

The Gospel Of Matthew

Title: He Is Coming Again?

Text: Matthew 16:27-28

Introduction: Vs. 13-20 detail the confession of who Jesus is by the disciples. Vs. 21-23 outline the suffering the Messiah was to endure, the rebuke of Peter for not wanting the plan of God, but his own. Vs. 24-26 outline the cost of discipleship. Many today want an easy, health and wealth life, but that's not often the case. Many today trade the eternal for the temporary. It's not wrong to have things, but don't let those things have you. The synopsis of the text remains that one must be willing to give all for the sake of Christ.

The OT references to a suffering Messiah and Redeemer were frequently rationalized away by Jewish interpreters or spiritualized to the point of insignificance. *In the minds of most Jews in Jesus' day, the Messiah was to come but once, as the conquering King of the earth.*¹ As Jesus moved closer and closer to the cross, He was preparing His disciples for what was to come, what He had already told them would happen. In these two verses today we see a promise, a warning, and a promise again. **NOTE:** Our hope isn't in this temporal world. 1 Corinthians 15:19, "If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied."² There's not a single politician, elected official or law that can change the heart of man. Only the redemptive work of God. Our Lord gives the disciples this future hope, a hope that we have, a hope that we know and a hope that isn't changing. HE IS COMING AGAIN.

POINT 1 - IS GOING TO COME - Vs 27A (THIS IS A PROMISE)

This was the first specific revelation to His disciples about His second coming. After the previous verses of the suffering and death and resurrection, now He speaks of a return and judgement. He will return in the glory, which this word is often used to refer to the totality of God's nature. When Jesus came to earth this glory was veiled for the purpose of being man, yet fully God, Philippians 2:6-8, "Although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men." Isaiah 53:2, "For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him." For those looking for a Messiah, this didn't fit what they were looking for. This defines much of the modern day evangelical church today, they want God to be what they want Him to be, a God that is at their beck-n-call.

1A - The glory for which He will come, cf. Matthew 24:29-31. He will come with blazing glory and the entire earth will be filled with that glory, just as in Isaiah's vision, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:3). Psalm 72:19, "And blessed be His glorious name forever; and may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and amen."

1B - His return in glory is a great promising hope. The slain saints, the believer often wonders how long Lord before your return? Revelation 6:9-10, "When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the

¹ The John MacArthur New Testament Commentary; pp. 53

² ESV

The Gospel Of Matthew

earth?" Psalm 74:10, "How long, O God, will the adversary revile, and the enemy spurn Your name forever? There is hope, He is coming, He is coming in great glory. We should pray as John did in Revelation 22:20, "Yes, I am coming quickly. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."

POINT 2 - THE WARNING OF JUDGEMENT - 27B

At this glorious coming He will also repay every man according to his deeds. The coming glory and judgement is bittersweet for the believer. He longs for the glory of God, but knows of the judgment of the lost, and of himself for which he will give an account. It was in Revelation 10 where John was told to eat the little book that told of God's great glory, but also of His judgement, "Take it and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey."³ As Christians today we look for His glory and return, but we know we have family, friends and others who aren't saved. Thus, we are persistent in sharing the gospel, time is of the essence, I don't have time to waste. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:11, "Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men." Knowing the fear of God we work, we share, we pray.

Jesus is simply pointing out that it will be a time of glory and reward for those who belong to Him, and judgment and punishment for those who don't. He is coming to resolve the destiny of everyman, cf. John 5:25-29. It's important to note that everyman will be judged according to his deeds, but it's not his deeds that save him, it's his deeds that give evidence of his inward spiritual condition. People are best known by their fruits, "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they?" (Matthew 7:16). And James declares that faith, if it has no works is dead, cf. James 2:17.

2B - Righteous deeds aren't the source of salvation, they are the product of it. It's only then that we truly understand the message Jesus said in the sermon on the mount, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter" (Matthew 7:21). The believer will also be judged, 1 Corinthians 3:13, "each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work." 2 Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." Did you do things for your own gain or for the promotion of the gospel?

Dr. John MacArthur notes, "No genuine righteous works can be manifest in the life of an unbeliever."⁴ Let me be clear, a person who has no evidence of righteous behavior in the life has no basis for assurance of salvation, no matter how long they have professed to be a Christian. The true Christian knows that he has assurance of forgiveness as well, 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This does not mean you can willfully sin either.

2C - The dire warning to the unbeliever. The reality of Isaiah 64:6 comes to fruition, "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away." The term used for filthy garment refers to an often puss riddled rag of lepers which is the best human goodness can produce. 1 Thessalonians 1:8

³ Revelation 10:9

⁴ The John MacArthur New Testament Commentary; pp. 57

The Gospel Of Matthew

describes the judgment of those who don't believe, "*dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.*"

*"For all men there will be a day of accounting, a day of reckoning. For the cross-bearing, obedient Christian it will be a day of great rejoicing and glory, because he will have evidence of the life of God within him by faith in the Lord Jesus. But for the unrepentant, Christ-rejecting sinner, it will be a day of great terror and torment, because he will have no evidence of divine life."*⁵

2C - A few final points on this verse, "*men will then be rewarded, not according to their gains in this world, but according to their works, according to what they were and did.*"⁶ The best scenario for this day is to have denied yourself, picked up your cross and followed Him. For it is then we can rejoice as Paul did writing to Timothy as we serve Him this side of heaven, "*For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.*"

POINT 3 - THE PROMISE ASSURED (Vs. 28)

It should be noted that Jesus cannot lie. Therefore, He is not saying that some would not physically die before His second coming. It is important to understand this this correctly, it's helpful to know that word used for kingdom here was often used as a metonym to mean "royal majesty" or "regal splendor." According to Greek commentators, used in this way, the word would refer to a manifestation of Jesus' kingliness rather than His literal earthly reign. His promise could therefore be translated, "until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingly splendor."

They witnessed the King in the flesh. Simeon was assured that he should not see death till he had seen the Lord's Christ come in the flesh. Matthew Henry comments, "*At the end of time, he shall come in his Father's glory; but now, in the fulness of time, he was to come in his own kingdom, his mediatorial kingdom.*"⁷ Some little specimen was given of his glory a few days after this, in his transfiguration, cf. Matthew 17:1-8. Here was the Son of man coming in his kingdom. Many then present lived to see it, particularly John, who lived till after the destruction of Jerusalem, and saw Christianity planted in the world.

Jonathan Edwards notes concerning this text three points he addresses, and I thought them worthy to look at in closing.

3A - It is a great encouragement to suffering saints to be assured of the advancement of Christ's kingdom among men; not only notwithstanding their sufferings, but by their sufferings. A believing prospect of the success of the kingdom of grace, as well as of our share in the kingdom of glory, may carry us cheerfully through our sufferings. In other words, you have seen the King in His splendor come.

⁵ The John MacArthur New Testament Commentary, pp. 58

⁶ Matthew Henry Commentary, https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Mat/Mat_016.cfm; accessed 8.25.23

⁷ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Mat/Mat_016.cfm; accessed 8.26.23

The Gospel Of Matthew

3B - That their cause shall be pleaded; their deaths shall be revenged, and their persecutors reckoned with. Vengeance is mine says the Lord, cf. Romans 12:9.

3C - That this shall be done shortly, in the present age. Note, The nearer the church's deliverances are, the more cheerful should we be in our sufferings for Christ. The more you live here in this ole painful world, the closer you get to home. The width of your visibility becomes narrower, your focus is on eternity, not temporal. The hope of His return is why we go on, the hope of being with the Lord in the face of death is why we press forward.

In the hymn from Issac Watts one stanza says it all about our temporal world we live in, *"His dying crimson, from His head, spreads o'er His body on the tree; to all the world then am I dead, and all the world is dead to me."*⁸

⁸ When I Survey The Wondrous Works of the Cross; Issac Watts