

WEEK FOURTEEN

The Second Coming

Dr. Bob Jones

He is coming suddenly, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. It will not be the permeating of human society with the Gospel, not the spreading of Christian influence in the world. That is not the second coming of Christ. It will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Like a flash of lightning He is coming. Oh, what a startled world it will be! What a startled Chicago and New York and London and Paris when He comes like that!

Listen! People are going to find out some of these days that we Christians were not the fools after all. Do not let them get you down. Do not let this wicked world oppress you. Keep lifting up your heads and keep looking up to the sky. He is coming one day, suddenly.

He is coming unexpectedly. A thing may be sudden and unexpected. I may expect a gun to shoot, and it shoots suddenly; but I expected it. The second coming of Jesus is to be both sudden and unexpected. He says, "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt 24:44, 1 Thess. 5:3-8.)

Let us be looking. Some of us are not going to be surprised. Every night for years I have gone to sleep saying to Jesus, "O has-

ten Thy coming!"

You folks who are back of this revival-every time you bring a soul to Christ you are hastening His coming. After awhile the last member of the bride will come in; then He will come. Our business is to work with the Holy Ghost in this dispensation to get a bride for Jesus. He is coming suddenly and unexpectedly, but not unexpected to us who know Him and love His coming.

Listen! "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3). There is nothing that weans Christians from the world like the assurance of His coming. Sometime when you are inclined to love money, position, fame, worldly honors, just sit down for a few minutes and contemplate His coming.

I went through a crisis in my life. We have a large enrollment in our school. We must turn away many students next year whom we cannot take care of. There is no strain on us financially. Oh, the mortar in the buildings is almost made up of my blood. There I was. What should I do: turn away students? No. Put up buildings! Make more room for young people who desire training for Christian leadership! Shall I take it easy? What shall I do? It is so easy

to take it easy. Well, I cannot, I dare not. I would not want Jesus to catch me sitting down. I want to be out on the battlefield fighting for God. I do not want, when He comes, to hear Him say I was too lazy to work for Him

When I was young I used to think I would take it easy someday. I have never taken it easy. All my life I have staggered under burdens that I could not have carried without God. This strain while I am here is just a little part of it. If I had nothing but this campaign - that used to be all I had - it would seem very light. However, this is only part of the load. But I would not want Him to come and find me sitting in an easy chair.

One day a woman in a meeting got up and gave this testimony: "God saved me from a life of drunkenness and debauchery. He has been better to me than anybody else." Then she sat down. Another woman, prominent socially, a woman of wealth got up and said, "Jesus has done more for me than He did for her. He saved me from the love of an easy chair."

Christian, How can you take it easy? Your Lord is away, but He is coming back someday. Is He going to find you busy when He Comes?

THE LIFE OF CHRIST:
A BUSY TUESDAY CONTINUES

THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY

Our opening passage illustrates the reality of the old adage “The enemy of my enemy is my friend.” We find two disparate groups who unite against Jesus. The Herodians and the Pharisees were normally at odds with one another but they were united against Christ.

The Pharisees were a religious sect highly regarded for their superior wisdom and holiness. They were a rigorously separated group that we know today as being legalistic. The both added to and took away from the Scriptures. They added their own traditions but failed to see Christ as the prophesied Messiah.

The Herodians were a Jewish political sect. They were willing to compromise with Rome in order to maintain some political clout and authority. They feared that Jesus “the King of the Jews” might upset that balance of power.

The Pharisees hated Rome and therefore detested the compromise of the Herodians. Together, they asked Jesus a question of Roman taxation. Had Jesus spoke against Roman taxation, the Herodians would have reported Him. Had He advocated paying taxes to Rome, the Jewish community would have rejected Him. They thought they had the perfect plan but they failed to recognize who they were dealing with.

The Sadducees, unlike the Pharisees, did not believe in an afterlife, therefore, they rejected the resurrection. Though they differed from the Pharisees, they were united against Christ.

Even today, various groups and organizations, whether religious, political or social find pure, biblical Christianity distasteful. While their overall purposes may differ and even be at odds they are

often united against truth.

Why would these groups unite against God rather than each other? The answer is simple: There is but one truth. The devil has many lies. They are not in competition with one another. They devil doesn’t care which lie you believe so long as you reject the ultimate truth.

Yet there was one scribe who caught Jesus’ attention. Scribes, often called lawyers, were those who gave attention to the understanding of the Scriptures and were usually Pharisees. He heard to words of Christ. His heart was convicted of the truth. He began to see beyond the rhetoric of his companions. The bible doesn’t give us the rest of the story. I often wonder if that man came so close without trusting Christ completely or if he came to a place where he received Jesus as his personal Savior?

DAILY READING: Mark 12:13-34, Matthew 22:15-40, Luke 20:20-40

DAY
1

Cities/Places

1. What did Jesus know about the Herodians and the Pharisees?
2. Who says that there is no resurrection?
3. Who perceived that Jesus had answered well?
4. Do you believe he ever fully trusted in Christ? Why or why not?

INDEPENDENT STUDY Using your own resources describe each of the following groups.

5. Pharisees
6. Sadducees
7. Lawyers
8. Scribes
10. Herodians

APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God’s Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

LEAD, FOLLOW OR GET OUT OF THE WAY

As we continue to journey with the Savior on this busy Tuesday, we find Him passionately engaging the Pharisees. Previously, He has answered them in parables or subtle sayings. He has stopped their mouths with questions they could not answer. This, however, is His most direct assault on the Pharisees.

Though Jesus never feared them, He had a complete understanding of the times. Before He could be crucified He chose to identify Himself and train disciples. There was a set day, time and year that He was to be offered as the spotless Lamb of God (Daniel 9:25-26). Earlier, He told us, "My time is not yet come" (John 7:6-8). Very soon He will say, "My time is at hand" (Matthew 26:18). Proclaiming the truth,

Jesus is giving the Pharisees the tools they have long sought for. His stinging words or reproach light a fire in their hearts. They are being brought to a place of decision. They will either receive Him as the promised Messiah or they will reject Him and have Him executed.

He calls them out for their hypocrisy. They lay great burdens upon others that they cannot bear themselves. They love the adulation of the crowds. They covet the titles bestowed upon them. They take pleasure in lording over others. Their positions are prestigious and powerful but absent of anything truly godly. They hinder those they should be helping. Their pride is their shame. While claiming to be better than their forefathers they

commit even worse sin. Their disciples are even worse than they.

The greatest tragedy is the God loved them and was giving Himself for them. His arms were extended to them but they would not come to Christ. Not only would they not come but they prevented those who would. Because they held positions of authority and influence, Jesus says that their condemnation is even greater. The hottest place in hell, I believe, will be reserved for those religious leaders who drew people away from Christ rather than to Him.

If you will not lead others to Christ, if you will not follow Christ, then don't be a hindrance. Get out of the way and allow others to do His work.

DAILY READING: Mark 12:35-44, Matthew 22:41- 23:39
Luke 20:41-21:4

1. Where was Jesus teaching and what was the response of the people?
2. What did the scribes love and what would they receive?
3. Why did Jesus say follow the words but not the works of the Pharisees?
4. Why should you call no man Father?
5. The word "woe" is an expression of great calamity and distress. It is a denunciation or curse. How many woes did Jesus pronounce upon Pharisees?
6. What did Jesus say they would do to the prophets, wise men and scribes He would send?
7. How would Jesus have gathered the people of Jerusalem if they had let Him?
8. How was a widow able to give more than the rich men?

APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

DAY
2

Cities/Places

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Reading Josephus' account of the destruction of the temple, allows us to see what Jesus saw when He wept over Jerusalem. He saw the coming judgment and destruction of the city and the temple. It broke His heart. He would much rather have gathered them to Himself but they would not.

As they departed the temple, his disciples were greatly impressed by the buildings. The huge and magnificent structures caught their attention. We are easily impressed by such things. Jesus was not. No matter how big or spectacular they were, Jesus knew that they were empty spiritually. They looked good on the outside but these buildings were already condemned.

Four of His apostles asked three specific questions. "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The answer Jesus gave is commonly called the Olivet Discourse due to the location from which He spoke.

The first prophecy has already been fulfilled. It is the destruction of the temple. Jerusalem was conquered and the temple destroyed in 70 A.D.

Spurgeon reports "As soon as Christ's disciples saw 'the abomination of desolation,' that is, the Roman ensigns, with their idolatrous emblems, 'stand in the holy place, they knew that the time for them to escape had arrived; and the did 'flee into the mountains.'"

Not only did God allow the destruction of the temple but He prophesied that it would happen. It was a result of God's judgement on a people that rejected Him. They maintained a form of godliness but denied the power thereof. That is the ultimate fate of any people that reject Christ. It may be a nation that turns from God or a church that fails to follow His direction.

If we look to Revelation 2:5 we will find a stern warning that the candlestick, the church, would be removed from Ephesus unless they repented and returned to their first works.

Let us always be mindful to worship and serve God.

DAILY READING: Mark, 13:1-23, Matthew 24:1-25, Luke 21:5-24

DAY
3

Cities/Places

1. Where did Jesus sit and teach?
2. Who asked Him questions?
3. Who spoke of the abomination of desolation?
4. Why did Christ foretell these things?
5. What three questions were asked?
6. Why did Jesus say that love would "wax cold?"
7. Why were those days shortened?

APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

I'LL BE RIGHT BACK

Christ explicitly states that there will be false Christs and false prophets. Not too long ago, I received a book that proclaimed the God had been incarnated again and this time as a woman, (somewhere in China it think). David Koresh told everyone that he was Jesus. Jim Jones made messianic claims for himself.

Only a confused few have followed these cult leaders. However, the world is becoming less biblically educated and more spiritually gullible. The false prophets are becoming more suave and personable. There has become a blending of religion and politics. Not the true religion but the religion of unity at all costs. It is the religion of tolerance and acceptance.

At the same time, the denominational religions are working at breaking down the walls that divide them. Distinctive doctrines are being laid aside for a common worship. Acceptance among the world has

taken priority over being acceptable in God's sight.

Soon the only outsiders will be those who stand on the absolute, unchangeable, uncompromising truth of God's Word. When it comes to the one world government and global religion, I would rather be an outsider with an inside track on God!

Jesus does not address the rapture of the church in this passage. Instead, He goes directly to the Second Coming which occurs seven years later. During the rapture, we will be caught up to meet Him in the air. Jesus never sets foot on earth at that time. The saints are caught up to be with Him and escape the judgment that follows in the Great Tribulation, also known as the seventieth week of Daniel. 2 Timothy 4:13-18 gives an excellent description of the Rapture.

The Great Tribulation, will conclude when

Christ returns in great power and glory. He will establish His kingdom on earth. This will initiate the Millennial Reign of King Jesus.

Jesus says that this generation will not pass till all these things are fulfilled. The word generation (genea) may speak of either an age or a nation. Either interpretation is true and perhaps both are implied.

We are living in the Church Age or the Age of Grace. The Word of God foretells nothing else till the Great Tribulation and the Millennium. Hitler tried to eradicate Jews from the face of the earth. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad appears to have a similar philosophy. He has more to fear than the United States. God always has been and always will be the Defender of His people.

Jesus is coming again! Anticipate Expect. Believe and be ready!

DAILY READING:

Mark 13:24-31, Matthew 24:24-35,
Luke 21:25-33

1. What will happen after that tribulation?
2. How will the Son of Man come?
3. What will pass away and what will not pass away?
4. Who or what shall arise?
5. Describe their influence and persuasiveness.
6. What effect will these signs have on men's hearts?
7. Why should we look up when these things come to pass?
8. What parable does Jesus use to illustrate His lesson?

APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

DAY
4

Cites/Places

BE PREPARED

Boy Scout's Motto is "Be prepared." That is a great motto for all believers in Christ.

The disciples had asked Jesus for signs of the times. He gave them some signs that are visible in every age (wars, rumors of wars, false prophets, famine, earthquakes) and then some that are more specific (the abomination of desolation, the sun darkened, stars falling from heaven). Then He follows up by saying that no one knows the day and hour but the Father.

Can you imagine what it would be like if the world knew exactly when Christ was coming again? I fear that those who lived in the ages when He was not coming would live in such worldliness and wantonness that by the time the actual day came no one would even know about it. The lack of accountability would breed

irresponsibility. The church would have lost its sense of urgency.

Instead, God chose to keep every generation on its toes. Paul expected to see Him return in his day. In 1 Thessalonians 4:15, Paul explicitly expects to be among those "which are alive and remain" at the rapture. No wonder he had such a sense of urgency in his ministry! He was always prepared.

A lack of preparation is a lack of power. If we are not prepared for Jesus to return at any moment we will lack the power to accomplish His will.

While we have no clue when the Second Coming will occur, we know that the seven year clock begins ticking at the rapture. When that will take place we do not know. But we should assume that

it is today. All signs are in place. There is nothing that we know of to prevent it from taking place this very moment. Even before you finish reading this paragraph or even this sentence, it is possible!

The day and hour are known by no one but the Father but Paul was wise enough to pen some Scriptures that remind us that the day of our salvation gets closer by the minute. I have adopted these as my life's verses to remind me to always be prepared.

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Romans 13:11-12

DAILY READING:

Mark 13:32-37, Matthew

24:36-25:46, Luke 21:34-38

DAY
5

Cities/Places

1. Who knows the day and hour Jesus will return?
2. What two things should we do since we do not know?
3. How many times are we told to watch?
4. How will the second coming be like the days of Noah?
5. Why should we watch?
6. Briefly describe or give a title to the two parables Matthew gives to illustrate the importance of being prepared.
7. How will people of all nations be divided in the judgment?
8. What three titles are ascribed to Jesus in the judgment passage?
9. What indication does Luke give us that the day changes?

APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?



TABLE TALK



PASTOR'S MESSAGE