

(Revelation - Part 2): A Prognosis of Events

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer's sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual readiness for Christ's return over mere prophetic knowledge.

Duration: 18:46

Scripture: Matthew 22:37, Mark 4:18-19, Luke 16:31, Luke 21:34, John 20:30-31, Revelation 7:3-4, Revelation 14:1-3

Topics: "Book Of Revelation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher talks about the importance of being prepared for the second coming of Jesus Christ. He uses a story about a boy who eagerly awaits his father's return to illustrate this point. The preacher emphasizes the need to keep our heads cool and not get caught up in the cares of this life. He also highlights the significance of following God's commandments and staying faithful to Him. The sermon concludes with the message that we should strive to be prepared and ready to stand before Jesus Christ when He returns.

Transcript

You know what Alexander Pope said about knowledge. He said that loads of learned lumber in his head, and we're ignorantly read with loads of learned lumber in our head. A man can get ignorantly read, many a man who is a great teacher of prophecy, and he has loads of prophetic lumber in his head.

As soon as the meeting is over, he goes up, sits down, puts his two feet under a table, eats his fourth meal for Sunday, then goes to bed and lies there and dreams. They tell me that one of the greatest preachers England ever knew died of gout, and gout is a result of overeating. I heard his name say one time, a great man of God.

So now which is it? Should I try to find out the key to the woman clothed with the sun, or should I remember that passage which says, Keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ? That's in the same chapter. I think it's infinitely more important that we keep the commandments of Christ and keep the testimony of Jesus Christ than it is that we know who the woman is. Though when I come to the chapter, of course, I'll tell you who it is.

Then that 144,000 in the 14th chapter, there is another interesting passage, and it's amazing, isn't it, how many people say that they are that 144,000? I looked and lo, a lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him 144,000, having his father's name written in their foreheads. I heard the voice from heaven, the voice

of many waters and the voice of a great thunder, and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. They sung as it were a new song before the throne.

Now, there are the 144,000. Who are they? It's rather amusing that every new cult that comes along says they are the 144,000, and if you join them you'll be part of the 144,000. I'm a nice fellow, really, although I don't always sound so nice.

I have never quite had a frontery to go ask some of these cult leaders what they are going to do when their membership goes beyond the 144,000. When they are only 134,000, they still have 10,000 converts to make, cross-lights. But when they get those 10,000, they have 144,000.

What are they going to do with the over-plus? I've never found that out. It could be very embarrassing to ask one of those cult leaders. But who are they now, which is important to identify them or to bring our lives into line with verse 12 of chapter 14, which says, Here is the patience of the Saints, and here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

Suppose that the man was going away and he said to his son, Now, John, I'm going away and I'm coming back at a certain time. I'm not going to tell you the day, but I'm coming back. But I'm going to leave a letter here with certain complex symbols on it, and maybe you can figure out the day, anyhow, or near to the time.

But here's what I want you to do. I want you to obey your mother, and I want you to keep your room cleaned up, and I want you to wash behind your ears, and I don't want you to ride your bicycle out on the busy highway. And he put down some rules and regulations for a young John to keep.

And he said, Now, if you keep all of these, when I come back, I will have, and then he named something the boy had wanted, something really bad he had wanted. He said, I'll have this for you when I come back. So the boy, his eyes all bright, was waiting for his father to come back.

Then he reminded himself that there was a letter there. He looked at that letter and said, I'm not sure, not sure, but I think that Dad will be back the 27th of August. Not sure.

So the 27th of August comes along and Dad doesn't return. So he re-examines the letter and says, I think it's the 4th of September. But the 4th of September comes and goes, and still the man doesn't come.

And the boy said, Now, if I had the key to unlock this thing, I'd know exactly when he was coming back. I wonder why he'd want to know. I wonder if it would be so that he could cram for exams at the last minute and get ready to meet his father.

But suppose the father comes way late, gets there a month late, and appears after the frost is on the pumpkin. And he comes up, smiling up the walk, and the boy explodes down the walk to meet him and grabs him around the waist, and they have a reunion. And he said, How did you do, boy? He said, Oh, Dad, I did everything you told me to do.

He said, Look, look, everything, just exactly. I didn't know when you were coming, but I kept clean, kept my hair combed, and I kept my room right, and I obeyed my mother. And I didn't ride my bicycle on her way.

I did exactly what you told me to do. Then the father checks with the mother to see if everything is all right, and she said, Yes, it's right, Daddy. He did exactly what you told him to do.

He was perfect. The father said, Son, you didn't figure out when I was coming, but you figured out why I told you I was coming. And you kept right, and you did what I told you, and you kept my commandments.

Therefore, here is the gift, and he unwraps this fabulous thing the boy had been dreaming of for a couple of years. That's exactly where we stand with the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He went away and said, I'll be back.

And when he went away up there from the Mount of Olives, they said, This same Jesus is so coming in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven. This same Jesus in like manner, not somebody else in some other manner, but this same Jesus in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven. He said, Watch, for an hour when you know not the Son of Man coming.

John said, The reason we are told that he is coming back, and we are given a prognosis of coming events, is that we might be prepared and ready for him when he comes. The point is, would it be better for me to know the day of his coming, or be all cleaned up and ready for him when he comes? You know the answer to that question. The exact time of his coming isn't of any vast importance to me.

But that I should be prepared for him at any time, that is of vast importance. Because if in his will he should remain a little longer, and I should lie down and sleep with yesterday 6,000 years, and he still shouldn't have come, it would be the same as if I had met him prepared and ready. Behold, I come quickly, says Revelation 22, verse 7. Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Ah, how wild is the human heart! The old Roman writer said that mankind is a wild beast that walks upright. How wild is the human heart! And how our interest is aroused in novel things, and strange things, and supernatural things. One time there was a man down in hell, and he said to another man down there who wasn't in hell but was with inhaling distance, he said, send somebody back to talk to my brothers.

Because if a man came back from the dead, they'd listen. He said, if a man came back from the dead, they wouldn't listen, because they haven't listened to Moses and the prophets. And if they won't hear Moses and the prophets, they wouldn't hear if a man came back from the dead.

And if God were to perform a miracle out here on the lawn back of the building tonight, and you hadn't believed on his son and repented of your sins, that miracle wouldn't help you at all. And if God were to raise everybody in the cemetery out here at Oak Hill, such a cemetery, usually as every town has one Oak Hill Cemetery, and if there's a cemetery by that name out here, and God were to raise everybody, and you hadn't believed in Christ before, you wouldn't believe in him now. Our Lord said so.

They'd believe not the scriptures, they wouldn't believe the miracle. I want to read a passage in close. It's a passage I think is one of the most important that our Lord left behind for us.

He says this, Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged. The overcharging of the heart is like the overloading of a boat. It sinks it.

Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged. What is it that overcharges the human heart? The Lord named three things that overcharge the human heart. He said one was surfeiting.

I don't think people eat as much as they used to. Maybe they eat more frequently. They have their coffee breaks now to get strength so they can have another coffee break.

But I don't know. They used to serve as many as seven different kinds of meat at one meal. Seven different kinds of meat at one meal.

It wasn't anything for a man to eat a whole chicken and a whole fish. Drink a quart of some kind of liquor. I don't believe people eat as much as they used to.

But still it's here, overcharged with surfeiting. Surfeiting, as you know, is overeating. But if we just live for eating, I suppose then we're overcharged.

Then he says drunkenness. Drunkenness is usually associated with liquor, but there are other kinds of drunkenness. I've seen people as high as a kite and they hadn't any liquor in them at all.

Something else that caused them to get drunk. They were drunk with delight over some new thing they had or some new job or money that had been left them or something else, some trip they were going to make. Watch out and keep your head cool.

Scripture says that we ought to keep our heads cool and we ought to keep our hearts warm. A man who has a warm heart ought to keep a cool head. Be sure to keep the fire in the furnace.

Don't let it get into the chimney. If the fire gets in the chimney, you'll burn the house down. Keep it in the furnace.

Keep the chimney cool and the furnace warm in cold weather. You and I are to keep our hearts warm, but to keep our heads cool. When everybody else is hysterical, running all directions, wringing their hands, either shouting for or against, you'll be standing there smiling cool as a cucumber.

And they'll think, of course, that you're dumb or that you're untouched by all this, and you will be. You'll have a cool heart. You won't be drunk.

I don't want to get drunk. To put somebody up there and send him around the earth a few times, what's he been doing up there anyhow? When I was a kid, we used to go to the circus and I'd ride on a merry-go-round. It wasn't a very big merry-go-round, but it was a merry-go-round.

You started and you went around and you got off where you got on. You'd been somewhere and you'd gone in a circle. What did these two Russians do the other last month or so? Well, they went in a merry-go-round a little bit larger.

I got this from another fellow, but I'm passing it on to you. A little larger merry-go-round, a little larger. They got off where they got on, and they're just the same as they were before.

Now, I'm not going to let that get me down at all. I was riding along with a fellow one time over a highway, and he suddenly got all thrilled about the highway. He said, Look, look, a four-lane highway, a four-lane highway.

And I was as cool as the proverbial kink. And I didn't respond, and he turned and looked at me rather disappointed. He said something to the effect that nothing excites you, does it? Well, some things do excite me, but four-lane highways don't excite me, because I know what they are.

They're just hunks of concrete. I know how to make concrete. Stir it up and have it kind of runny, pour it and roll it and leave it there.

It'll harden, and people can go out and get killed on it. So I'm not going to get all steamed up over a four-lane highway. He said, Don't get drunk about anything.

Keep your head cool. Then he said, Another thing that overcharges us and sinks the boat is the cares of this life. Here we've got to be careful.

The cares of this life. They've made life almost intolerable for us now, haven't they? And when this new tax comes on in September, 30 years I've paid 3 cents tax, so I won't mind it. I'll just be back home paying my 3 cents sales tax.

But it complicates things for people. No storekeeper can say, Well, I'll just bear the tax to save the bookkeeping. That's what you think.

Be a fellow over in Ottawa flying over here to Toronto to look you up. You won't do that at all. So it's bookkeeping, bookkeeping.

You know what they've done to me, as the brother said? I paid my income tax in Canada. Then I got a letter from the man with the long beard and the star-spangled hat, wanting to know how it comes. Now, I don't know, I may have to pay it again down there.

And if I do, making out one is enough to drive a man crazy. But making out two, I don't know whether I'll get through it or not. The cares of this life.

Brothers and sisters, civilization is just too much. When I was a kid, I hadn't a care in the wide world. From the time the frost got out of the ground in the spring until it came back into the ground in the fall, I never wore even a pair of shoes.

These used to paddle around in my feet as God made them. And there wasn't a complex or a complicated thing anywhere. If you wanted a rabbit, you went out and shot him or trapped him.

If you wanted to fish, you went down and fished and got him. I used to get a trout occasionally with a bent pin on the worm. And now, if you want to shoot a rabbit, you have to go and line up with a lot of other fellows that want to shoot rabbits and get yourself a license and keep that in your wallet.

If you want to fish, I set up a general. You have to have a license to fish up here, he said Americans do. You can't even get a minnow and you have to have a license for it.

Everything. License. Cares of this life.

Jesus said these cares of life are coming. It used to be you could start when you were born and end when you died. Now you have to be shot for this and shot for that and shot for the other thing.

Vaccinated and vexated and looked after. Used to just sit down and eat. Now you have to remember whether it's vitamin A, vitamin E, vitamin B complex.

Life is just too difficult. Send missionaries over to the heathen to make Christians out of them, and if we do that, I am for it. But if we send them over there to make nervous Canadians and Americans out of them, I

am not for it.

We're so worried over here. They're not so worried over there. Said in Africa years gone by, a fellow was over there and he had some of the Nationals, used to say Natives, but they don't allow you to use that word anymore, working for him.

They were good-natured boys, but they were nobody's fools, let me tell you. Soon as he'd leave the premises, they'd lie down to sleep. And as long as he was around, they would work.

But as soon as he left, they'd sleep. When he came back, they'd hear him and wake up and be digging away beautifully. So he had one glass eye, and he thought of a way to handle him.

He took that glass eye and he put it on a stump. He said, now I'm going back to the ranch, but that thing will be watching you. If you lie down, it'll see you.

And that worked for about 15 minutes, and then one boy got himself an idea. He went and picked up an old hat that somebody had and didn't want, and he laid that over the thing, and all of them lay down and went to sleep. There's a way of handling it, you know, brothers and sisters, but we make it so difficult for everybody.

The cares of this life, he said, and that day come upon you unaware, for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and stand before the Son of Man. That's the purpose of prophecy, that we might be prepared for the hour when we shall escape all of these snares and traps and stand before Jesus Christ our Lord, clean, forgiven, driven, and saved.

I hope you're ready. Now, Sunday night after Sunday night when I'm here, and I expect to be here as I've said most of the Sunday nights. When I'm not, Brother Gray will preach.

But when I'm here, I'll preach on Revelation. We will go on into this book, and we will discover some wonders here. We hope that you'll come and tell others.

We'll see what God the Lord will speak on the book of Revelation.

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