

# Christ's Appearing Our Appearing

by F.J. Huegel

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of participating in Christ's coming and the glory of this mystic union with Christ, which will bring transformation and glorification to believers.*

**Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 4:16

**Topics:** "Second Coming Of Christ", "Participation in Christ"

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## Description

F.J. Huegel emphasizes the significance of Christ's Second Coming, urging believers to remain vigilant and prepared for His return. He highlights the intimate connection between Christ and His followers, asserting that as members of His body, they will share in His glory and participate in the ultimate fulfillment of redemption. Despite the mystery surrounding the Second Advent, Huegel encourages faith and anticipation, reminding the congregation that their hope in Christ's return should inspire purity and readiness. He concludes with a call to embrace the joy of participating in the marriage supper of the Lamb, celebrating the profound union between Christ and His Church.

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## Transcript

WE have not yet exhausted the deep veins of purest gold to which this principle of participation has led us. In a sense, the most sublime of all its aspects has to do with the future developments of Christ's Kingdom. There is the great fact of the Saviour's coming about which the New Testament has so much to say. We are told to watch and pray, for we know not what hour our Lord may come. We are told to abide in Him that when He shall appear we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at His coming. We are told that the angels shall be sent forth with a great sound of a trumpet, and that they shall gather together the elect from the four winds.

The doctrine of the Second Coming may not be popular, but for that matter, what word or doctrine of our beloved Lord has been? The truth of the Second Advent may have been abused and distorted, and held out of proportion to other truths, but what word of our Master has not been abused? As good disciples of the Christ of God, we dare not be indifferent to any truth; nor dare we, without hurt to our souls, neglect any word that ever issued from the lips of Him who spake as never man spake. That the Saviour did declare again and again in unmistakable terms, that He would come again, and that the inspired writers with one voice herald the glorious appearing of the Blessed and only Potentate (I Tim. vi. 15) , as the consummate event toward which all history is moving, no student of the Scriptures would deny.

Now, just because we may not be able to grasp the full significance of the Saviour's word, or understand just what this glorious appearing may involve, are we going to waver? Are we going to look askance at those who rejoice in the comfort which this great hope imparts? Are we going to fail to heed the Apostolic injunction, "When He shall appear we shall be like Him, and every man that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as He is pure," because we cannot comprehend the modus operandi? Is the Saviour worthy of trust only when He is understood? Will we follow only when the intellect can support us? Is it any more wonderful than those things which have already transpired? the Incarnation, the raising of Lazarus, the Cross, the empty tomb, the ascension, our oneness with Christ in death and resurrection? What of the prophets did they understand the full import of the revelation vouchsafed to them as regards the first coming of Christ? Indeed, they did not understand; and I dare say that the marvellous events which transpired in Galilee, the proclamation of which, even after two thousand years, still causes the ears of the world to tingle, were no less baffling to them, as from ancient times they looked forward to them, than those unfulfilled prophecies to which we look forward in our day.

I am not ashamed to confess that I do not understand. But I do believe. And since I have come to realize my oneness with Christ in death and resurrection, since I have come to enjoy the full fruits of His Victory on Calvary, since I have learned to participate in the ascension of my Lord, as one who has been made to sit with Him in the Heavenlies, and since I have learned that my sufferings as a follower of the Crucified are after all a filling up of His sufferings; since the true import of the everlasting gospel has wrought in me, I look forward as never before to the coming of my King. Could it be otherwise, when I know that even in that supreme event I shall participate?

We are plainly taught that when Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory (Col. iii. 4) . He can do nothing without us. We are His body. Oh! marvellous thought! Christ has bound us to Himself with ties so strong (no man would speak of his own hand as being near or far, his hand is part of himself; no man would undertake anything without a full participation on the part of every member of his body in that event), Christ has bound us, I repeat, so eternally and utterly to Himself that we must figure in His movements. Of course we shall appear with Him. It could not be otherwise—we are His body. The Church has been so grafted into the trunk of the eternal Godhead, so incorporated in His life that He and the Church are one.

Oh! the unutterable glory of this mystic union with Christ. To what an ineffable destiny it commits us. We no longer concern ourselves about whether or no we shall go to Heaven. The truth of the matter is, we would rather not go, if Christ were not there. He is Heaven. The faintest glimmer of light from His holy countenance beside which the sun is but a shadow, suffices the heart. Paul could not have done otherwise than sing there in prison when at midnight with Silas, he rejoiced. His back was bleeding with the stripes; it was midnight; he was in prison. But he sings as a participant of Christ; Heaven's ineffable light bursts in about him, and he forgets all but the fact of Christ.

We are to participate in Christ's coming. We are to be caught up. We are to be changed. Chariots of fire are to sweep us from earth in the twinkling of an eye. One thing is still lacking in our incorporation in the Godhead. Christ's work is incomplete. Redemption is still in its swaddling clothes. Paul says there is a great groaning in nature. One writer has referred to it as the trinity of groanings. The whole creation groaneth. The Spirit groaneth. We groan. For what? "For the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 23). Our bodies are to be changed. We are to be glorified with Christ. As His body was glorified so our bodies are to be glorified in Him. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly . . . Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a

moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory . . . thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. xv. 48-57).

We are moving forward toward the most stupendous transactions in the history of the human race. We would not be dogmatic. We would not quarrel over the interpretation of dispensational truth. It behooves us to be exceedingly tolerant, as Christians, as to one another's mode of interpreting the Word in its bearing on the future. Some believe that the shadow of the great Tribulation is already upon us, that we may be caught up at any moment. Others tell us that the event may not transpire for thousands of years. Be all that as it may. No one knows but the participants of Christ's Coming. Nothing can befall Him that does not befall us. We are yet to participate in a fuller measure in the fruits of redemption. We shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. With Him we shall reign. The stream of life, which proceedeth from the Throne, and from the Lamb and which breaks in upon us, so that even now "rivers of living water" flow from our innermost being, is going to just overflow all its banks some day, so that Death will be literally swallowed up in victory. Our ascension with Christ will not be merely in spirit as it is now-our participation in the ascension will, as it were, blossom forth in its true splendour; and then we shall shine as the sun forever in the kingdom of the Father. "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready . . ." "And he saith unto me, write: Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God" (Rev. xix. 6-9).

Oh ! that God may give us a heart to make due preparation for the participation in the yet unfulfilled history of Christ. For as we have been made to partake of the death of the Federal Head of the New Race, and in Him were resurrected and made to sit in the Heavenlies in spirit, so, in that sublime event toward which the Church moves, the marriage supper of the Lamb, we too, shall participate. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.

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