



BEACON

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The Second Coming of Christ

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We know that Christ is coming again. There are many reasons why we know this. First, He Himself said so, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there ye may be also*" (John 14:3). This language was uttered by Christ to the apostles the night of His betrayal.

Again, we know that Christ is coming again because the angels say so:

Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven (Acts 1:11).

This language was addressed to the apostles by two angels at the ascension of Christ.

And yet again, we know that Christ is coming again because inspired apostles say so:

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 The. 1:6-8).

The inspired Paul wrote this to the Thessalonian church.

When is He coming? There has been much speculation and wild guessing along this line. Many dates have been set. These dates have come and gone, but Jesus has not come. What does this prove? It proves that men know nothing "of that day and that hour." When God says that men do

not know, that should settle it. "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32). We ought to thank God that Christ is coming again, and we ought to thank Him that we know not the time of His coming. No doubt there are reasons as high as heaven why the time has not been revealed.

We know not the time of His coming, but we do know something about how He is coming. We have already learned from Acts 1:11 that He is coming as He went. This being true, He is coming in the clouds of heaven.

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him (Rev. 1:7).

What will take place at His coming? Here, the floodgates of speculation have been torn down! But let us see what the Scriptures say. Let us read slowly and carefully:

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a

shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words (1 The. 4:13-18).

This makes it plain what will happen when the Lord returns. The dead are to be wakened, and “then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.” Yes, we are going to “be caught up together,” and we will all meet the Lord at the same time. What about that word *first*? “The dead in Christ shall rise first.” That is, the ones who are living shall not precede the ones who are dead. No two resurrections with a thousand years or so between are taught in this passage.

When Jesus comes again, the dead will be raised, and all shall be judged. In the last chapter that Paul ever wrote, we hear him saying this:

I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom (2 Tim. 4:1).

What did Paul say Jesus was going to do at His “appearing”? He said He was going to “judge the quick and the dead.” How would you state this more

plainly? If He did not mean what He said, why did He not say what He meant?

In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus speaks of the judgment “when the Son of man shall come in his glory.” Yes, and He says that at this judgment the “sheep” and the “goats” both will be there! The righteous will be rewarded with eternal life, and the wicked will be punished with eternal damnation. Jesus uses the same word to describe the duration of hell as He does for the duration of heaven. When Jesus comes, that will be the end of time. The gates of time shall be closed, and the doors of eternity opened. May God help us to be ready for the second coming of Christ. My reader, are you a Christian?

Deceased

“Man owes his strength, his energy, chiefly to that striving of the will that conflicts with difficulty, which we call effort. Easy, pleasant work does not make robust minds, does not give men a consciousness of their powers, does not train them to endurance, to perseverance, to steady force of will, that force without which all other acquisitions avail nothing.”

Author Unknown

Sins of Omission

There is much to learn from Jesus’ standing still at the cry of Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52). Contemplating the possibility of ruining His perfection with a sin of omission (by ignoring an opportunity to serve when He had the time and ability to do so) is sobering. To have ignored Bartimaeus’ plea on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem would have incurred the same guilt before God as the priest and Levite did when each “passed by on the other side” (Luke 10:31-32). Thankfully, our Lord avoided this potential snare of Satan.

Like termites, sins of omission can slowly weaken and destroy a Christian. Even though you have not committed a scandalous public sin nor has a grievous work of the flesh blackened and scarred your life, you still can be lost. By just minding your own business and doing as little as possible for the cause of Christ, you are feeding a cancerous and deadly sin. In His final parable (Mat. 25:31-46), Jesus declared the real and extreme danger of failing to obey God. The righteous were those who had fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, taken in strangers, clothed

the naked, visited the sick, and attended to the prisoners (25:35-36). The unrighteous did not (25:42-43) and were sent away into everlasting punishment (25:46). Failing to do the right thing when you have the opportunity and ability to do good is failing to love your neighbor (Luke 10:25-37). It is impossible to love God acceptably (the greatest commandment) when you fail to love your neighbor (1 John 4:20-21; Mat. 22:37-40).

Doing good unto all (Gal. 6:10) is not a divine suggestion; it is a divine expectation. God expects His children to follow the example of His only begotten Son, who went about doing good (Acts 10:38). Like Jesus, every Christian is to be:

- zealous of good works (Tit. 2:14),
- prepared and ready unto every good work (2 Tim. 2:21; Tit. 3:1),
- walking in good works (Eph. 2:10),
- bearing fruit in every good work (Col. 1:10),
- glorifying God by good works (Mat. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:12),
- well-reported of for good works (1 Tim. 5:10).

A failure to comply with God's expectations is sin (Jam. 4:17). Sins of omission (i.e., failing to do what God says) are just as effective at keeping you out of heaven as sins of commission (i.e., doing what God says not to do). Therefore, taking an honest and careful inventory of your priorities and actions is essential to being and remaining faithful to God. It is clear, for example, that assembling with brethren for worship and Bible study is God's weekly expectation for His people (Heb. 10:24-25; Eph. 4:15-16). When assembly time comes, are you present, or are you guilty of the sin of omission? Communing with God daily is essential to your spiritual health and growth (Acts 20:32). Reading and meditating upon God's Word, coupled with prayer, are vital to your fellowship with God. Is this your daily habit, or are you guilty of the sin of omission?

God expects His people to show love to strangers (Heb. 13:2). When we have visitors to our services, are you cordial and welcoming, or

Watch What We Sing

Not only is our singing to be scriptural, but we are to guard against singing a lie. For your consideration: The singing of a hymn should be a great experience for us. Someone has written some comparisons on the hymns we sing:

- We sing, "Onward Christian Soldiers" and wait to be drafted into His service.
- We sing, "Sweet Hour of Prayer" and are content with fifteen seconds a day.
- We sing, "O, for a Thousand Tongues" and do not use the one we have as we should.
- We sing, "There Shall Be Showers of Blessings" but do not come to the services of the church when it is raining.
- We sing, "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" and let the least little offense sever it.
- We sing, "Serve the Lord with Gladness" and gripe about all we have to do.
- We sing, "We Are Marching to Zion" but fail to march to Bible school of worship.

Author Unknown

are you guilty of the sin of omission? God expects His children to greet one another warmly. Paul instructed the Philippians to "salute every saint in Christ Jesus" (Phi. 4:21). The apostle John closed his final epistle with the words: "Greet the friends by name" (3 John 14). Paul and Peter both commanded a warm, friendly greeting when brethren are together (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 1 Pet. 5:14). Is this your practice, or are you guilty of the sin of omission?

Sins of omission slowly, steadily, and stealthily extinguish the fire of a Christian's zeal. As zeal diminishes, the deadening disease of lukewarmness increases. Like our Lord, we must ever beware of sins of omission.

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Beacon

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Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Bill & Peggy Crowe

Nancy Travis

Orville & Linda Worley

Carla Burseson

Bill & Pam Busch

Heather Stark

Phyllis Brantley

John Hastie

Please Remember

March 15

Birthdays and Anniversaries Get-together will be held in the zone room after the afternoon service.

March 29

Fifth Sunday Dinner after the morning service. Singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.

Weekly Services

Sunday

Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship Service — 10:00 a.m.

Afternoon Worship Service — 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

Bellview Church of Christ

Bishops: Paul Brantley

Michael Hatcher

Bill Busch

Minister: Tim Cozad