



OUR BLESSED HELP AND HOPE!

by George O. Wood

INTRODUCTION

Looking for the Lord's personal return always gives people a great view of Jesus . . . They have a splendid Christology who are looking for their Lord. They do not merely believe in the Christ of history . . . We believe in the Christ of glory. When a man is possessed of this doctrine he does not mumble. You can hear what he says, he has got good news to tell. When a man tells you good news he does not mumble it. He shouts it out. – The Weekly Evangel (predecessor to our Pentecostal Evangel), March 23, 1918

No matter where you look in the New Testament, if there is a passage on the second coming, it fits into one of the follow five themes. The hope of our Lord's imminent return.

1. Provides a powerful incentive for righteousness in our daily life.

Matthew 7:21-23 warns us against performance without Christ-like behavior. Charisma without character leads to disaster.

Admonitions to righteousness in view of His coming are replete throughout the New Testament: Matthew 24:42, Mark 13:35-37, Luke 12:40.

2. Galvanizes us to risk greatly for the King and His Kingdom.

Jesus tells the story of the man who played it safe and took no risks. He knew his master would return, but he played it safe (Matthew 25:14-30).

Are we taking the kind of risks that will produce eternal dividends?

3. Steadies our resolve to endure until the end.

Our Lord knew we would go through tough times. Therefore, he warns us about standing firm until the end (Matthew 10:22, 24:12-14).

The great expectation of the Lord's soon return gladdens our hearts in the days of weariness and desert (Ephesians 1:18-19, Hebrews 6:18-20).

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4. Fills us with the anticipation of reward.

We live in a culture of instant gratification. However, the Bible talks to us about delayed reward (Mark 8:34-35). However, knowing that the Day is approaching gives us wonderful assurance (Romans 16:20), and we take great comfort in the last message Jesus gives – the beginning words of which state: “Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done” (Revelation 22:12).

5. Makes us long for reunion with the One we love and serve.

Jesus used strong words in describing the disciples’ experience in His physical absence from earth – troubled hearts, grief, pain, anguish, weeping, and mourning (John 14:1, 25; 16:6, 20, 21, 22, 33).

But at this moment in heaven, Christ intercedes for us (Romans 8:34), prepares a place for us (John 14:2, and has sent the Holy Spirit to fill and empower us (John 16:7). While He physically remains at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He is working with us (Mark 16:20).

But, the Great Day is coming (Matthew 24:31, 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18).

Our hearts head for home when we begin to meditate upon our reunion with Jesus (Philippians 3:20, 21)!

CONCLUSION

The doctrine of the second coming aims directly at believers and tells us:

- Live righteously, in readiness for the Coming!
- Risk greatly. It will be worth it all!
- Resolve to endure to the end. Persevere!
- Anticipate the reward. It is with Him when He comes!
- Sent your heart on reunion. So shall we ever be with the Lord!

Alexander MacClaren, the great Scottish preacher, declared that the early Church *thought more about the second coming of Christ than death or heaven. They were not looking for a cleft in the ground called a grave, but for a cleavage in the sky called glory. They were not looking for the undertaker, but the upper taker!*