

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Introduction:

The second coming of Christ is a pivotal and eagerly anticipated event in Christian faith. Since His ascension to the Father nearly two thousand years ago, believers have awaited His promised return. As recorded in Acts 1:9-11, the certainty of His return is affirmed. This promise is reiterated throughout the New Testament, with nearly three hundred references underscoring its significance. To understand this profound event, let us turn to the Bible alone for insight and guidance.

“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do” (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11).

1. How Will Jesus Return?

The Bible provides clear details about the manner of Christ’s return, emphasizing its personal, visible, and glorious nature. Understanding these aspects helps believers anticipate and recognize this pivotal event in Christian eschatology.

- a. Personally: According to 1 Thessalonians 4:16, “For the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God...” This passage emphasizes that Christ will return in person, not through an intermediary.
- b. Visibly: Revelation 1:7 states, “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him . . .” This verse, along with many others, assures us that Christ’s return will be a visible and unmistakable event. There will be no secret or invisible rapture.
- c. With power and glory: Matthew 25:31 declares, “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.” This verse highlights that Christ’s return will be marked by immense power and divine glory, a majestic and transformative event for all creation.

Jesus will return personally, visibly, and with great power and glory. These scriptural assurances underscore the profound and transformative impact of His second coming, offering hope and encouragement to all who await His return.

2. When Will Jesus Return?

The timing of Christ’s return is shrouded in mystery, as Scripture repeatedly emphasizes its unexpected and sudden nature. The Bible teaches us that no one can predict the exact moment, urging believers to remain vigilant and prepared at all times.

- a. Unexpectedly and without warning: 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 informs us that “For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night...” This suggests that Christ’s return will be sudden and unanticipated, with no prior signs to alert us.
- b. Parable of the wise and foolish virgins: In Matthew 25:13, Jesus says, “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.” This parable underscores the importance of vigilance, as the exact timing of His return remains unknown.
- c. Christ’s response to the disciples: When questioned about the end of the age, Jesus replies in Matthew 24:36, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.” He continues in verses 42 and 44, emphasizing, “Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming,” and, “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” The key takeaway is to remain alert and prepared, as the precise moment of His return is beyond our knowledge.

The return of Jesus will occur without warning, catching many by surprise. By heeding the biblical calls to watchfulness and readiness, believers can ensure they are prepared for this momentous event, despite its unpredictability.

3. What Will Happen When Jesus Returns?

The return of Jesus Christ will be marked by a series of significant and transformative events. The Bible provides a detailed account of what will transpire, including the resurrection of the dead, the destruction of death and Hades, the transformation of the living, the final judgment, and the restoration of the kingdom to the Father.

- a. Resurrection of the dead: According to John 5:28-29, “All the dead will hear Jesus’ voice and be raised.” This indicates that everyone who has died will be brought back to life to face judgment.
- b. Destruction of death and Hades: Revelation 20:13-14 describes how “Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.” Death, which claims the body, and Hades, which claims the spirit, will be destroyed. As stated in 1 Corinthians 15:25-26, “For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.”
- c. Transformation of the living: In 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, Paul reveals, “Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet . . .” This passage highlights that the living will be transformed into their glorified state instantly.
- d. Meeting Jesus in the air: 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 tells us that “The righteous who are alive and those who are resurrected will be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” This signifies a grand reunion with Christ.
- e. Destruction of the Earth: 2 Peter 3:10 asserts that “The earth and everything in it will be destroyed.” This event marks the end of the current creation.
- f. Final judgment: Jesus will sit on His throne to judge all humanity, as described in Matthew 25:31-33 and 2 Corinthians 5:10. Every person will be judged according to their deeds.
- g. Restoration of the kingdom to the Father: In 1 Corinthians 15:24, it is written, “Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God, the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.” This final act will complete Christ’s mission and restore the kingdom to its rightful place with the Father.

The second coming of Christ will initiate a series of profound events that will reshape existence as we know it. From the resurrection and transformation of believers to the ultimate destruction of the earth and final judgment, these occurrences will fulfill God’s redemptive plan, culminating in the eternal reign of the Father.

Summary:

1. **Certainty Of His Return (Acts 1:11):** The second coming of Christ is a fundamental truth affirmed throughout the New Testament. His return is a certainty, as assured by the angels at His ascension. Believers can trust in this promise and eagerly await its fulfillment.
2. **Need For Vigilance (Matthew 24:44):** “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” The exact timing of Christ’s return is unknown, emphasizing the need for constant vigilance and preparedness. Jesus repeatedly urged His followers to stay watchful, as His return will be sudden and without prior warning, catching many by surprise.
3. **Transformation And Judgment (1 Corinthians 15:52):** “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” Christ’s return will trigger a series of transformative events, including the resurrection of the dead, the destruction of death and Hades, and the final judgment. These events will culminate in the restoration of the kingdom to the Father, marking the fulfillment of God’s redemptive plan and the ushering in of eternity.



Applications:

1. **Live A Life Of Readiness (Matthew 24:44):** “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” Since the exact timing of Christ’s return is unknown, believers should strive to live in a state of spiritual readiness. This means continually growing in faith, maintaining a close relationship with God through prayer and scripture study, and living a life that reflects Christ’s teachings and character.

2. **Encourage And Build Each Other Up** (1 Thessalonians 5:11): “Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.” In anticipation of Christ’s return, believers are called to support and encourage one another in their faith journeys. This can be done through fellowship, acts of kindness, sharing of scripture, and mutual encouragement to remain steadfast in the faith.
3. **Proclaim The Gospel** (Mark 16:15): “And He said to them, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” Knowing the certainty and significance of Christ’s return should compel believers to share the gospel with urgency. This involves witnessing to others about the love of Christ, the hope of salvation, and the importance of being prepared for His return, thereby fulfilling the Great Commission.

Invitation:

When Christ returns, those who are prepared will love His appearing and rejoice (2 Timothy 4:8). However, those who have not obeyed Him will face His judgment (2 Thessalonians 1:5). Do not delay - begin preparing today to welcome His return with joy.

To be ready for His return, follow these steps to salvation according to the Scriptures:

1. Hear the gospel: “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).
2. Believe the gospel: “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:16).
3. Repent of sins: “I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3).
4. Confess Jesus as Lord: “That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).
5. Be baptized for the remission of sins: “Then Peter said to them, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

By following these steps, you can ensure that you are prepared for Christ’s return and secure your place in His eternal kingdom.

Questions:

1. What assurance do we have that Jesus will return?
2. In what manner will Jesus return according to the scriptures?
3. Why is it important for believers to remain vigilant regarding the return of Christ?
4. What will happen to the dead and the living when Jesus returns?
5. What ultimate events will take place following the return of Christ?

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Note: Based on a lesson by Bobby Stafford.

www.granbychurchofchrist.org/Sermons/pages/2011/Second-Coming-Christ.htm

