

## The Second Coming

### Text: Luke 12:35-48

INTRO: In Billy Graham's autobiography, Just As I Am, he relates a conversation with the then President Elect, John Kennedy. They were driving back to the Kennedy's house when Kennedy stopped the car and turned to the evangelist and asked, "Do you believe in the second coming of Jesus?" "I most certainly do!" Billy replied. "Well, does my church believe it?" Billy responded, "They have it in their creeds." Kennedy in sarcasm said, "They don't preach it. They don't say much about it. I'd like to know what you think." So Billy shared the reason for the first coming of Jesus, to die for our sins, the resurrection and the promise of his return. Only then, Billy said, "Are we going to have permanent peace." The president elect said, "I'll have to talk about that someday"

I believe that many church goers might agree with John Kennedy's assessment. The second coming of Jesus is a missing note in today's pulpit. There are many passages that we need to often review: John 14:1-3, Acts 1:11, I Thessalonians 4:16-18.

The second coming of Jesus is mentioned 318 times in the second volume of the Bible. Seven out of every ten chapters refer to his second coming. One out of every ten verses in the epistles mention it. For every prophecy on the 1<sup>st</sup> coming of Christ, there are eight on the second coming. Let me share a few of those. Each has a unique slant on the appearance of Jesus.

Charles Wesley, the great Methodist wrote 7000 songs, 5000 of them related in some way to the second coming. The Nicene Creed. "He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead." The return of Jesus will be absolute, public, unmistakable, and of cosmic dimensions.

In the Bible reading this morning Jesus gave us two stories that emphasize a believer's game plan for the return of Christ. [At this point I read Peterson's paraphrase of Lk.12:35-48]

The stories or parables of Jesus serve both as windows in which we see kingdom truth and mirrors in which we see ourselves.

They present two of the best practices for you who believe in the second coming of Jesus.

#### 1. FLAVOR YOUR LIFE WITH EXPECTANCY.

Describe the Jewish wedding. [Barclay and others give Background material on the rituals of Hebrew weddings.] Unencumbered, v. 35 they would tuck

the long flowing robe under the belt. "free to move." They would trim the wicks so the light might be bright; v. 35 They were to be ready regardless of the time.

1<sup>st</sup> watch, the wedding banquet 6-9 p.m.

2<sup>nd</sup> watch, 9-12 p.m.

3<sup>rd</sup> watch, 12 a.m. - 3 a.m.

The twist in the story is the groom will serve you [remember the breakfast by the sea, (John 21:12) may have been a preview of the great Supper.] "Come have breakfast" Rom. 13:11-14, and do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed; the night is nearly over; the day is almost here. Jesus leaves us with an image, the unexpectedness of the thief Luke 12:39.

The second story calls you to:

## 2. EXERCISE YOUR LEADERSHIP WITH COMPETENCY,

Explain the trust the master placed in the steward. The nearer meaning may refer to those who were stewards of the ministry when Jesus came, but it also speaks to us who profess to be leaders in Christ's church. The steward's life deteriorates if he grows cynical of the Master's return, v. 45. If we stop looking we begin to stop loving the people of God. Luke 12:47-48 are some of the harshest words Jesus spoke. Jesus expects his followers to be productive, in a ministry, doing a work for the kingdom. I have heard fellow preachers say, "Well, after all we are only called to be faithful." Yes, faithfulness is required, but it's not the whole story.

3. FRUITFULNESS IS EXPECTED. John 15 shows the joyful servant needs to bear fruit, more fruit and much fruit, some thirty fold, sixty fold and 1000 fold. The Thessalonian believers, turned from idols to serve a living God and to wait for his son from heaven. I Thess. 1:9-10

Conclusion: The early church had a greeting: Maranatha, Our Lord Comes!