

3 Things Christ's Coming Does for You

Introduction. Christ is coming again. When His disciples watched Him ascend into the clouds following His resurrection, they were also assured of His future return (Acts 1:9-11). Since Christ has not yet “come in like manner” as they “saw Him go into heaven,” Christians still await the fulfillment of this promise (Hebrews 9:28).

In 1 Thessalonians Paul emphasized the importance of the second coming of Christ, especially as it relates to the everyday lives and future hope of God's people (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20). Based on the teaching presented in this book, there are three advantages of Christ's coming which gives you a better way to live now.

I. It Provides Comfort

- A. To calm the concerns of the Thessalonians regarding those among them who had already died, Paul wrote comforting words to them about the end (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). The understanding that the Lord will come again and resurrect faithful Christians so that they join with those still living in being welcomed into His eternal home is a comfort for God's people.
- B. Christ is coming again, and we're consoled in the fact that He'll provide a glorious future for His faithful followers beyond this brief earthly life (Romans 8:18; 2 Timothy 2:10-13; Hebrews 2:10; 1 Peter 5:4, 10).

II. It Motivates Holy Conduct

- A. Paul exhorted the Thessalonians that their hearts would be established (1 Thessalonians 3:12-13). The understanding that the Lord will one day come again to receive His own should spur servants of God to be “blameless in holiness” when it comes to attitudes, behavior, and conduct.
- B. Christ is coming again, and we want Him to accept our level of devotion, manifested in our holy conduct (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8). Our holiness defines our future state (Romans 6:22; Hebrews 12:14). Paul wasn't the only writer to use Christ's coming as a motivation for holiness (2 Peter 3:10-15).

III. It Encourages Watchfulness

- A. Paul warned the Thessalonian Christians that the second coming is like a “thief in the night” (1 Thessalonians 5:1-6). The understanding that the Lord will one day come again at an unpredictable time should awaken each child of God to the urgency of being prepared for His coming.
- B. Christ is coming again, and remaining watchful and ready at all times instead of lapsing into sin and neglect in our service is wise. When Jesus warned of the destruction of Jerusalem, He taught about the end of the world in parables:
 - 1. The wise servant (Matthew 24:45-51).
 - a) The good servant is prepared for the Lord's return at any time, is faithful throughout his delay, and in the end is rewarded. The wicked servant is faithless in fulfilling responsibilities, abusive to fellow servants, and lax in waiting for the master's return.

- b) This parable teaches that we can't neglect preparation. The revealed presence of God is represented as such an overpowering event that sinners are crushed by it. The evil servant ultimately earned his expected punishment — eternal condemnation (cp. Matthew 8:12; 22:13; 25:30).
- 2. The ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13).
 - a) The foolish virgins didn't forget to bring oil; rather, the delay of the bridegroom shows they didn't bring enough. They were foolish because they failed to provide for their lord's delay.
 - b) This parable teaches that you can't borrow what you can buy. There will be no borrowed righteousness on the day of the Lord's coming. All Christians must be ready now and each soul must see to their own lamp.
 - c) The oil of God's grace is given without price, but in the hour of the Lord's appearing it'll be too late to seek for it (Isaiah 55:1-2, 6).
- 3. The talents (Matthew 25:14-30).
 - a) The parable of the virgins represented watchfulness displaying itself in waiting for the Lord, while it is here displayed in working for the Lord. There it was inward spiritual life, here it's external activity.
 - b) This parable teaches that we can't recall lost opportunities. This advice is especially useful for those of us who have children. We must use what we have and not fret over being judged in regard to what we lack (cp. v. 15, "according to his own ability").

Conclusion. As we await the fulfillment of the promised coming of the Lord, the prospect of His coming will motivate us to comfort our hearts in view of our eternal hope, to conduct ourselves in holiness, and to encourage us to constantly live watchful and godly lives rather than becoming entangled in the sins of this world (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Will you be ready for His coming?

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