

Christ Is Coming

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[0 : 0 0] We look forward to hearing the word of God preached, so please turn with me once again to! the book of Mark this time, the book of Mark chapter 13. And again if you're visiting with us our pastor has been preaching through this book.

And we're going to carry on from verse 24 in Mark 13. In this chapter Jesus has been speaking of the desolation of Jerusalem, but also of his second coming. So we're going to continue that theme in chapter 13 of Mark verses 24 to the end.

This is the word of God. But in those days following that distress, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. The stars will fall from the sky and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory, and he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

Now learn this lesson from the fig tree. As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near right at the door.

[1 : 1 7] I tell you the truth. This generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard. Be alert. You do not know when that time will come.

It's like a man going away. He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back, whether in the evening or at midnight or when the rooster crows or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping.

What I say to you, I say to everyone. Watch. Well, the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back.

[2 : 1 9] It's the next great event on heaven's calendar. The last days that began with the incarnation and birth of Jesus Christ.

He's lived his perfect life. He's gone to the cross and suffered and died for sin. He's been buried. He's been raised from the dead.

And 40 days later, he ascended into heaven. He's there today. He's reigning. He's ruling over all things for his church. And the last thing on the great calendar is he's coming back for his people.

Are you ready for the return of Jesus Christ? If it should happen before this sermon was over, are you ready to meet him with joy and gladness and not with shame?

If so, if you're in Christ and he is your Lord and master, then you are ready. And that's what it means to be prepared for the return of Christ. And that is our Lord's great aim and concern of heart throughout this sermon that's been called the Olivet Discourse since it was given from the Mount of Olives.

[3 : 32] The devil's aim is to keep you preoccupied with trying to figure out supposed signs of when Christ is coming to the neglect of walking with Christ and living a holy life before God each and every day, which is the very essence of what it means to watch and be prepared for his coming.

We've seen in this chapter how shattered the disciples were as they were leaving the temple complex. And the disciples are overawed at the massive stones of the temple and tell Jesus, wow, look at that.

And Jesus says, not one of those stones will be left upon another. They will all be leveled. Unraveled. And then as they leave the temple, they walk through the Kidron Valley and on up to the Mount of Olives where maybe a half an hour's walk.

And the disciples are processing this. They can't get over the fact this temple is going to be demolished. And so they sit down on the Mount of Olives and they're looking back at the temple complex.

And the disciples come to Jesus with a question. They ask, when will this happen? And Matthew 24 gives us the fuller question. When will this happen and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?

[4 : 57] You see, the flattening of this glorious temple was so devastating to the disciples that they thought, it surely must be that when that temple is destroyed, Jesus will come back and it will be the end of the age.

But they were wrong, weren't they? The temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. and it's been over 2,000 years. And the Lord has not come back yet and the age has not ended.

And so as not to leave them in their misunderstanding and their thoughts, our Lord starts to differentiate between these two events. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and his return at the end of the age.

We saw last time how Jesus started by talking about when the temple will be destroyed. And he does give signs, time signs, marking when that would happen.

He says, when you see the abomination that causes desolation. Luke adds, when you see the armies encircling Jerusalem, then run for the mountains.

[6 : 06] Because that's when Jerusalem and the temple will be destroyed. Now today we see Jesus contrasting that event with his coming at the end of the age.

Don't confuse these two things, disciples. Because of that day, of that time, our Lord gives no sign markers. No time markers as to when it is about to happen.

So, four points today. The first is the coming of Christ at the end of the age. Verses 24 to 27. He's just warned them that when this great distress comes upon the Jews at Jerusalem, Josephus says over a million perhaps that were slaughtered.

And that distress. He's just warned them about that destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple. And he says, be careful because that will be an opportunity for false Christ and false messiahs to come and to say, we're the answer to this great problem that we have at this time.

And they'll take advantage of the great distress at Jerusalem's destruction. And so they'll say, here's the Christ. He's over here. Or no, he's over there.

[7 : 23] He's in this inner room. He's out in the desert. And Jesus says, don't believe them. And this next section that we're looking at now, verses 24 to 27, Jesus tells them why they shouldn't believe them.

It's because my coming will be so glorious, so obvious, so unmistakable and unmissable to all. You won't need to be told, well, he's over here or he's over there.

No, every eye will see him. And so he begins to talk about his coming and why they will not need someone to announce he's here or there. Luke says this time of distress included the Jews falling by the sword and being taken as prisoners to all the nations and Jerusalem being trampled on by the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

All of that is part of this distress that is coming upon them. The times of the Gentiles is a reference to the times when Gentile nations rule the world.

A time that is to reach until the return of Christ when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. And forever Jesus shall reign.

[8 : 35] Revelations 11, 15. So in those days, after that time of distress in Jerusalem and Gentile world powers holding sway, the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, the stars will fall from the sky and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

This is not a verbatim quote of any one Old Testament passage. It's rather something of a collage of many Old Testament texts that speak in this language.

You have it in Isaiah, in Joel, Ezekiel, Amos, even in Revelation chapter 6. Great commotions in the heavenly bodies are used to speak of great commotions among the nations.

And so the prophets of the Old Testament used this kind of language when they spoke about God coming to destroy Babylon, Egypt, Assyria, and Edom.

All the enemies of his people. Cataclysmic events. God interrupting history and destroying the enemies of his people.

[9 : 45] And by using this apocalyptic language, Jesus is saying a time of judgment is coming, not just upon one or two nations, but upon the whole world, upon all the nations that rage against the Lord and his Christ.

You remember Nebuchadnezzar had a dream and he didn't understand it. And there was this great statue and the head was made out of one kind of gold and then the chest and right on down.

And he didn't understand it. So Daniel explains the dream he had. And he says, well, you're the head, O Nebuchadnezzar. And after you will come another kingdom and another kingdom and then another kingdom.

And in the days of that king, a rock will be cut out of the mountain, not by human hands. And that rock will come tumbling down the mountain and smash into that statue and smash it to smithereens.

And the wind will blow away the dust and there will be nothing left except for that rock. And that rock will grow and grow and fill the whole earth. This is the kingdom of Christ.

[10 : 49] Christ is coming back and he's going to shatter the nations of the world. And then the nations and the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ. So that's what's coming.

And when he spoke about these cataclysmic events in history, the prophets were often given these kind of words that spoke about the commotion in the heavens with the sun, moon, and stars.

Now, how much is literal and how much is symbolic? I'll leave that up to you. It could be a bit of both. I think we'll know when it happens. But at that time, following this distress, men will see, verse 26, men will see the Son of Man in the clouds coming with great power and glory.

When he comes again, there'll be nothing like his first coming. Oh, he came so quietly, didn't he? Just a few shepherds and Mary and Joseph know about the coming of this king and his first coming.

All was silent. The world went on its way without a thought about this great king that's been born. But when he comes again, there'll be nothing quiet.

[12 : 08] There'll be nothing secret. Nothing hidden. He's coming with a trumpet blast and the shout of the archangel, 1 Thessalonians 4. And Revelation 1 says, every eye will see him.

This is why you don't need to go into an inner room or out in the desert to find him. They're lying to you because when he comes, every eye will see him. He's coming will be like lightning in the east is visible in the west.

The same Son of Man they saw crucified in weakness will now see coming in clouds with great power and glory. All his angels with him, majestic in holiness, awesome in glory.

That glory will be unveiled now, no longer hidden, but revealed as he comes. At the end of the age. And yes, he's coming to judge the world, but first to gather his elect to himself.

Verse 27. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, north, south, east, west. From the ends of the earth to the ends of the heaven.

[13 : 15] Wherever his elect are, he will find them. His angels will gather them. This is not a local gathering, a local event like he's spoken of the destruction of Jerusalem and the mountains around Jerusalem and the temple.

No, this is now the ends of the earth. The ends of the heaven. The dead in Christ will rise first. And then those who are still alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

Not one of his elect will be missing in that day of roll call. Everyone will be present. They've all been born again by the Spirit of God.

A new birth has happened. They're new creatures. They've been given faith and repentance and put all their hopes for heaven. Not in what they have done, but what Jesus has done, as we just sang.

And they've all endured to the end, protected and preserved by God's mighty power. And so they will be gathered to the marriage supper of the Lamb and his bride, never to be separated, forever with the Lord.

[14 : 23] So don't fall for these false Christs that will ever be presenting to you. That's the coming of our Lord, point one. We move then to the parable of the fig tree, verses 28 to 31.

And this has to do with the understanding of the signs and time markers of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Not about Christ's return. He's still talking about the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem.

Now learn this lesson, verse 28. Learn this lesson from the fig tree. As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you will know that summer is near.

Now this very thing might have been happening right then as the disciples were sitting on the Mount of Olives. And Jesus is talking about the fig trees. There were many famous fig trees growing on the Mount of Olives.

And these fig trees lost their leaves in winter. And they were one of the last trees to get its leaves in the spring. So when you saw the fig tree putting forth new leaves, you knew for sure summer was very near.

[15 : 36] Indeed, at the door. Verse 29. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it's near right at the door.

Well, what are these things? Well, all the signs that he's been talking about for the destruction of Jerusalem. When you see those things happening, the abomination that causes desolation, the armies encircling Jerusalem, you know it's near.

Just like you know when the fig tree shoots forth its leaves, you know it is at hand. Well, how near is it?

Well, Jesus goes on to tell us in verse 30, I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Now, Jesus used this word for generations three times earlier in the book of Mark.

Every time it refers to his contemporaries, those who are living at that time. And that's how he's meaning it here. He's saying when destruction is going to come to Jerusalem in the days of this generation.

[16 : 40] And that's the way that the Bible most often refers to this word as this living people at this contemporaneous time of history.

Remember Exodus 32 and verse 13. What was the punishment for Israel for not going into the promised land when they were supposed to? They were to wander in the desert. How long?

Forty years. This is what Exodus 32, 13 says. He made them wander in the wilderness forty years until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the Lord was gone.

You see, a generation was considered as forty years and that's the way it most often is used in Scripture. And so Jesus is simply saying this generation, this living now, will certainly not pass away until you see the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

And just to overcome any unbelief, Jesus adds these words in verse 31. Heaven and earth may pass away, but my words will never pass away.

[17 : 50] The long enduring heavens and earth that to us seem like they've been here forever. They will pass away. They'll make way for a new heavens and a new earth.

The home of righteousness. But my words, mark my words, my words will never pass away. You know, we have many statements in the Old Testament. The grass withers, the flowers fall, but the word of God stands forever.

And now Jesus says, my words stand forever. Because he is God. He's God in the flesh. And he's putting us on notice that what I say will happen.

And sure enough, forty years later, 70 A.D., Roman General Titus came and destroyed Jerusalem and its temple. Just as Jesus said, this generation will not pass away until all these things have happened.

So that's the parable of the fig tree. Marking the signs of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. And then thirdly, this morning, we have the unknown timing of Christ's coming.

[18 : 58] Verses 32 and 33. He's just explained the events that they are to see as sign markers like the fig tree for the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. But now, he says, this is different.

Now I'm going to tell you about the unknown timing of my coming. But now, as for the coming of the Son of Man at the end of the age, he says, no one knows but the Father.

Now the NIV leaves out the first word of verse 32. And that's unfortunate. It's found in the ESV. It's just the word but. And it's the word of contrast. So just as there have been signs for the destruction of Jerusalem, and I've taught you that.

So now, but as for the day or hour that I'm coming back, no one knows. He says, but no one knows about that day or hour. Not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son of Man, but only the Father.

So as to his humanity, Jesus Christ himself didn't know the time. And therefore, does not give signs of that time in the sense of, if you see this, you know it's going to happen right away.

[20 : 13] So this is one of the secret things of the Lord our God. He has his secrets. And we're to let God have his secrets without trying to pry into them with our curiosity.

Instead, we're to occupy ourselves with the revealed things. The things that he has revealed. That are for us and for our children forever. Sadly, not even such clear words from our Savior are enough to stop some men who ought to know better from setting dates for Christ's return.

Down through history, there's been a steady stream of date setters. I told you earlier about the little booklet that came out, 88 Reasons Why the Lord Will Come in 1988. Harold Camping went a step further.

Camping was an evangelist and Christian radio broadcaster with a broad reach. He was the head of the family radio. For over five years, he convinced thousands of worldwide followers that Christ would return on May the 21st, 2011.

He not only published that over his radio broadcast that had over a hundred different stations throughout the world, but he also rented big billboards that just had the date and saying this is when Christ is coming.

[21 : 30] May 21st, 2011. Millions of dollars poured in. I suppose the money is not going to be worth anything after May 21st, they figured.

So they gave much. And atheists had a heyday. Holding rapture parties. Mocking. Not only camping, but mocking Christ's claim to be coming again.

After a year passed and Christ didn't return, camping confessed that what he had done was sinful. But by then so much damage had been done to the name of Christ.

Christ's coming is certain. That's what Jesus is saying. Mark my words. They will not pass away. The time of my coming is uncertain.

We need both of those truths held with all of our heart. Christ is coming. And the time of his coming is uncertain. And so for the fourth time we're told, be on guard.

[22 : 35] Therefore, since you don't know when I'm coming, be on guard, verse 33. Be alert. You do not know when that time will come. I wonder if we're getting the point. He keeps making it.

No one knows. Not the angels. Not me. Only the Father. You do not know the time. And it's our ignorance that calls for constant vigilance.

It's precisely because we don't know that we're to always be looking and watchful, ready for his coming. That's the point Jesus wants ringing in our ears as he drives it home with yet another parable.

This time it's the parable of the doorkeeper. And this is our last point. The parable of the doorkeeper, verses 34 to 37. It's not at all like the fig tree that was showing signs that it's immediately going to happen.

When you see those things, you know it's near, even at the door within this very generation. Just the opposite here in this parable. We're given no sign times for his return.

[23 : 38] And it's because we don't know that we must always be prepared. Here's the parable, verse 34 to 36. It's like a man going away. He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned tasks, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

Therefore, here's the message to you, keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back, whether in the evening, at midnight, or the rooster crows, or at dawn, lest he comes suddenly and finds you sleeping.

So when the owner went away, he had assignments for each one of his servants. You do this, you do that. And he doled out their duties. But the parable then focuses in on just one man, one servant.

That's the doorkeeper. And his assigned task is to guard the door into the house. And he's to do it not when he feels it's convenient, but through all four watches of the night as the Romans divided them.

So since there were no cell phones for the owner to call in and say, hey, I'm going to be later. It's going to be about midnight. There was no way to communicate. He just showed up. And that's the point.

[24 : 50] He's going to show up unannounced. And he's making that point for the third time. You do not know when he is coming. So keep watch at all times, lest he find you sleeping.

Now, sleeping is the exact opposite of keeping watch and being alert, isn't it? But Jesus is not just saying that this poor guy's never to go to bed at night.

He's talking about spiritually sleeping. Getting tired and slumbering spiritually. It speaks of a moral laxity, of ungodliness, of worldly passions.

Not guarding your heart with all diligence or guarding the eyes and ears, the inlets to the heart. Letting the world squeeze you into its mold with its ideas and values, its priorities and treasures.

Neglecting your spiritual duties. Neglecting your assigned tasks that he's left you with. The commands of Jesus. Matthew gives a fuller account of this whole sermon of Jesus.

[25 : 52] And he makes the same point over and over about not knowing the time of his coming. He not only tells this parable of the doorkeeper, but he gives a history lesson as well.

Let me read it. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days of Noah, before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage.

Up to the day Noah entered the ark. And they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. By the time they saw it, it was too late to escape.

The point he's making is they were just carrying on life as usual. I don't even know that there's anything sinful about what he's pointing out. They were eating and drinking. We do a lot of that too, don't we?

They were marrying and giving in marriage. We do that too. It's just pointing out that it will be life as usual. And then one day, without warning, the flood interrupted their lives and took them all away.

[26 : 55] They knew nothing about what would happen. And Jesus says, this is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. So what do you think?

Do you think our world's thinking about that day? Do you think they're prepared for that day? I don't think they have a clue about what's coming.

They don't read their Bibles. They don't hear the Bible preached. They just carry on. Totally unprepared.

Most have not given it a serious thought. Few are expecting it to happen. Many are scoffing at the very idea. Preoccupied with the things of today and planning for the things of tomorrow.

It'll be just any other day. Just another day. Meals being prepared. Kids being taken to appointments and activities. People coming and going from work.

[27 : 57] People eating out. Watching a movie. Going to bed. The anchor of the evening news will say what they always say. See you here tomorrow night. At the same time. Same station. And there will be no tomorrow night.

For suddenly with the trumpet blast, our Lord will appear on clouds of glory. Coming back to judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his truth.

Interrupting this unbelieving world that's totally unprepared for the coming judgment. And his coming will bring this whole age to an end and will usher in the eternal age.

Jesus isn't done. Matthew 24. He went on and he compared his coming to a thief in the night. I'm coming like a thief in the night.

Kids, how do thieves come at night? They don't call ahead and say we'll be there a little after one in the morning. And we've got some of your stuff we would like to have. They just show up unannounced.

[28 : 57] And they take your things. Suddenly, unannounced, no forewarning. Jesus says, so you also must be ready because the Son of Man will come in an hour when you do not expect him.

Do you hear how Jesus is drumming home this one point? You don't know. He's even said, I don't know. When I'm coming. So always live in a way that whenever I come, you're ready.

You see, that's the point of the whole, all of that discourse. So that I'll find you prepared to meet me. Whatever time of day or night I show up, you'll be able to meet me with joy and confidence at my coming.

Not ashamed. Notice how Jesus closes his Olivet Discourse. Verse 37. What I say to you. Remember, he's sitting with his disciples. They're looking at the temple. He's withdrawn from the crowds.

He's talking to his disciples now. In verse 37, he concludes, what I say to you, I say to everyone, watch.

[30 : 03] Watch. Watch. The sixth time. Watch. Be alert. The 19th imperative. Showing he's not just giving us facts about the information of these things.

He's giving us commands. Commands. Be ready. Watch. Don't be deceived. Don't let persecution pull you away from me. Take up your cross.

Follow me. Deny yourself. Watch. Watch. Watch. Watch. Those words weren't meant just for the disciples sitting with Jesus on that Tuesday of Passion week looking at the temple.

They were meant for everyone. Everyone who will ever hear those words. Everyone who will ever read those words. They were meant for you, Grace Fellowship Church.

Every one of us. What I say to you, I say to everyone. Watch. Watch. Watch. Let that word ring in your ears as we leave this precious chapter of Mark's gospel.

[31 : 05] Not at all meaning to watch for some supposed signs of his coming. No, no. That's where we get off the rails. The unhealthy preoccupation and speculation about some supposed signs of his coming is so out of place with Jesus' sermon on the end times.

It's diverting the attention of the church away from what should be their attention. You know, it's the work of the magician. Well, he's got his flashy thing going on over here.

He's doing something secret over here. Not wanting you to look here. And that's the way to... Let's figure out when he's coming. Let's try to interpret what's going on in Palestine with the scriptures.

Let's try to figure out this thing. And what's the thing that the devil's diverting you from? From watching today. From living the Christian life today in a way that you're ready to meet him when he comes.

So, what you must do is to be in Christ. To watch means to be not letting your heart grow cold because of the increase of wickedness, but rather persevering in holiness, repenting and believing to the very end, bearing whatever persecution comes to you for the witness that you're bearing to Jesus Christ.

[32 : 27] To watch means being sure he finds you busy at your assigned tasks. You know, you have assigned tasks, every one of you. Here's the assignment. The whole Bible's full of assignments.

And that's what it means to be ready, to be found when he comes doing your assigned tasks. Husbands, you've got assigned tasks for your wives. Wives, you have assigned tasks for your husbands. Parents, you have assigned tasks for your children.

Children, you have assigned tasks to your parents. Employees, employees, employers, church members, elders, deacons, neighbors, citizens. We all have tons of assigned tasks that Jesus has loved us.

Get out there into the world and make disciples of all nations and see them baptized and see them taught to obey everything I command you. See them following my assigned tasks.

You see, that's what it means to be ready. That's what it means to be ready. To act justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with your God.

[33 : 38] Doing everything you do for the glory of God. Finding your joy in knowing and serving Jesus. Live for things that will last forever. It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns.

So I trust we'll return home and we'll ask, well, what are my assignments from the Lord? And I trust we're reading our Bibles every day to keep sensitive to our assignments from the Lord.

And where we fall short, we'll come and confess because he's willing and faithful and just to forgive us of all our sins. To cleanse us from all unrighteousness and to help us where we're weak.

It will be good. The coming of Christ should not stir up fear in the hearts of the Christian.

It should stir up the greatest joy. It will be the best day of your life. It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing. Let that be the spirit in which you think of it, the return of Christ.

[34 : 51] You see, that's what it means to be watchful, always prepared for Christ. Just simply being serious about living the Christian life every day of your life. So whenever he comes, you're ready. You're packed and ready to go.

What I say to you disciples, I say to everyone. Watch. So the million dollar question is, are you ready to meet Christ at his coming? Many of you are.

Many of you are, bless God. You've come to Christ with nothing good to say for yourself, but I'm a sinner. And I believe that Jesus died for sinners. And God be merciful to me, a sinner, for Jesus' sake.

Because what he did. I've done nothing but sin against you. Save me because Jesus died for sinners. And you've been there to the cross.

And you've confessed. And you've received Christ into your heart. He's your master. He's your Lord. You have a new drumbeat to your life. And you're following him and seeking to do his will.

[35 : 53] He's forgiven you all your sins. And he's declared you righteous in the courts of heaven. You're one of his beloved. His chosen bride. His elect. He became a man for you.

He obeyed the law of God for you. He went to the cross and died for you. In your place condemned he stood. He rose from the dead for you.

He ascended into heaven for you. He there now reigns for you. And yes, he's coming back for you. Because he wants you to be with him where he is. That you might see his glory.

And share in that glory. In the new heavens and the new earth forever and ever. Doesn't it make you want to see him?

Never to be separated. Happy is the man who trusts in the Lord. What will it be worth in that day to be found in Christ?

[36 : 53] Not having a righteousness of your own. Which is by the law keeping. The righteousness that. The righteousness of God that comes by faith in Jesus Christ.

Oh, it will be worth everything in that day. And nothing will mean anything in that day but that. Am I in Christ by faith? And so bless God that many of you are.

Others here would have to answer my question. Are you prepared for Christ's return? They would answer, oh, I sure hope so. I hope so. Are you ready to rest such a weighty matter?

On such a flimsy answer? I hope so. What would you think if I took one of those old revolvers that had a chamber with six places to put a bullet.

And I put one in there and I spun the chamber and I put it to my head and I pulled the trigger. You'd say, you're a fool, John, to play Russian roulette with your life. Oh, but I hope, I hope I won't get the one chamber.

[37 : 58] The one bullet. I've got five out of six chances. And some of you, I fear, are playing Russian roulette, not with your life, but with your eternity.

Where you will be a million, million, million years from now. And you're willing to put it on a flimsy. I hope so. I hope so. My friend, if that's you this morning, I want to urge you to make this the most important thing in your life today, tomorrow, every day.

To give yourself no rest and to give God no rest until you know for sure that I am His and He is mine forever and forever.

To be able to say, I know for sure that Christ has paid the price for all my sins. He's my Savior, my Lord, and He's coming back for me.

And should He come at any time, I will be prepared to meet Him, not with shame, but with great joy. You know, the first, the book, the first epistle of John is written to help believers know for sure that you have eternal life.

[39 : 09] And this is the testimony we've received from God. God has given us eternal life. And this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life.

But he who has not the Son of God has not life. So it is important that we have the Son. We have Him as our Lord and Savior. We come to Him.

We confess our sins to Him. You know, He's ready to be your Savior and King today. Are you ready to receive Him as such?

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the forgiveness of your sins. Pastor Colin and I, parents, many others here, would love to talk further with you about how to be sure that Christ is yours and you are His.

But don't miss the heart of Jesus in this Olivet Discourse. There is a lot that's confusing and we may not agree on everything here. But why is He telling us this?

[40 : 14] Why is Mark 13 in our Bibles? What's the heart of Jesus behind it? He wants you to be prepared for His coming. Isn't that a precious thought? He's not telling us this so we can figure out all...

No, He's here to say, Be ready. I'm coming for you. If you're trusting me, I'm on my way. Hold the fort for I am coming. Be encouraged in the midst of persecution and trial and heartache.

Don't deny the faith. Don't deny me whatever happens. J.C. Ryle says, The uncertainty of when Christ is coming is intentional. It's calculated to keep believers in an attitude of constant expectation and to motivate us to live in a way that we're always ready to meet Him.

Our confession of faith ends the 32 chapters with these words about Christ coming. Christ will have that day unknown to men. It's intentional. He wants you to not know.

He wants you to be ignorant about this one thing. When He's coming, that they may shake off all confidence in themselves and because they know not at what hour the Lord may come, may be ever on the watch and may ever be prepared to say, Come Lord Jesus.

[41 : 26] Come quickly. Can we say that together? Come Lord Jesus. Come quickly. Let's pray. Lord Jesus, we thank You that You know our hearts like no one else and You know exactly what we need to know.

Maybe not all we want to know about Your coming. We've heard You loud and clear to be watching and ready. I pray for any here who are not in Christ.

You would keep sounding this word in their ears that they would not be able to escape it until they've made peace with God through a crucified, risen, reigning Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

So be at work. And for us who do know You, we thank You that because of the work of Christ, we can meet You with joy and not with shame. Teach us then to walk day by day, ready for Your return.

And may the joy of that day spill over into every day that we live and create a watchfulness just as a teabag flavors every bit of water in the cup.

[42 : 37] So the anticipation of seeing our Lord face to face would leave its tincture and taste upon every aspect of our lives. We pray, come Lord Jesus.

Amen.