**Waiting Room Series**

**“Waiting for the Second Coming of Christ”**

**Introduction**

Let me start this morning by asking, “What are you waiting for?” If I gave you a piece of paper and on the top it said, “Three Things I am Waiting For” – what would you write down? Now, be honest. How many of you would have written down “the second coming of Christ?”

Our current sermon series is looking at the topic of waiting. Last week I shifted our focus away from the spiritual posture we need as we wait for the Lord in our daily lives to the three things the Bible tells every believer to wait for. God’s Word tells every believer to be eagerly waiting for the redemption of the body, the second coming of Christ, and the new heavens and new earth.

These three things are part of what is known in theology as “eschatology” or the study of last things. And these three things the second coming of Christ, the redemption of our body, and the new heavens and new earth are literally the last things. (ICor.15.23-25)

Last week we looked at waiting for the redemption of our body – the promise of God that one day we will inherit a glorified body and be with the Lord forever. This morning I want us to focus on “Waiting for the Second Coming of Christ.”

**Waiting for the Second Coming of Christ**

In His first coming, Christ humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross. (Phil.2.8) In His second coming, Jesus will come as the conquering King. In His first coming, (Rev.19.11) Jesus was the suffering Servant. In His second coming, Jesus will arrive with the armies of heaven at His side. (Rev.19.12) And the Bible clearly teaches that every believer should be eagerly waiting for the second coming of Christ.

*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*. (Heb.9.28)

*For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.* (Phil.3.20)

*Awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.* (ICor.1.7b)

*For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.* (Gal.5.5)

*Wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.* (IThes.1.10)

As I said last week this waiting is not some humdrum, twiddling your thumbs type of waiting. This is waiting eagerly with divine expectation. God’s Word teaches every believer to have an eager expectation for the second coming of Christ. We are to love His coming (2Tim.4.8); look for His coming (Titus2.13); be ready for His coming (Mt.24.44; Lk.12.40); be patient until He comes (Js.5.7-8); and the pray for His coming (Rev.22.20). As a matter of fact, of the New Testament's 260 chapters Christ's return is mentioned no less than 318 times. That’s more than once per chapter! It seems that God wants us to know about the second coming of Christ. So, lets review.

**The Second Coming of Christ**

Even though there are some disagreements concerning issues surrounding the second coming of Christ like the rapture, the tribulation, and the millennium; every Christian agrees that the Bible tells us that Jesus will return.

*The Son of Man will appear in the sky . . . and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.* (Mt.24.30)

*When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.* (Mt.25.31)

*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.* (Jn.14.3)

*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 going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. 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.”* (Acts 1.9-11)

*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 will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.* (IThess.4.16-17)

*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. So it is to be. Amen.* (Rev.1.7)

The Bible teaches that the second coming of Christ will be physical, visible, glorious, and triumphant. The second coming of Christ will usher in the future age, the eternal state of things, and the new heavens and new earth.

The Bible tells us that *mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.”* (2Pt.3.3-4) We will deal more directly we how God’s Word responds to these mockers next week but for now let me say that in many ways these mockers exist today. If you tell someone that you believe in the second coming of Christ you can almost be assured that you will be mocked. Many people today consider the second coming of Christ to be utterly fantastic, an outdated mythology, and scientifically unsound. They put the second coming of Christ in the same category with the cow that jumped over the moon. These mockers consider the second coming of Christ as a theological fairly tale because if it was going to happen – why hasn’t it happened yet?

But as they mock *do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.*Our sense of time is not God’s sense of time. But be reassured that *The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.* Have you ever considered that the Lord’s delay is a demonstration of His mercy and grace? *Not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance!* (2Pt.3.8-9)

*But the day of the Lord will come like a thief!* (2Pt.3.10a) While the world is saying that everything will always be the same the Bible tells us that the Lord will come. Like an expecting mother doesn’t know actually when the child will come she has an eager expectation for the child to come. So believers might not know when the Lord will come we still have an eager expectation that Jesus will come again. (IThes.5.3) But no one knows when Christ will come again. Jesus said it like this:

*But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.* (Mt.24.36)

*“It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;* (Acts.1.7)

**“Shake off all Carnal Security.”**

Our Church Fathers taught us that the Lord has left the day of His return unknown so that we would “shake off all carnal security.” (WCF 33.3) What is this “carnal security” that our Church Fathers hoped that we would shake off? Let me describe it to you. A person comes to Christ and they are standing in firm footing on the Rock of Ages. For some time, perhaps for even years, he has been free from all doubts and rests securely in the forgiveness and grace in Christ. But then he begins to “take ease in Zion.” He falls into spiritual slumber and becomes lax in practicing spiritual disciplines to maintain his spiritual health. He becomes spiritual “fat and happy.” What our Church Fathers are telling us is that the Father has left the coming of Christ unknown so that we would “shake off all carnal security, *to be alert, and stand firm in the faith.* (ICor.16.13)

When the topic of the second coming of Christ comes up people always ask about the anti-Christ, the tribulation, and all of those “end-times” sort of stuff. But your biggest concern should not be on when the anti-Christ is coming. Our biggest concern should be on our own spiritual lives when Jesus comes back. Jesus said it best, “*When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”* (Lk.18.8b) Our biggest concern should be our spiritual health and our relationship with Christ as we wait for the coming of Christ.

In a series of parables Jesus taught us that there are things that we must shake off, and continue to shake off, as we wait for His return.

The first thing we must shake off is becoming too focused on this “Life.”

**Becoming Too Focused on this Life**

*For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.**For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,**and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.* (Mt.24.37-39)

Notice that what the people prior to the flood were focused on – eating and drinking – marrying and giving in marriage. There is nothing wrong or sinful about eating and drinking. I like doing both! The problem is when enjoying the finer things become my main focus I can lose sight of the kingdom of God. There is nothing wrong with marrying and giving in marriage. I’ve done both! The problem is when Christ ceases to be the center of my life and I replace Christ with others. Jesus said it like this, “*Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you*.” (Mt.6.33) We need to ask the Holy Spirit to enable us to fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith. (Heb.12.2)

The second thing we must shake off is becoming spiritually “Lazy.”

**Becoming Spiritually Lazy**

*Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes.*(Mt.24.45-46)

The Lord has appointed us to be His stewards – His servants. He has put us in charge of His household, to feed and nourish His family – the Church. And the Lord wants to find us “doing” when He comes. How cool would it be to be taking out the trash after a worship service and Jesus come back? How cool would it be to be teaching a children’s Sunday School class and Jesus come back? How cool would it be to be leading someone to Christ and Jesus come back? How cool would it be to be in a worship service praising God and Jesus come back?

The Bible says, “*Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”* (Heb.10.24-25)

The third thing we must shake off is becoming spiritually “Lethargic.”

**Becoming Spiritually Lethargic**

*The kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the prudent, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the prudent answered, ‘No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. Later the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open up for us.’ But he answered, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you.’ Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.* (Mt.25.1-13)

The five foolish virgins become lethargic, compliance, and apathetic. They were not prudent and lacked preparedness. I think verse five captures the heart of these girls. *Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep.* (vs.5)

Like the person I mentioned earlier these five girls began to “take ease in Zion.” They fell into spiritual slumber and became lax in practicing spiritual disciplines to maintain their spiritual health. And the same thing can happen to us. The Bible says,

*Be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*(Eph.5.15-17)

**Conclusion**

In these parables Jesus taught us that there are three things that we must shake off, and continue to shake off, as we wait for His return. We must shake off becoming too focus on this life instead of the kingdom of God. We must shake off becoming spiritually lazy and consider how we can serve. We must shake off becoming spiritually lethargic maintain a spiritual alertness and readiness.

As I conclude this morning I want to introduce you to two people who were waiting eager for Jesus first coming. Their names are Simeon and Anna and their story in found in the book of Luke chapter two. There we find Mary and Joseph bringing the baby Jesus to the Temple to offer the sacrifices required for every first-born male. (Lk.2.22-23)

*And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law,**then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God.* (Lk.2.25-28)

*And there was a prophetess, Anna. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.* (Lk.2.36-38)

I think we can see in Simeon and Anna the character of heart and life that the Lord desires in those who wait for His appearing.

Simeon *was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him.* And those are the characteristics that God wants to form in our hearts as we wait for the coming of Christ.

Anna *serving night and day with fastings and prayers.* Constantly serving, fasting, and praying are the characteristics of those waiting for the coming of Christ.

Let’s seek the Holy to enable us to be like Simeon and Anna as we wait for the second coming of Christ!

**Call to Prayer**

“Maranatha”

Maranatha is a word used in the Bible and the Early Church that means, “Our Lord come!” It is a prayer using one word – Our Lord come!

Maranatha reminds us to keep our eyes on the eternal things of the Spirit. To dwell on material things is to be in constant mental turmoil. Looking down, we see the earth; looking around, we see earthly things. But looking up, we see the hope of the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. To those who are discouraged today, Maranatha! To those who are worried today, Maranatha! To those who are filled with anxiety over the problems they are facing, Maranatha! Our Lord is coming!

**Benediction**

The Lord Jesus says, *“Yes, I am coming quickly.”* Amen (Rev.22.20)

Yes, Come Lord Jesus Come!