

## Rayville Methodist Church

### Study Guide Week of July 6<sup>th</sup>

#### Look: Jesus is Coming!

#### Scripture: 2 Peter 3:1-10

Jesus Christ is coming back! This has been the confident expectation of Christians for the last 2,000 years. The message of Jesus's second coming dominates the Bible; it is mentioned 1,845 times - that's one in every thirty verses. For every mention of His first coming, there are eight references to His second. For every mention of His atonement, His second coming is mentioned twice. Jesus personally spoke of it twenty-one times. Over fifty times we are told to be ready for it. In our passage, Peter affirmed the certainty of Jesus Christ's return and how false prophets scoff at it. Scoffers, like most people today, mock the idea of Jesus Christ's return. However, as Peter told us that we should look in three places as we wait for Jesus to return.

First, we are to look back at the Scriptures (see vv. 1-2). Peter wrote that he wanted to stir up (v. 1) his readers from spiritual lethargy by urging them to consider that the apostles did not invent the day of the Lord, but only affirmed what the prophets and Jesus Christ spoke of. "The day of the Lord" mentioned nineteen times in the Old Testament (Isaiah 13:6, Jeremiah 46:10, Amos 5:18, Zephaniah, Daniel, Joel, and Zechariah all mention it) and four times in the New Testament refers to a future time when God will uniquely, supernaturally, and miraculously intervene in human history through a time of unparalleled distress for the purpose of final judgment. It will culminate in Jesus's second coming. Jesus taught about it in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, as did Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5 and 2 Thessalonians 1 and 2. John also detailed it in Revelation 6-19. By looking back, Peter was demonstrating the unity of Scripture that the Bible is one continuous revelation of truth from beginning to end. Many recommend memorizing Scripture as a remedy for spiritual lethargy. Come up with a list of Scriptures to commit to memory.

Next, we are to look around at the scoffers (see vv. 3-7). The same prophets who spoke of Jesus's return wrote also of those who mocked judgment (see Isaiah 5; Jeremiah 17; Ezekiel 12; Malachi 2). A scoffer is someone who treats lightly what should be taken seriously. They ridicule the truth, often through intimidation. They scoff because they want to continue living for temporary pleasure (see v. 3). The basis for their beliefs is uniformitarianism (see v. 4), the idea that we live in a closed naturalistic system and all things simply move on steadily without any catastrophic change. However, Peter noted that God interrupted history in the creation, the flood, and in the person of Jesus Christ and that He will do it again at the second coming. The Bible teaches that there is general uniformity in the universe, evidence of God's providential care, and the biblical view is that creation is an open system in which God regularly intervenes. Remember that Jesus said, "As the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. (Matthew 24:37). As you look around, consider that as people scoffed at Noah, they will scoff at the notion of Jesus returning. These folks willingly walk after their own lusts, willfully forget what God has done, and want no one to hold them accountable. Think of a time when you have done one or all of these things, and consider how God brought you or is bringing you out of that. If the Lord leads, share what you have learned.

Lastly, we are to look ahead to the Savior (see vv. 8-10). While His return has been promised for a long time, there are reasons for the delay. First, because God is merciful (see vv. 8-9). What seems like a long time to us is a very short time to God. Psalm 90:4 reads, "For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past. God delays because He wants to see as many people as possible saved. He has enormous capacity for patience before His anger spills over into judgment. The next reason is that God is punctual (see v. 10). Scoffers may doubt, and unbelievers may ignore, but Jesus Christ is coming again and on time, on the day of the Lord! As we look ahead, it is important that we distinguish between three different days mentioned in Scripture: The day of Christ refers to the rapture, when Jesus Christ comes for His church. The day of the Lord refers to the tribulation, when Jesus Christ comes at the end of the world. The day of God refers to the eternal state of the

new heaven and the new earth. The first time Jesus came, He came to deal with sin. The second time, He will come to take over the world. What will be your fate when you die? When we believe the reality of the other side, then we will start behaving differently on this side. *Maranatha* means *the Lord is coming soon*. Are you expectant and confident of His return? Why or why not?

## **The BIG Idea**

**Biblical prophecy is the remedy for spiritual lethargy.**

## **Look, Jesus Is Coming! Detailed Notes**

### **I. Introduction**

- Jesus Christ is coming back again
- That has been the hope of the church for the last 2,000 years
- He came once to deal with sin; He's going to come back again and fix all the injustices of this world
- Isaac Watts wrote "Joy to the World" about the second coming of Christ: "No more let sin and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground; He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found"
- The Scriptures have a lot to say about the second coming
  1. Next to faith, the return of Christ is the most discussed topic in the Bible
  2. 1,845 times it is spoken about or alluded to
  3. One out of thirty verses speaks of it
  4. One-fifth of the Bible deals with the end of days and/or the second coming
  5. For every one verse about His first coming, there are eight about His second coming
  6. For every one verse about His atonement, there are two about His second coming
  7. Twenty-one times Jesus personally referred to it
  8. Fifty times we are told to be ready for it
  9. John 14:2-3
- "He will come again to judge the living and the dead, and of His kingdom there will be no end" the Nicene Creed, or Apostles' Creed
- Peter was dealing with a group of people who were denying all of that (see 2 Peter 2)
  1. They got the past, present, and future wrong
  2. When you get Jesus wrong, you're going to get all the answers wrong
- There were and are scoffers when it comes to Jesus' second coming

- As we look forward to the return of Christ, we ought to look in three places

## II. Look Back at the Scriptures (vv. 1-2)

- The Prophets' Writings
  1. We tend to become lethargic; we start becoming drowsy in the light
    - a. We need to be woken up
    - b. The cure for spiritual lethargy is scriptural prophecy
  2. The day of the Lord (see v. 10)
    - a. If you've read the Bible at all, you've come across this idea
    - b. Nineteen times in the Old Testament: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Joel, Amos Zephaniah, Zechariah
    - c. Four times in the New Testament
    - d. The day of the Lord is something really bad that becomes something really good
      - I. When God from heaven dramatically and miraculously intervenes in human history, bringing the greatest distress the world has ever known
      - II. It will culminate in the second coming of Jesus Christ
    - e. Old Testament references: Isaiah 13:6; Jeremiah 46:10; Amos 5:18
    - f. New Testament references: Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; 1 Thessalonians 5; 2 Thessalonians 1-2; Revelation 6-19

## • The Apostles' Records

1. Peter elevated the teachings of the apostles on an equal par with the writings of the prophets
2. There was a continuous revelation of the day of the Lord
3. Do you stir up your mind in the mornings?
4. "I stir up your pure minds" (v. 1);
5. "that you may be mindful" (v. 2)
6. Peter was trying to engage the mind. Engage or stir up your mind enough to memorize Scripture. Nothing will help you in your spiritual formation like memorizing verses that can be called to mind when you need them

## III. Look Around at the Scoffers (vv. 3-7)

- The prophets who predicted the reign of the Messiah also predicted the scoffers and recorded modern-day mockers
  1. Isaiah 5; Jeremiah 17; Ezekiel 12; Malachi 2
  2. A scoffer is someone who treats lightly what should be taken seriously
  3. Scoffers want to continue living for their temporary pleasures and want to write away anything that speaks of God's judgment or holds them accountable
- Their World view

1. They say we live in a closed, naturalistic system, and events move along without any kind of cataclysmic event from heaven
  2. Uniformitarianism; the present philosophy in Western culture
- Their Wrong View
    1. This view is fallacious: a person measures all of history, which they haven't lived through, based on what they have observed
    2. Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology* and Charles Darwin
    3. Wrong on two counts
      - a. Creation
      - b. The great flood
    4. There's a growing number of geologists who have abandoned uniformitarianism and believe in historical catastrophism: we live in a volatile universe
    5. There is general uniformity in the world, evidence of God's providential care
    6. The biblical worldview is that we live in an open system where God does what He wants when He wants to do it
    7. Verse 5: the creation account in a single verse
      - a. God shaped the earth between two areas of watery mass
      - b. Genesis 1:6-10
      - c. Water was a huge part of the original creation and became part of the original destruction (see v. 6)
    8. *Flooded* (v. 6) is the Greek word *katakluz*; it was a punctuated event where God interrupted the flow of history
      - a. The flood helps explain otherwise inexplicable things in the natural world
      - b. Inland seas, the Great Basin, coal, the fossil record
    9. "For this they willingly are ignorant of" (v. 5, KJV)
    10. "Everybody is ignorant, only on different subjects" Will Rogers
    11. Matthew 24:37

#### **IV. Look Ahead to the Savior (vv. 8-10)**

- What seems to us like a long time is really a short time to God
- Why is it taking so long? God counts things differently
- His patience is not Shortened: He wants to see as many people saved as possible
- His promise is not Slack: God is merciful, but He is also punctual
- *Longsuffering* is the Greek word *makrothume*

1. Macro (big, large) to burn, or literally, great anger
2. It means God has an amazing capacity to store up well-deserved anger until He finally spills it out in judgment
3. One day He will act, but until then, He's longsuffering

## **V. Closing**

- When we start believing the reality of the other side, that's when we'll start behaving differently on this side
- Don't look for the day of the Lord; look for the Lord of the day
- *Maranatha*
  1. A word early Christians would say to each other
  2. It means the Lord is coming soon