

WHEN JESUS COMES

2 Peter 3:1-14

Introduction: There are many differences between the conditions of the early churches and the churches of today. They met in homes of the members, today we have large, beautiful buildings with organs, choirs, processions and responses just to mention some things. They traveled by donkeys, camels or walked, wearing turbans, sandals and blankets. We have cushions, air conditioning, expensive hymnals, etc. Their preachers were not placed on a platform above the people but the people sat around the preacher. The internal differences were more pronounced. They had a spirit of expectancy which we do not seem to have. They had a hope which we seem to have lost. Their lives were filled with an air of anticipation which we are strangers to. They expected, anticipated, and longed for the return of Jesus Christ.

Oh, yes, we are intense, expecting and anxious about many things like: sports, pleasures, recreations, amusements, politics, the latest styles and our own personal interests, but at the thought of the soul, we are tolerant and easy going.

Perhaps one of the most popular reasons for this attitude is the divine calendar, the eschatological schedule our theologians have placed the Lord on. While the Lord waits His day of return, there is the spectacle of His servants beating one another on the head with the "pre" and "post" millennialism until the whole thing is "pre-post-terous."

I. THE LORD JESUS IS CERTAINLY COMING BACK

Just as He came to establish the kingdom of God upon the earth, He will come again to wind up the affairs of the earth.

1. The angels announced His first coming and will also announce His second coming.
2. Paul looked for the return of Jesus Christ.
3. *"The day of the Lord will come..." The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God..."*
4. Jesus, Himself, told of His coming back in *John 14:1-3*
5. Every time we take of the Lord's Supper we look forward to His return.
6. One of our generals made a statement that became famous when he said to the Philippines, "I shall return..." and he did.

II. THE MANNER OF JESUS' COMING

1. It will be in person.
 - Jesus said, *"I go away, and I'll come again..."*
 - It will not be the advent of the Holy Spirit as some teach for He is already here.
2. It will be a visible return as He will come with clouds and lightening.

3. It will be sudden.

- *"...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..."*
- Life is full of surprises.
 - Abraham was surprised by the heavenly visitors.
 - Moses was surprised to find the burning bush not consumed by the flames.
 - The disciples were surprised when Jesus appeared to them in the closed upper room.
- There are unpleasant surprises.
 - The people of Noah's day when the rains came.
 - The people of Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - The Egyptians upon the death of their first born.

4. It will be glorious.

- He came first in lowliness, but this time Jesus will return in mighty dignity.
- He came in poverty, but He will return in the wealth of Heaven.
- He came alone, but He will return with countless Angels and His Church.
- He came in weakness, but He will return in almighty strength.
- He came in humiliation, but He will return in exaltation.
- He who was born of a virgin, worked in a carpenter's shop, died on a Roman cross, buried in a borrowed tomb, shall return in glory. He who was crucified by a howling, mocking mob will return amidst the hallelujah of the skies.

III. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF JESUS' RETURN?

1. It will be a time of reward (*2 Timothy 4:6-8*) for those deserving.

2. It will be a time of reunion (*1 Thessalonians 4:14*) for all of our loved ones who have already gone on to be with the Lord, we shall be reunited with them.

3. It will be a time of separation (*Matthew 13:29-30*).

- Here on earth we live a life of togetherness, birds go in flocks, cattle in herds, fish in schools. The early settlers traveled in wagon trains. We want to be together in life and we want to be together in death and eternity.
- The believer and unbeliever will be separated, regardless of their family. The saint and the sinner shall be separated forever. We sing a hymn entitled, "When We all Get to Heaven" but the fact is not everyone is going to heaven.

IV. WHAT SHOULD BE THE BELIEVER'S ATTITUDE?

1. The believer should be watching. *"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."*

2. The believer should be faithful. *"Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh shall find so doing..."*

- To be faithful means to stand up when others sit down, hold on when others turn loose, to sing when others sorrow, to endure when others falter, to do right when others do wrong. This is being faithful.
- 3. The believer should be holy. (*2 Peter 3:10-11*) The fact that our Lord may return at any time should make us clean up our hearts and lives and purify our minds that we should not be ashamed at His coming.
- 4. The believer should be useful. (*1 Thessalonians 1:9-10*) It has been said that there are black shirts, silver shirts, brown shirts, shirts of all colors and even night shirts, but the kind of shirt that a Christian must wear is a WORK shirt.
 - The Lord isn't going to ask us how many clubs do we belong to, nor is He going to ask how many times the church has pot luck BUT He is going to ask, how many souls have we won.
 - The majority of the work in our churches today can be done and should be done by organizations outside the church. The main mission of the church is to: Evangelize, Baptize, and to Teach.

CONCLUSION:

1. When is Jesus coming back? When will the believer be caught up to be with Jesus? When will the skies split open and Jesus begins to descend?
2. Jesus is coming back and that is an undisputable fact. When? Should it matter to a Christian?
3. Christians need to be mindful that Jesus just might come back today, so it is only logical that Christians ought to be ready every moment of their lives to face Jesus.
4. Unbelievers will be left behind when Jesus comes. They will be separated from their Christian family members and friends.
5. Are you ready for the return of Jesus?