will resort to the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal for the peoples; And His resting place will be glorious.**

I also hold to what Augustine and Polycarp and the Anglican Church taught that since The glorious Resurrection of Jesus Christ- it matters not one whit whether you are Jewish or Chinese or African, that it doesn't matter whether you are male or female, that it no longer matters if you are a slave or a slave owner, that it doesn't matter if you are educated or uneducated, young or old, and therefore:

#### **Galatians 3:26b-29**

**26 ... you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.**

**27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.**

**28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**

**29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.**



... and

**Romans 2:28&29**

**28** For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.

**29** But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

... which are basic fundamental tenets of A-Millennialism. And yet at the very same time- conducting a normal reading of the Scriptures- using the very best information that I have available to me- it appears that the nation of Israel will play a role in the future- a role that is absolutely Pre-millennialism and a role that I must confess that I do not understand and cannot piece together.

Not that it matters- but since many of you have asked- if you were to ask me today where I personally stand on this issue- I would say that as I have become more Biblical in my thinking and in my preaching- I am not nearly as Pre-millennial as I used to be, and that I am more Post-millennial than I have ever been. But since both Augustine and Jonathan Edwards have deeply impacted my life- I simply stand silent when these two giants disagree on Eschatology.

For example- I do not for the life of me understand why the Jews re-building their Temple in Jerusalem at some point in the future and re-instituting animal sacrifices – matters to God. You could not blaspheme God any worse than to reject the pristine Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and to replace it with the blood of bulls and goats and any effort to do that in the future is an abomination to God. Why people who read their Bible can think for a second that unbelieving Jews re-building their Temple in direct defiance of the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus is a good thing and yet some joker walking into the Temple is the man of sin is a misread of what the Bible is actually saying.

What makes more sense to me is that some of the Biblical Prophecies surrounding these events that are to happen just before the Second Coming may in fact have already been fulfilled in the years between when those particular New Testament Books were written, and 70 AD when Titus Vespasian, thundered down into Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple and with it- the Jewish way of life was forever

ended- which is exactly what portions of both the Old and New Testament say will happen.

But however this will all come about- after it is over and when stand victorious with the Lamb- we will look back on these days and we will say,

*"It happen exactly as the Bible said"*

... which is the way we discuss Jesus' First Coming very precisely and clearly because we see that Event in the Scriptures- with the advantage of 20/20 hindsight. So even though we struggle over some aspects- there are other aspects of Christ's Return that we can be crystal clear about.

Now in the midst of all this Calamity and Judgment and Confusion- how can we who believe take any comfort in the Return of Jesus at all? With all its terribleness- how can we see the Return of Jesus as being "Great"? So to try to obey what Jesus is saying here in **Luke 12** and "**Be Ready**"- we need to use the Scripture to understand the Scripture, and to do that- please turn with me to **Titus 2:11-15** that says:

**11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,**  
**12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,**  
**13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,**  
**14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.**  
**15 These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.**

So as Jesus tells us here in **Luke 12** that He is absolutely coming back- but that it will be at an undisclosed time- and, therefore, we are to live our lives- every day- in a state of readiness- How do we do that? How do we stay motivated? And the answer to that is that we hope. But what do we hope for? And the "end" or the "fulfillment" of our blessed hope is found at the end of **Titus 2:13:**

**the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,**

...so we are to set our hope on the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

So while it is possible for us to get all tangled up in the controversies over the timing of the Return of Jesus to this earth in connection to other prophetic events like the millennium and a time of great tribulation- there is another more serious issue that concerns me infinitely more than any of that.

And I want to mention it because we all need to realize that belief in the appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ is considered by many to be utterly fantastic, an outdated mythology, and scientifically untenable.

We hear and read about men like Carl Sagan put the Second Coming of Jesus Christ in the same category with the cow jumping over the moon. And we understand that he has simply ruled out the meaningfulness of all Biblical Truth. And the logic of people like that is:

*If it is not scientific- then it is not real*

...where "scientific" is defined as excluding all Biblical Truth. But what we need to be more prepared for is the rejection of the Second Coming from inside the church- lest we be jolted and lose our doctrinal balance. For example, in 1950, William Neil of the University of Nottingham wrote in the Moffatt Commentary:

“[The Day of the Lord] is God’s timeless Judgment which is past, present, and future. In a sense it is always to come, in a sense it is always present, and in a sense it has already been passed . . . Thus the Parousia [a technical word for the second coming] is, like Creation, in a real sense timeless; not an historical event, but the underlying purpose of history and the summing up of all things in Christ. (*Thessalonians*, London, 1950, pp. xli–xlii)

In other words Neil says that the Second Coming has only a *symbolic* meaning and is not a real literal historical event. One of the most influential New Testament scholars of our generation, Rudolf Bultmann, wrote:

“The mythical eschatology is untenable for the simple reason that the parousia of Christ never took place as the New Testament expected. History

did not come to an end, and, as every schoolboy knows, it will continue to run its course. Even if we believe that the world as we know it will come to an end in time, we expect the end to take the form of a natural catastrophe, not of a mythical event such as the New Testament expects.” (*Kerygma and Myth*, London, 1953, p. 5)

One more- in his major commentary on the Thessalonian Epistles that was published back in 1972- the year after my new birth- Ernest Best, Professor of Divinity and Biblical Criticism at the University of Glasgow, wrote:

“We have to conclude that the End is something with which men will never have to reckon in practical terms, again excluding the possible destruction of our own planet, and that it is as wrong to think of a real physical End which God achieves in some public way as it is to think of a real physical Beginning.” (London, p. 363)

Carl Sagan and those like him we can understand. They are simply unbelievers who are blind to the Truth. But these professors of Divinity who want to think they belong to Christ and yet they deny the Truth of Scripture put forth an infinitely more dangerous attack against the Church than a Carl Sagan. You see, the main problem with what they say is not merely that it contradicts dozens of Biblical texts, but that it attacks Jesus Christ. It attacks Biblical Christianity at its very center.

We have to understand, dear friends, that the very Center of Christianity is the Coming of the Son of God into the world the first time as a real man to destroy the works of the devil and create a new people for His Own Glory. The very heart of our Faith is that Jesus did this by obeying the Law of God perfectly, dying for the sins of His people on the Cross, rising victorious over death on the third day, and ascending in absolute Triumph to God’s Right Hand with all His enemies under His Feet.

And, therefore, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is not some side show that is of little or no importance, but is, in fact, the *completion* of His Saving Work. If you take Jesus’ Return to this earth away- the whole fabric of His Saving Work unravels. Consider these things:

- ✓ A physical Incarnation of the Son of God
- ✓ A physical Death
- ✓ A physical Resurrection
- ✓ A physical Ascension

... and then poof! Vanish! Never to be seen on earth again. You can see what is really behind this denial of a real Second Coming by these so-called theologians- it is the denial of a real Physical Incarnation and a real Physical Death and a real Physical Resurrection. Why? Because, to use Bultmann's own words:

“Every schoolboy knows that if a real prince comes into a real country to conquer and reclaim it for his Father the King, and if he dies and really rises from the dead with all power in heaven and on earth, and gives the weapons of spiritual warfare to his revolutionary followers, and returns to his Father, then you can know for a certainty that he will come back to set up his throne and be acclaimed by his victorious people as Sovereign over his Father's world.”

So Jesus came to conquer! And He *has* conquered and He *will* conquer! Jesus Christ will not be denied the fruit of His travail. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. He alone made it. He alone redeemed it. And He alone will have it. He has not evaporated into some never-to-be-touched-again realm of the spirit. He is reigning at the Father's Right Hand until the time for the restoration of all things.

Now I'm not sure which is the greater tragedy — that a man as brilliant as Carl Sagan was content to find the meaning of life in the evolution of the “limbic system” and neocortex of the human brain, or that professing Christians- who have the Bible and lay claim to believe the Bible- strip Christ of His final Victory.

In any case let us pray for the unbelieving scientists of our day, that they might see the limits of their methods and their materials and consider the Authenticity of Christ. But as we denounce and reject the atheist's attack on Jesus Christ- let us not forget to also pray for the unbelieving liberal theologians of our day- who are training the next generation of preachers- that they might also be saved and see the folly of forcing a supernatural Christ through a secular sieve.

And let us encourage our hearts this morning that the blessed hope of all who believe is **THE APPEARING OF OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.**

Now notice first of all from **Titus 2** that there are two separate "Appearings" of Jesus Christ:

1. An Appearing of Grace
2. An Appearing of Glory

Look again at verse 11:

**Titus 2:11**

**For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,**

... now this literally says in the Greek:

**For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all *sorts of* men,**

... so that is the *First Coming* of Jesus Christ — the Appearance of Grace. Then look again at verse 13:

**Titus 2:13**

**looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,**

... and that is the *Second Coming of Christ* — the Appearance of Glory.

So the first Appearing was with Great Grace and the Second Appearing will be with Great Glory. And in Paul's mind- these two are inseparably linked- which is why the rejection of a real Second Coming in great Glory is really an attack on the very center of our Faith- which is the First Coming of Christ to die for sins. The Christ Who will come in Great Glory is the very same Jesus Christ Who came in Great Grace.

Then Verse 14 describes just how that Great Grace appeared

— "[Christ] **gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people of his own possession, zealous for good deeds.**"

So when the Great Grace of God appeared in history about 2,000 years ago, it appeared as a real Man- Who really died to redeem us from

sin and to make us zealous, or passionate, for good deeds. This was the Aim or the Purpose of the Appearance of God's Grace in Jesus Christ.

And that same aim of grace is described in verses 11&12 as well:

### **Titus 2:11-12**

**11** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,

**12** instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

And that is the same thing as saying (in v. 14) that Christ aimed to purify us and make us zealous for good deeds.

So verses 12 and 14 of **Titus 2** are like a sandwich around verse 13. Both verses describe the Aim and the Effect of God's Grace as it appeared in the First Coming of Jesus Christ. And the meat in the middle of the sandwich is our blessed hope (v. 13).

So the way to understand this is that what God's Great Grace has *begun* in our lives through the First Coming of Jesus Christ, He will *complete* in our lives through the Second Coming of Christ.

So I think it would be fair to say on the basis of these four verses of **Titus 2**- that the incentive and power to live a Christian life pleasing to God comes from two directions as it were:

1. It comes from looking *backward* with gratitude to the Great Grace of God that appeared in Jesus Christ at His First Coming when He purchased our Redemption
2. It comes from looking *forward* with hope to the Great Glory of God that will appear at the Second Coming when Jesus completes or finalizes our Redemption.

Now for one more final thought about this- please turn with me to **Hebrews 9:27&28**. This Passage describes the connection between the *past* and *future* Work of Jesus Christ as clearly as any Biblical text. Read with me:

### **Hebrews 9:27&28**

**27** And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment,

**28** so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without *reference to sin*, to those who eagerly await Him.

Now this Passage teaches so clearly that the saving Work of Jesus Christ *began* with His First Coming when He bore our sin in His Body on the Cross and will be *completed* at His Second Coming when He saves us from the final Wrath of God and gives us rest in His Kingdom.

So if you strip away the Second Coming from this equation as the unsaved and lukewarm theologians have done- Salvation itself is torn in half. And half a Salvation is no Salvation at all.

Now I want you to see just who will be saved at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ from the end of **Hebrews 9:28**:

**to those who eagerly await Him.**

I wonder if Ernest Best and William Neil and Rudolf Bultmann ever trembled when they read these words. He will save those who are eagerly waiting for him. The sheep and the goats will be divided, and the sheep will be those who have been eagerly waiting for him. Not waiting like a criminal on death row waits for the day of his execution. But waiting like a schoolboy who waits for the last day of school and the beginning of vacation- with eagerness

Will it not be an utterly terrifying thing when the liberal, modernist, secularized pastors and theologians stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ on that day and see Him open before them their own sermons and books and read the paragraphs where they have actually taught the Bride of Christ is NOT to wait for His Coming and not even to believe that He would come. I can't help but think that it will be an utterly terrifying moment because the Scripture says, "Jesus is coming back to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."

So let us look to ourselves this morning. Do YOU eagerly await the Second Coming of Jesus Christ? And I don't mean: Do you believe in the doctrine- but do you eagerly await Him? To me- this is infinitely more important than which "Millennial" group you fit it- because the eagerness with which you are waiting for Jesus to Return is a very crucial test of the genuineness of your Faith. The Apostle Peter said in **1Peter 2:7-12**:



**7** This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER *stone*,"

**8** and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this *doom* they were also appointed.

**9** But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR *God's* OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

**10** for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.

**11** Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.

**12** Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.

... look what Peter said in verse 7:

“To you who believe- Jesus is precious.”

And so the *preciousness* of Jesus Christ, the value that you place on Him, the way in which you treasure Jesus- *that* is the evidence of your Faith- not whether you can figure out who the anti-christ is. And the anticipation of His Second Coming- how *eagerly* you await Him- is the proof that Jesus is precious to you. And, therefore, you can test the reality of your faith by whether you are eagerly waiting for Christ's Return.

Now I don't mean that you must think about the Second Coming all the time. Even when you are deeply in love- you don't think about your sweetheart all the time. Rather, ask yourself these three questions:

- ✓ Does your mind return frequently to the Truth of Christ's Appearing?

- ✓ When your mind turns to the Truth of His Appearing, does your heart want it- is there an eagerness to see Him?
- ✓ Do you pray for His Coming? The early Church prayed, *"Come, Lord Jesus!"*

And if you come up short in answering those three questions, there are three possible explanations. From the least to the most serious:

- A. You may have trusted Christ as your Savior and Lord but you have not yet been well taught about the Second Coming, and that ignorance hinders the eager expectation of your heart and your prayers.
- B. You may have trusted Christ as Savior and Lord, you may know in your head the Truth of His Second Coming, but you have grown cold and distant and have not felt for some time that Christ is precious and that seeing Him would be the fulfillment of all your longings.
- C. You may have never submitted to Christ as Lord and trusted Him as Savior and you may stand in desperate need of a new birth.

So if any of these three conditions fits you, listen carefully as I close by trying to show from **Titus 2:13** that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is worthy of your most lively and eager expectation. My prayer is that God will touch us all and make us love his appearing.

In that verse- Paul says:

### **Titus 2:13**

**looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,**

The Apostle teaches here that the appearance of the Grace of God at Christ's First Coming actually trains us to wait eagerly for "our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." Now notice three things very briefly:

## **1. It Is a Blessed Hope**

We should eagerly await the appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ because this is a BLESSED hope. A blessed hope is the opposite of a cursed hope. So the first reason to be eager for this great day is that it will mean blessing to us and not cursing.

The Bible teaches that there is only blessing for those who are in Christ Jesus. So as awesome as the Second Coming of Christ will be- there will be no curse in it for genuine Christians.

So take note of what Jesus is called in this verse: **“the great God and SAVIOR!”** So He is not coming merely as a Judge- but also as a Savior. And that makes this a blessed hope and not a cursed one. Our hope is a confident expectation of Salvation and not Wrath.

## **2. It Is a Visible Hope**

It is an APPEARING of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. Ever since the Son of God became a man- men and women have wanted to see Jesus. Philip said to Nathaniel, “Come and see!” Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore tree because he wanted to see! The Greeks said to his disciple, “Sir, we would see Jesus!” The apostle Paul wrote, “Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face!” And John seems to make everything hang on this one hope: “It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

I don’t want a long distance phone call with Jesus. I want to see the lips of Jesus move on that great day when the grace of His Heart overflows with these words to me, **“Well done, good and faithful servant.”**

## **3. It Is a Glorious Hope**

It is “the appearing of THE GLORY of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” Listen to the Apostle John’s attempt to put this into words in **The Book of the Revelation 1:13-16:**

**13 and in the middle of the lampstands *I saw* one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash.**

**14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire.**

**15** His feet *were* like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice *was* like the sound of many waters.

**16** In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.

The Apostle Levi wrote in **Matthew 24:30-31**:

**30** "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the *SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY* with power and great glory.

**31** "And He will send forth His angels with *A GREAT TRUMPET* and *THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER* His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

Let the final word this morning belong to the great Apostle of hope as he wrote in **2Timothy 4:8**:

**in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.**

So do you wait *eagerly* for the appearing of Jesus Christ? If not, confess that sin, pray for the awakening of your heart, and set yourself to meditate on the blessedness, visibility, and glory of the Return of our great God and Savior- Jesus Christ.

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.