

Second Coming

Prayer

This morning I want to ask you a question. It is a question that should you consider the implications of the message today, it will shape the way you live your life from this day forward...

Will you rise when he calls your name?

Remember when we spoke about the preparation of the virgins for the bridegroom? We talked about the parallel between the five foolish virgins and the five wise virgins and the arrival of the groom, with the second coming of Jesus. Jesus is coming back for his bride. His bride is the church and YOU are the church.

Remember... Narcotizing Dysfunction - Narcotizing dysfunction is a theory that as mass media inundates people on a particular issue they become apathetic to it, substituting knowledge for action.

Have we heard about Jesus coming soon so much that we have become numb and apathetic to what that means? Do we believe that Jesus is coming soon?

If Jesus came today, right now... Let's say that the clouds rolled back and the trumpet sounded to announce the coming of the groom. Is your lamp full of oil or have you become complacent?

John 14:1-6 (CEV)

Jesus said to his disciples, "Don't be worried! Have faith in God and have faith in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house. I wouldn't tell you this, unless it was true. I am going there to prepare a place for each of you. After I have done this, I will come back and take you with me. Then we will be together. You know the way to where I am going." Thomas said, "Lord, we don't even know where you are going! How can we know the way?" "I am the way, the truth, and the life!" Jesus answered. "Without me, no one can go to the Father.

Homiletic:

I once heard of a young woman who prepared herself for a date with a man that all of her lifelong friends had said was a perfect match for her... they said he would be the man of her dreams. Needless to say she was excited. She was told that she would be going to an exclusive restaurant with live music and dancing... Now at first this woman wanted this so badly. She even took the day off work to make a good impression. She cleaned her whole apartment, went out and had her hair done, got a manicure and pedicure. She even had her makeup professionally done. She then went home and put on her best dress for the date. She really believed what

her trusted friends had said about this date. This was her future husband for goodness sake...

Now she expected him at 5 pm to come and pick her up... Finally, after waiting an hour she decided that she didn't know if he would ever come so she took off her dress, let down her hair and put on her pj's. She gathered up all her favorite junk food and sat in front of the TV.... At 7 PM the date arrived. She answered the door and there stood everything she had ever wanted in a man. He looked at her and said: "I told you I was coming, I even gave you two extra hours and your still not ready to go..."

The Father has delayed the return of the Son so that all might have a chance to come to him...

Now to be clear you need to prepare and be ready for the groom yet nothing you do will get you into heaven. The only way is through Christ. He can return at any time... Are you ready?

2 Peter 3:9 says:

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Now there will be a rapture; It is the blessed hope of the church. The living will be forever transformed in the blink of an eye and the dead in Christ will rise. We will appear before the judgment seat of Christ. We will have to give answer to God for our actions. Have we truly believed in him? God knows the intents of our hearts, have we turned from our flesh and allowed the Holy Spirit to bring about the likeness of Christ within us?

John 3:16 – 17

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

No let me be clear... this does not say he would believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, it doesn't say he who will believe. It says believes or believeth. Both of which when we look at the original language refer to a present tense participle. That means your faith MUST be active. You must believe in Jesus all the time... not just once upon a time. Once upon a time only works in fairy stories and Jesus is the real deal.

The one thing that I never want to hear from Jesus he has said is a possibility in Matthew 7:21-23

Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord,

have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

My friends Jesus has come and paid the price for all our sins. He has made us righteous before the Father, but we must embrace our faith in him and live as he has instructed.

There will be a great tribulation upon the earth... During this time those who are faithful in Christ will be with him... those who have not lived for him and believed will remain and experience the great tribulation. During this period the Anti-Christ will arise and offer false hope to the nations. Some will be deceived others will embrace the savior.

The Anti-Christ known in this context as the abomination of desolation will rise and establish a 7 year peace treaty with the nation of Israel. Israel will rebuild the temple in Jerusalem and once again worship God. They will re-institute the Mosaic laws of sacrifice. At the 3.5 year mark the Anti-Christ will break his promise and go into the temple and declare himself as God. The temple will be desecrated and thus will begin the great tribulation.

The tribulation will be a time of unprecedented war. It will be a time of earthquakes, famine, and disease. This will be a time so severe that Jesus says "Except the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved." (CF. Mark 13:20; Matthew 24:22)

Regardless Christ will return to the earth in power and authority and will conclude the great tribulation with the victory at Armageddon. Christ will defeat the Anti-Christ and will bind Satan. He will then establish a 1000 year rule on the earth, restore Israel to her land, lift the curse that rests on the whole of creation and bring the whole world to the knowledge of God.

When the Son of God came to earth we heard in the scripture in Luke 2:12...

And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger

This was a mundane sign of our King who came to die that we might live... The next time he comes Mark tells us in Mark 13:24-25

But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory

Luke says in Luke 21:25-28

And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.

The signs will not be mundane... they will reveal our God in his Glory...

Let's look at Revelations 6:12-17

I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, " Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?

I now really want to be taken out at the Rapture... How about you?

Even in the Old Testament the plan was foretold. Isaiah 13:6-13

*Wail, for the day of the Lord is at hand!
It will come as destruction from the Almighty.
Therefore all hands will be limp,
Every man's heart will melt,
And they will be afraid.
Pangs and sorrows will take hold of them;
They will be in pain as a woman in childbirth;
They will be amazed at one another;
Their faces will be like flames.
Behold, the day of the Lord comes,
Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger,
To lay the land desolate;
And He will destroy its sinners from it.
For the stars of heaven and their constellations
Will not give their light;
The sun will be darkened in its going forth,
And the moon will not cause its light to shine.
"I will punish the world for its evil,
And the wicked for their iniquity;
I will halt the arrogance of the proud,*

*And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.
I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold,
A man more than the golden wedge of Ophir.
Therefore I will shake the heavens,
And the earth will move out of her place,
In the wrath of the Lord of hosts
And in the day of His fierce anger.*

Jesus is coming back in splendor and glory. The lamb that was slain will return to this earth as the Lion of Judah. If you have been saved during the tribulation you will rejoice at his appearance... If you have not been raptured or come to live for Christ by this point, your time is up.

John 1:1-5 says:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Jesus is the Logos the living word of Creation.

Rev 19:11-16 says of Jesus the Word of God

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Our God will defeat his enemy with his very words!

Do you remember how our Lord Jesus began his public ministry?

He said: "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand" (Matt 3:2)

Now I believe who heartedly in the grace of Christ... but let's not get convoluted on what grace is...

Grace is God's unmerited favor. It is kindness from God we don't deserve. There is nothing we have done; nor can ever do to earn this favor. It is a gift from God. Grace is divine assistance given to humans for their regeneration (rebirth) or sanctification; a virtue coming from God - a state of sanctification enjoyed through divine favor.

In short, it is not a license to do whatever we please and still expect the bridegroom to accept us at the wedding feast. I believe that if in our hearts we are striving to serve God and are falling short, God looks at the intents of our hearts and gives us the strength as we go through the redemptive work of the Holy Spirit in sanctification and his grace is sufficient for us... If however, we are playing a dangerous game and walking the line and depending on a false security of Grace... We let's just say... I don't want him to tell me to depart from him, he never knew me...

Church this morning we are first called to be Disciples of Christ, then we are called to make Disciples of Christ...

Hear ye the word of the Lord this morning – Romans 13:11-14 NIV

And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

People as the end approaches even the elect are being deceived...

Here are some statistics from the George Barna Group that show just how far we in North America have been deceived

59% of people do not believe that Satan exists

51% of people believe that praying to dead saints works

35% of people believe that you can talk with the dead

50% of people believe that salvation is earned not a gift – so much for grace

75% of people believe that people are born neither good nor evil they make a choice as they mature. Unless our parents are saved we are born into the adamic nature.

44% believe that the bible, the Koran and the book of Mormon are all different expressions of the same truth

54% of people believe that truth can be discovered only through personal experience, logic and human reasoning

Okay now place you hands onto the bottom of your chairs and hold on, because many of these people today sit in our churches and call themselves Christians.

My friends today is the day; there is no more time to delay. The day of the Lords return has been set. While we sit and wait – be it know to you that God the Father has set a day, he has set a time and he will return and if you are not prepared...

If ISIS was here in Canada today and you were asked to deny Christ or die... What would you choose? If they threatened your family what would you choose?

Persecution is real today, it is not a dream, People are being put to death today for their faith in Christ. Do you think they stand on their own or do you think they take the first step and God grants them the strength?

Don't be deceived... daily the enemy is trying to get you to deny Christ is much more subtle ways...

Examine your walk today and if you find yourself falling short, make it right with God. Don't delay the time is short.

Matthew 24:3-13 NIV

As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.

"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.

The earth is showing the end is near. No man knows the day or the hour of the Lords return. We must be ready, just like the five wise virgins we must be prepared so that God's grace will be sufficient for us.

Homiletic:

There was one a young man that I spoke with about his personal relationship with Jesus. He was backslidden and he knew he was not serving God. When we spoke about his experiences in the church he had said he was hurt by some people but acknowledged that the time that he was in fellowship was the best of his life. He

said there was nothing better. He said he would have a conversation with God and he felt like sometimes Jesus was sitting right next to him in the seat. This young man knew his relationship with Jesus was real. He was angry but also acknowledged that God had not caused the problems in his life. He said that God loved him and when prompted said that God had not forsaken him. To me this sound like the perfect opportunity to try to restore this fellow. So I asked him if he was ready to recapture what he had lost, to once again embrace Christ. His answer stunned me... he said: "I'm not ready" He was afraid to take the next step... My daughter Ariana loves the Lord and is pulled between the will of the Holy Spirit in her life and he own will. She is not ready...

As painful as this is, I must give these individuals to the Lord, for only the Holy Spirit can influence a change in their position. As I was praying, I came to realize that these events are a sign of the coming of Christ. I pray this is not the case for my daughter but I came to realize that for the young man, he is an example of one whom Jesus said would turn away from the faith.

1 Timothy 4:1 CEV

God's Spirit clearly says that in the last days many people will turn from their faith. They will be fooled by evil spirits and by teachings that come from demons.

My friends... My brothers and sisters; Today we live in the tension between the imminent return of Christ and the delay in his coming; rest assured that tension will be broken by the suddenness of his return... but until that day, I challenge you today that as long as we have breath... LET US PREACH THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST.

Jesus has said that the signs of his second coming are: worldwide evangelism and birth pains. We recognize that TV evangelists, missionaries and Christians are spreading the good news world-wide. And in the world we are experiencing: deception, persecution, A falling away of people from the church, false prophets, and wickedness. We are in the day of the return of the Lord...

My friends – Jesus is coming back and he is coming back soon!
I love and care for each of you. Let us prepare together for the return of our Lord!

Let me close with these thoughts...

Jesus is coming soon
Without faith it is impossible to please God so he honors faith

Jesus said two wonderful things about his true church. He has said
"You have kept my word"
"You have not denied my name"

Now in the first instance we are holding fast to the words of Jesus the Logos. The second means that you are not embarrassed by the first... Jesus knew that some people would feel slightly ashamed of their faith. These people follow Jesus but keep it to themselves. Fear paralyzes them into not wanting to rock the boat...

Now let us look at the example of Paul and Silas when they had come to Thessalonica in Acts 17... the charge made against them by their enemies in Acts 17:6 says: *"These who have turned the world upside down have come here too"*

That's quite the insult isn't it... NOPE! Not to me...

As a Christian I would be proud to have it said... "Crossroads turned the village of Salmo upside down!"

From hurt, sorrow, grief, suffering and dis-function to the opposite. I would love to stand before my savior on that day and have him read that about this church.

To have our God return and smile down on us and say: "Well Done! Good and faithful servants, enter now into your reward, for I gave you the village of Salmo and you have turned it upside-down"

My friends many times you have heard the day draws near, yet hear me: The day of the Lords return is near, it is closer than ever before. It is time to put on the armor of God. It is time to pick up your sword and prepare for his imminent return.

Prayer