

"The Second Coming"

The Lord Jesus promised to come back for His own someday. And predictions abound, but no one knows when. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. And this is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." Today we'll study about the second coming, so stay with us.

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way. We're here to search God's Word for the Lord's will. God's word tells us everything that we need to know about life and godliness. And while there are some things that God doesn't tell us, He always gives us the truth that we need. God is a wise and a loving Father, who wishes for all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth according to 1 Timothy 2 and verse 4. He gives us that needed truth in His Word, His message of truth for all people in all places for all time. The Word of God is all-sufficient to teach us His will. Well we're always delighted when you spend this time with us. And we want to be a part of your life each week.

People are fascinated by the end times but can easily be deceived. Perhaps you remember some years ago when everybody focused on Y2K and believed a world disaster would happen. Dire predictions that frightened everyone never took place. And then people were focused on 2012 with predictions of calamities and total destruction. And they cited an ancient Mayan calendar, astrologers, psychics, and even some people who think the Bible says 2012 is the year. Well there was a famous radio preacher who said that he was certain that the rapture would take place on May 21, 2011 and the end of the world on October 21st. Well, neither happened, and he proved to be a false prophet. False teaching ends up causing doubt in the truth and it hurts the cause of Christ.

What can we know about the second coming of Jesus Christ? Well while most Christians believe it will happen, there's a lot of error about signs and times that confuse and needlessly frighten people. We're not interested in religious hoopla. We want to take the time to look into the Scripture for the truth.

Now if you want to know more about the second coming and what happens in the end, we're offering this month a free book or a CD of our study. They're both free. So just mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also stream this program on our website at www.searchtv.org.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from 1 Thessalonians 5:1 to 6, and then we'll explore the second coming.

Our reading today comes from 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 verses 1 to 6.

Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.

Encouraging and alarming words from the apostle Paul. Let's pray together. Father help us always to live with an alertness and a readiness for Your second coming. We don't know when You'll come Father but help us to be prepared. This we pray in Jesus name, Amen

Some people claim to be prophets today, but are they? The Bible gives us the test of a prophet in Deuteronomy 18:21 to 22, "You may say in your heart, (Moses writes) 'How will we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' "When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does

not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.”

Now Jeremiah spoke of prophets in his day that were always claiming to speak in the name of the Lord. Jeremiah 23 and verse 16 says, “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into futility; They speak a vision of their own imagination, Not from the mouth of the LORD.’” And the verse 32 says, “Behold I am against those who have prophesied false dreams,” declares the Lord, “and related them, and led My people astray by their falsehoods and reckless boasting; yet I did not send them or command them, nor do they furnish this people the slightest benefit,” declares the Lord.

Now so-called prophets, who falsely predict when Christ will come and the end of the world, they cause doubt in the Truth. They make people think God’s Word is not true because their prophecy turned out to be false. Now one religious group predicted 1975, the end of the world; I have book in my library entitled, “88 Reasons Why the Lord Will Come in 1988.” But the Lord didn’t come then either. Twenty percent of Americans believe the Lord will come in our lifetime.

Now while we cannot believe false predictions, we can be certain the Lord Jesus is coming again, because the Lord promised us that He would. And the Lord always keeps His promises. He said in John 14:1 to 3, “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” Now Jesus never lies. He will come again to take us home with Him in heaven.

The Lord Jesus is coming a second time to save those who love Him. The Bible says in Hebrews 9 verses 27 to 28, “And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.” Now each Lord’s Day, Christians partake of the Lord’s Supper in remembrance of what Jesus did on the cross and in anticipation of His return. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 11:26, “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.”

Now some wonder when the Lord will come. Well the Lord Jesus himself discussed this in Matthew 24 verses 35 and all the way through 39. And He said, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour (that is when the end of the world will end) no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they didn’t understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.”

Now in 2011 a man wrongly predicted the rapture on May 21 and the end of the world on October 21. But when those events didn’t happen, there was a devoted follower who said well the Bible is wrong. My friend, God’s Word actually proved true, while the human prediction of that false prophet proved false both times. The Bible said no one knows when the Lord will come a second time or when the world will end. “But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone” (Mark 13 and verse 32). God has not revealed something to man today that the Father did not even reveal to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus told the apostles in Acts 1 and verse 7 in answer to a similar question, “It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority.”

One thing we do know is that God hasn't revealed when the Lord Jesus will return. The Bible says in 1 Thess. 5:1 to 5, He says, "Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." Just as we don't know when a thief will break into our homes, we don't know when the Lord Jesus will return. And to say we do know shows that the Word of God is not in us.

So... "What will happen when Jesus comes again?" Well the first evidence of His coming will be a shout and a trumpet. The Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 4 and verse 16, "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." Now a shout and a trumpet will call people's attention to the arrival of the Lord Jesus. And no one will doubt what is about to happen.

How will Jesus appear to us? Well, He'll come in the clouds in great glory. And the Bible tells us of the Lord's ascension into heaven in Acts 1 verses 9 to 11: It says, "and after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven." Jesus will one day appear in glory with his mighty angels in the clouds.

The Bible says in Revelation 1 and verse 7, "Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen." Now every person will see the Lord Jesus on that day. Every person will know He is real, He is in power, and He is The Lord. On that day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of the Father.

When the Lord Jesus comes again, He will bring back with Him the spirits of those who have died. The Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 4:14 to 16, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." Now the departed spirits of the righteous dead will come back to earth, with Jesus, and they will be resurrected. Then their bodies will be changed. Now the raising up of the righteous spirits means they will have new bodies. And I'll speak more about this next week.

We should not think, however, that only the righteous will be raised on the last day. In fact all the dead will be raised. The Lord Jesus himself said in John 5 verses 28 and 29, "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment." The apostle Paul said in Acts 24 and verse 15, that "there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked."

Now those of us who are alive, if we are alive when the Lord returns will be changed. Our bodies will be glorified like the bodies of the resurrected. They will have imperishable, immortal bodies. And at that point the Lord will cause them to be caught up into the air. And the Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 4 and verse 17, "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with

them (that is the resurrected) in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

Now the Bible says in Philippians 3 verses 20 to 21, “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state (the body we have right now) into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.” Now our new, glorified bodies will prepare us for life in heaven.

Now you might hear the word “rapture” now and then, to speak of this taking up of those in Christ who were resurrected and those who are alive. The word “rapture” comes from the Latin term “rapio” used to translate the concept of being “caught up” to meet the Lord. Now some say the rapture happens much earlier than the general resurrection. And they say this because 1 Thessalonians does not really address the resurrection of the wicked; but as we have seen the Lord Jesus said that the resurrection of the good and the evil will happen on the same day (John 5 verses 28 to 29).

Now when Jesus comes again, the earth and its works will be burned up. 2 Peter 3 and verse 7 says, “But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.” Verses 10 to 11 say, “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up (now some versions say exposed. And then he says). Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness.” 2 Thessalonians 1 and verse 7 says, that “the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire.”

Now words such as “fire,” “intense heat,” and the “destroyed” clearly show the present heavens and earth will not be our dwelling place throughout eternity. This phrase “elements” refer to those elementary things of which this natural world is made. These elements will be destroyed by burning it’s self; intense heat. 2 Peter 3 verses 12 to 13 remind us to look for “the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat. But according to His promise we are looking new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.”

1 John 2 and verse 17 simply says this world is passing away. It’s foolish to get so wrapped up in this world and to forget there is more beyond. The Lord Jesus is coming back one day for His people. Those whose robes are washed white in the blood of Jesus and whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life will live with Him forever. I tell you nothing is more important. Nothing. Now I have a wonderful wedding ring here, that my wife put on my finger when we married. It’s important to me, very important. But you know what, when the Lord Jesus comes for me I can’t take this wedding ring with me. I have to leave it here. The only thing that I can take to heaven with me is my soul and the new body He will give me. Are you prepared to go to heaven? Nothing is more important. Let’s pray together. Father help us to love You with all our heart and soul and mind and spirit. And help us Father to give ourselves to You fully and freely. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen.

If you saw Jesus coming in the clouds right now, what would you think and how would you react? Could you say, “Come, Lord Jesus,” and welcome Him; or would you dread the day of the Lord? Now how you answer that question says a lot about where you are spiritually. Many people want the Lord to come someday, but they want to live as they please for the moment and not make the needed

changes to prepare for the Lord's coming. They presume they'll have plenty of time; that it'll come later, it'll be okay, and I can get right with the Lord later on.

Because the Lord will return like a thief in the night and we don't know when, we must be ready for His coming at all times. We ought to live every day as if it were the last one before the Lord returns. If it's the last day, what changes do you need to make in your life? And is your heart right with the Lord? Are you living as you ought to live? Maybe you have loved ones that need to get right with the Lord. Not knowing when the Lord will return doesn't mean that we have plenty of time; it means that we must be prepared at all times.

And if you're not right with the Lord, today, today is the very best day to respond to the grace of God in obedience to the gospel. Believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Repent and turn from your sins, and let the Lord rule your life. Upon the public confession of your faith, be baptized in His name. Now baptism into Christ means being baptized into His death according to Romans 6:3. Baptism brings us into contact with His blood, and unites us with Him in His burial and resurrection. It frees us from sin according to Romans 6 verses 4 to 7. So don't wait, obey the Lord today.

Well we hope that today's study of the second coming has stirred you and your heart to follow the Lord. We're offering a free little booklet called After Life. And if want a free printed copy or a CD of this study, then mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now you can download these lessons or a newsletter online at our website: www.searchtv.org. Or you can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! And we ask that you subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry." There's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now if you get a hold of us don't worry, we're not here to get your money. We're not here to exploit anybody. We're here to help you get to heaven.

We do ask that you please, please get involved with a church of Christ. They're looking for new folks. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be happy to help you find one. Well, we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So we ask that you keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program, let them know you watch. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.