

The Facts and Blessings of Christ's Second Coming

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Date: 15 January 2012

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[0 : 00] In his helpful little book, *Profiting from the Word*, A.W. Pink asks a very important question. Are you longing for the second coming of Christ so strongly that you would be filled with joy if you knew for certain that he would come back within 24 hours?

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Now, probably most of us don't have that strong of a desire, at least as we ought. But that longing can increase as we consider the facts and the blessings of the second coming of our Lord Jesus. And that's what we're going to do this afternoon. We're going to look at three facts and two blessings concerning his return. We're going to turn to a number of different passages, so I'm going to ask you to turn to Acts chapter 1 and verse 10 to begin with.

In fact, number one is very simply, Jesus is coming again. Jesus is coming again. It was 40 days after his resurrection, and he had just descended into heaven in full view of his 11 disciples.

[1 : 34] Yes, there were just 11. Judas had hanged himself, and Matthias had not yet been chosen as the 12th disciple. And in verse 10, we read chapter 1 of Acts.

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. Men of Galilee, they said, Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus who has been taken from you into heaven will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven. That's fact number one. Jesus is coming again.

It's a glorious truth. It's a fantastic fact. It's the promise of God. It's the blessed hope of every born-again believer. And it's confirmed here by two angels that were sent from God.

Jesus is coming again. Now, should we not be praying, Come, Lord Jesus. Jesus taught his disciples in the Lord's Prayer, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.

[2 : 44] That's how you ought to pray. Come, Lord Jesus. It's your will. It's our desire. Some of the best ways that you can pray and that I can pray is the word of God.

And the word of God says he's coming again. So let's pray about that. Let's pray and let's ask him to come again. Turn to Matthew chapter 25.

Matthew 25 and verse 31. Fact number one, Jesus is coming again. Fact number two, all the angels will be with him.

All the angels will be with him. Matthew 25 and verse 31. When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him.

All of them. Listen to John Piper's comments. All of them. Did you hear that? Heaven will be left empty of his armies. All of the angels will be with him.

[3 : 48] That means his triumph is so sure that he doesn't have to cover the rear guard. No one will threaten heaven when Jesus comes back to earth.

All of the armies of God are on the front line with Jesus. Now he could handle the conquest of earth alone, obviously, if he wished. He is God. And the angels are not God.

We read in Hebrews 1.4. Jesus became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

And in verse 6 of chapter 1. Let all the angels worship him. They worship the Lord Jesus. He doesn't worship them.

But the angels come along to magnify him and to do his bidding and to serve him even as he serves those who inherit salvation. That means you have angels around you serving you right now if you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

[4 : 56] He has sent his angels to serve those who inherit salvation. Praise God for that. Well, what is his bidding for the angels?

In Matthew 24 we read this. He will send his angels with a loud trumpet call and they will gather his elect from the four winds. What an exciting assignment that is.

They're going to gather you and me and every believer to meet the Lord Jesus. And they won't miss a single Christian. They'll gather every single one.

Now some people say, well, I don't want to pray for the Lord to come back. I want my husband. I want my wife to be saved first. I want my children to be saved. I want my neighbors and my friends to be saved.

But beloved, here we need to learn something, don't we? Let God be God. Let God be God. All of his elect are going to heaven.

[6 : 00] Everyone he has chosen before the foundation of the earth will be in heaven. So, let us pray earnestly, come Lord Jesus.

And on the other hand, let us pray earnestly for sinners to be saved. And I trust you're doing that. I trust you're praying for at least three unconverted people every day to come to know Jesus Christ. But I trust also you're praying, come Lord Jesus. Turn to Hebrews chapter 10. Hebrews chapter 10 and verse 37.

Fact number one, Jesus is coming again. Fact number two, all the angels will come with him. And fact number three, his coming is near. His coming is near.

Hebrews 10, 37. For in just a very little while, he who is coming will come and will not delay. In Revelation 22 and verse 20 we read, Our Lord assuring us himself.

[7 : 07] He says, he who testifies to these things says, Yes, I am coming soon. He is coming soon.

Soon? What do you mean, Lord? It's been 2,000 years and you're not here yet. Well, Peter has the key. And in 2 Peter chapter 3 we read this.

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends. With the Lord, a day is like a thousand years. And a thousand years are like a day.

2,000 years? It's only been two days. His coming is near. But Peter also teaches us that there will be scoffers continuing. They will say, Where is this coming?

He promised. Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation. And regarding those scoffers, Matthew Henry says, Let them know that God is not slack concerning his promises toward his people.

[8 : 14] But he is patient and he is long-suffering toward his enemies. His coming will be sooner than they are aware. His coming will be sooner than they are prepared.

His coming will be sooner than they desire. But for his people, it will be just the right time. His coming is near.

Well, we've looked at three simple facts relating to that glorious day. Now let's look at some of the blessings that come to the people of God at the return of Christ. Turn to John chapter 14, please. John chapter 14. A lot of attention and speculation is given to the question. Maybe you've heard things like this.

What will we do in heaven? Will I get to go shopping? Will I get to play golf? Will I get to fly to other planets? Will I get to play my trombone? This and that and the other thing. It's all the activities.

[9 : 12] Blessing number one. We will be with him. We will be with him. J.C. Ryle says, The full nature of heaven is wisely hidden from us.

It is enough for believers to know that they will be with Christ. It's enough for believers to know that they will be with Christ.

It is the company, not the activity, that makes for eternal happiness. And so, John chapter 14, we read it. The words of our Lord. Do not let your hearts be troubled.

Trust in God. Trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you. I'm going to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, that you also may be where I am. We will be with him.

[10 : 16] And our joy will be complete. Our joy will be complete. Turn over to John 17, 24.

Tremendous verse from the high priestly prayer of intercession that Jesus prayed to his Father, where our Lord reveals his great desire to have us with him in heaven.

John 17, 24. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am and to see my glory. The glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

We will be with him because he wants us with him and he wants us to see his glory. Now that's an unusual glory.

Piper says it again. This glory that we will see is not mere wonder and beauty and glory of a sunset or the Grand Canyon or the Milky Way, as awesome as they are.

And I'd like to add a couple of my own to the majestic, awesome glory of God's creation.

Betelgeuse is my favorite star.

[11 : 30] It's in the constellation Orion. Orion. And its size is so great that it's twice the size of the orbit of the earth around the sun.

You know how long it takes the earth to go around the sun? One year. That's right. Twice the size. It's more than 3,000 times as bright as the sun.

It's 300 light years away from the earth. And you know that light travels at 186,000 miles a second. And that means at that speed, it takes 300 years for the light from Betelgeuse to get to Bremen.

That's the glory of God's creation.

Now, the other end of the extreme. My favorite bird is a little hummingbird. Smallest bird in the world. It weighs as much as a penny.

[12 : 32] And its little heart beats not one time per second like yours and mine, but it beats 20 times per second. Brr, brr, brr.

Amazing. And when it's in full flight, its wings beat 80 times per second. And you know it's like a helicopter.

It can go right up and it can come down. It can go in and it can come out. And it can go any way it wants to. The magnificence of the glory of creation.

But that's not the glory we're talking about. We're talking about the glory of the creator who made them all. And that's the glory of Jesus. And he says, I want you to come and be with me.

Father, I want them with me to see me and to see my glory. And it puts all the other glories of creation, as awesome as they are, into the shade when we see the glory of Jesus.

[13 : 32] I want to be there, don't you? Shouldn't we be praying, come Lord Jesus? We're anxious to meet you and anxious to see your glory? Oh my.

No wonder Paul said in Philippians 3, we eagerly await a Savior from there. Turn to 1 John chapter 3, please.

1 John chapter 3. First blessing is we will be with him. And the second blessing is, very simply, we will be like him.

We will be like him. Now isn't that the work of the Holy Spirit in your life and in mine? The work of sanctification, making us to be more and more like our blessed Lord Jesus.

We read it in 2 Corinthians chapter 3. We are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

[14 : 36] And if there's no evidence at all of becoming more and more like Jesus, whatever the degree may be, there's really a question of, has he saved you?

Has his work of grace had its way in your life? Oh my. Does anyone ever attain complete likeness here on earth? No.

No. Will we one day? Well, 1 John 3, too. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not been made known.

But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Now, the Bible nowhere states that we will ever be equal to Christ.

He's God. And he always will have his supremacy. And he always will be sovereign. We will never be God. We will worship him.

[15 : 43] He will not worship us. But note this wonder. Jesus is our elder brother, and he calls us his brethren. And by adoption, we have the same father, and we have the same inheritance.

We will have the same spiritual body. And the day is coming when nobody will doubt that you belong to the family of God. You who have trusted Jesus Christ.

Now, sad to say, sometimes that's questionable now, isn't it, when people look at our lives. Is that what a Christian looks like? Well, then I don't want to be a Christian.

No. That's the reason we need to be on our knees before our God in repentance for our sins. Confessing them to him and being washed afresh by the blood of Jesus Christ.

We need that day in and day out, beloved. So that we are becoming more like him. And that's why John goes on to say, everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself just as he is pure.

[16 : 54] And when he comes back, we will be like him. We will share in his immortality. Our bodies will be raised from the graves, snatched off of the earth, united with our spirits, taken to heaven.

For there will be no more death. There will be no more suffering. There will be no more sorrow. There will be no more sin. There will be no more trials. There will be no more temptations. None of that in heaven.

Never again will our communion with Jesus be broken. Never again will we be plagued by unbelief or depression or worry or anger or pride or greed or lust or addictions or gluttony.

We will be like Jesus. We will be perfect in those moral aspects. Turn to Philippians 3.20 if you will please.

Paul puts the clincher on it. And if you are saved by God's amazing grace, you belong to the same tribe as the Apostle Paul when he wrote this. Philippians 3.20.

[17 : 56] Paul says, Now here's the same question I asked you at the beginning.

Are you longing for the second coming of Christ so strongly that you would be filled with joy if you knew for certain that he would come in the next 24 hours?

Now brothers and sisters, may I suggest that we all need that kind of revival in our hearts and our lives today. Let's be praying for it.

That God would do that work in our lives. Well, one more thing. The Lord Jesus is speaking to every one of us here. Be on guard. Be alert.

Keep watch. Keep watch. Because you do not know the day when your Lord will come. And this afternoon, if you are lost, and if you are blind, and if you are miserable, and if you're on the broad road that leads to destruction, then Satan's most powerful and clever scheme is to convince you of the wisdom of delay.

[19 : 35] Wait just one more day. One more day. You know the Bible is true. You know Jesus saved sinners.

Just wait one more day. One more day. You can take care of that business. One winter day. A carcass was floating down the Niagara River on a cake of ice.

There was an eagle soaring above the river. He spied that carcass on the cake of ice, and he swooped down and began leisurely devouring his prey.

Swift current began moving him toward the brink of the falls. But wasn't he safe? Couldn't he stretch his powerful wings and leap in just a moment the very brink of the falls and make his escape?

He'd done it a thousand times before. And so he floated on, enjoying his meal. But now the thundering roar and the cloud of white mist that marked the fatal brink of the falls was close enough.

[20 : 38] It's time to leave. And so he stretched out his great wings to fly away. But alas, he couldn't move. He couldn't rise.

Unnoticed by him, his talons had been sunken in the ice on that bitter winter day. Sunken in the flesh of his prey and in the ice.

And his fate was sealed. He struggled with all of his power and with all of his might and with all of his muscles and with all of his sinews. But in vain.

And in a few minutes, he was swept over the edge to a swift and horrible death. He had waited too long. I want to ask you, have you waited too long?

Is it too late for you to be saved? And I answer, no. No. A thousand times no. The Bible says now is the day of God's favor.

[21 : 37] Now is the day of salvation. So right now, turn away from your sins in repentance toward God and he will forgive you. Right now, trust Jesus Christ to save you from the hell that you deserve.

And he will. He's the only way. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. For Christ died for sins once for all.

The righteous for the unrighteous. To bring you to God. Don't be like the eagle. Beg God for mercy. Today. Not tomorrow. And then you'll be ready. If Jesus comes back today. Now unto him who is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

To the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and majesty. Dominion and power. Both now and forevermore. Amen. Amen.

[22 : 46] We're dismissed.