

***“Jesus Is Coming Again” by E A Terry Delivered 12 02 18***

Isaiah 40:1 – 5; 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4: 13 – 18; Luke 17: 26 – 37; **Matthew 24: 3 – 51 (Sermon)**

Today is the first Sunday of Advent on the church calendar. Advent means; *“The coming of Jesus Christ.”*

There are two Advents on God’s Calendar. The first Advent or coming of Jesus was the birth of Jesus 2000 years ago in Bethlehem.

The Second Advent or the second coming of Christ will be when Jesus returns to gather and to reward His faithful disciples, to judge and punish all non-believers; to destroy all evil, all evil doer, and Satan; and to establish His earthly kingdom of peace.

The Advent Season always begins by looking ahead to the second coming of Jesus Christ!

Remember last Sunday was *Christ The King Sunday* and the Christian’s life is built on the promises Jesus made to His disciples and the hope that we have because of what Jesus has done for us.

Today and next Sunday we will look ahead; then on the following two Sundays we will look back in time to the birth of Jesus Christ.

While Jesus was on earth He taught about the events leading up to His second coming to set up His earthly kingdom.

A large number of these teachings are contained in Matthew 24 and 25.

Since the scriptures gave such infallibly accurate details in hundreds of Old Testament prophecies concerning the First Advent of Christ, hundreds of years before Jesus’ birth, we need to know and study the scriptures prophesying the Second Advent of Christ so that we will be adequately prepared and we will be ready to receive our Lord when Jesus comes again.

The second coming of Christ is important because it is mentioned 318 times in the New Testament.

Jesus’ second coming to rule as a King is also predicted more times in the Old Testament than Jesus’ first coming to die as a sacrificial lamb.

Here are just a few New Testament verses that teach Jesus’ second coming:

- In John 14 Jesus promised that He will come back for His disciples. ***“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”*** (John 14: 1- 3)
- And then in John 14:28 Jesus repeats His promise to come again. ***“I am going away and I am coming back to you.”***
- In Matthew 24:27 Jesus said, ***“For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.”***

- And in Hebrews 9:28 we read, *“So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and He will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him.”*
- In Acts 1:10-11 we read, *“They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”*

These passages as well as many others state in clear and distinct terms that our Lord Jesus is coming again.

Next week we will look at the signs leading up to Jesus’ return.

Then we will look at the other aspects of Jesus’ second coming.

All of Christianity believes in the second coming of Christ but there is not total agreement in timing or the sequence of the events of Jesus’ second coming.

I have listed five distinct stages of Jesus’ second coming and we will look at these stages in the coming weeks.

Other people may group these future events in different stages but The Bible is very clear all of these events will take place.

The first stage of Jesus’ second coming will be when Jesus comes in the air to receive all believers.

This event is referred to as The Rapture.

We read about the Rapture in our lesson from 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4.

We will talk more about The Rapture on December 23<sup>rd</sup>

The second stage of Jesus second coming will be when Jesus returns to earth and that event is described in Matthew 25:31-32.

In the first stage or The Rapture, Jesus comes in the air **FOR** His own, and in the second stage Jesus comes to earth **WITH** His own.

The third stage of Jesus’ second coming is The Great Tribulation.

The Tribulation consists of a series of events that describe God’s wrath being poured out on earth.

These terrible events are designed to give those people still living on earth one more last chance to accept Jesus as their Savior.

This stage ends with Jesus putting down all rebellion and destroying all evil.

In the fourth stage Jesus will judge and punish all those people who refused or neglected to accept Jesus as their savior.

***“Anyone whose name was not found written in The Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.”*** (Revelation 20:15).

The Book of Life is also referred to as The Lamb’s Book of Life. (Revelation 21:27)

At this time Jesus will also punish Satan and all of Satan’s followers.

Then in the fifth stage Jesus will establish His eternal Kingdom of Peace on earth.

We can read about The New Heaven and a New Earth in Revelation 21.

Jesus is definitely coming again.

But remember The Apostle Peter warns us that there will be mockers in the latter days who say, ***“Where is this coming He (Jesus) promised?”*** (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:4)

Not only is Jesus’ second coming important because of its prominence in scripture, but our lesson from 1st Thessalonians was written to give the Thessalonian Church and us comfort.

***“Comfort one another with these words”*** (1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:18).

These words of comfort from 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4 are read, explained, and proclaimed at most worship services celebrating the homecoming of our Christian loved ones.

These words clearly tell us that physical death is not the end of life, but physical death is the beginning of eternal life for all believers.

And these words clearly tell us that words that all believers will be with The Lord throughout eternity.

Isaiah was sent to comfort the Children of Israel in their time of misery with the message that The Lord will come and deliver His people (Isaiah 40).

Jesus’ coming again also brings us hope.

In Titus 2:13 we read these words: ***“While we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ...”***

The Apostle Peter also tells us as Christians we should look forward to Jesus’ second coming.

***“Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.”*** (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:14)

If you are a faithful believer you should not dread Jesus’ coming again.

But rather every faithful believer should want Jesus to come quickly to destroy evil and to take us home to be with our Lord.

The words of Revelation 22:20, ***“Come, Lord Jesus”*** should be the prayer of every believer.

In Matthew 24:36 Jesus’ disciples asked Jesus when He was going to establish His eternal Kingdom.

And Christians have continued to ask this same question for centuries.

Many Bible scholars have tried to figure out the exact time of Jesus’ return.

But The Bible is clear. Jesus said; ***“It is not for you to know the times or dates The Father has set by his own authority”*** (Acts 1:7).

And 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:8 says, ***“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.”***

But this we know for sure; Jesus’ second coming will be when people least expect it. (Luke 17: 26 – 30)

We do not know when Jesus is coming again but we are told over and over in The Bible to be prepared for Jesus’ return by living holy Godly lives and we are to watch for Jesus’ return.

In Matthew 24:42-44 Jesus said, ***“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come... so also you must be ready, because the Song of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him.”***

In a few minutes we will celebrate The Sacrament of The Lord’s Supper.

When we celebrate The Sacrament of The Lord’s Supper we remember Jesus death on the cross, we celebrate Jesus rising from the tomb, and we anticipate Jesus’ second coming.

When we pray The Lord’s Prayer we pray ***“Thy Kingdom Come”***.

That is a prayer for Jesus’ to come and to establish His earthly kingdom.

In addition you are praying for Jesus to transform you, to rule over every aspect of your life, and to crush all of your selfish little kingdoms.

God’s word to us is clear as Christians we should be **ready** for Jesus’ return.

As Christians we should be **watching** for Jesus’ return, and as Christians we should be **longing** for Jesus’ return.

Listen again to Jesus’ last promise, ***“Yes, I am coming soon”*** (Revelation 22:20).

**AMEN**