

I Come Quickly: Hold Fast

by H.J. Vine

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being spiritually prepared for Christ's imminent return through faithfulness, community, and adherence to Scripture.

Scripture: Ephesians 5:25, James 4:6, Revelation 3:9-22

Topics: "Second Coming", "Faithfulness"

Description

H.J. Vine preaches on the importance of being prepared for the Lord's second coming, emphasizing the need for practical readiness and loyalty to Christ. The Scriptures serve as the highest authority in guiding believers to stay true to His word and assemble together, contrasting the lukewarmness and self-sufficiency prevalent in the church. Those who are prepared eagerly await Christ's return, cherishing His love and holding fast to His promises, while being preserved from the deceptions of the world and false doctrines.

Transcript

Revelation 3:11

The Lord is coming again, and Scripture shows plainly what will mark those who are prepared for that momentous event. Enoch was ready to go when God took him, and Elijah also, in his day, and they were both translated.

Those who are in practical readiness for Christ's coming have Himself--His Name, and His return immediately before their hearts; they abide true to His word, and assemble together. We have the highest authority for saying this--the Scriptures of Truth.

The coming of the Lord must be near; and just as Scripture foretells, Laodicean lukewarmness as to our Lord Jesus Christ marks the large mass of those who belong to the church by profession. Neither His personal glory nor His love have any true value for them. Great amalgamations are also in swift progress which will lead to greater self-sufficiency and boasting and independence of God and the exclusion of Christ Himself. They will make for the unified confusion and corruption, which will be state-established, which is Babylon, as Revelation 17 shows, before its final fall and doom. The prime movers think mainly of world-serving, and not of serving our Lord who is still world-rejected. It is a fatal snare. Obedience to the revealed mind of God in Scripture is not considered, for its authority has long been undermined for them; therefore the Lord Himself and His own Word are set small store by.

Many, too, whose slackness is so culpable, will be caught in the gathering floods which hasten thitherward. To Lot, as he "pitched his tent toward Sodom," it looked like the garden of the Lord. Let us take warning and turn away into the secure path, and consider the sure road, divinely marked out for our feet in the last days, the highway for all the saints to tread, so shall we be preserved from gradually drifting towards delusive but doomed Babylon.

The Lord Himself will be before the hearts of all who are loyal to Him. This is the hall-mark of the true assembly. He loved it, and gave Himself for it, and will come again to present it to Himself (Eph. 5:25-27). He is all to it, but He was crucified and is still rejected by the world. The Object of the heart of the true bride has been refused here. Babylon, which is the false and unfaithful woman, says, "I sit a queen, and I am not a widow." She is full of self-importance, and has no sense of Christ's rejection. It is nothing to her. The real have, so His name is everything to them, and they cleave to Himself. His interests are paramount in their thoughts. and they are cheered by His word, "I come quickly, hold fast what thou hast, that no one takes thy crown." This stimulates them to faithfulness and steadfastness; and they are preserved from losing what they have, and from being deceived by "up-to-date" doctrines and schemes, which can only lead away from Him.

His return is expected by them at any moment. It is immediately before their hearts. Christ is precious to them; for His love, which was shown out at Calvary for them, is no false dream to them. They deeply desire to see His face. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come" (Rev. 22:17). Ecclesiastical and political failure, confusion in the church and the world, only intensifies their longing for His return, knowing that He alone can put things right. They have "a little strength," but they do not use this in attempts to rectify that which Christ alone can adjust. They cleave to Him. His Name avails for them as they await His coming. The word of His patience is treasured by them. Long has He been refused His rights. Patiently has He waited the Father's time when all shall own Him as Lord. This they know and value. Before the hour of the great tribulation strikes, the Lord Jesus will take them to Himself at His coming; and He will show to all that He has loved them. This is true of the whole assembly, of course; but we are speaking of those who are practically prepared for the Lord's return. Till that moment, those described in Revelation 3:8-11 will be here.

Meanwhile they have His own Word, and this they keep. The Scriptures are esteemed as divinely inspired by them; and, through faith in Christ Jesus, they get divine encouragement, comfort, and edification through them. The Spirit teaches them; and it is also through the Scriptures they learn the Word of Christ, which they delight in, and cleave to, even as they do to His Name. This preserves them safe in Christ Jesus amidst the general departure from the truth. His word affords abundant food as well as direction for them, and it is the exhaustless theme of their converse. They become formed by it. Doubtless, some more than others, but all in some degree. Like those spoken of at the close of the Old Testament days, they speak often one to another, as they think upon His Name, upon what He is. They assemble together, and He is the Centre and Object of their gatherings.

It is not a question of coming to hear a preacher or teacher. They have a common interest, a common bond, a common theme and object--Christ Himself; and they edify and encourage one another in Him.

Love of the brethren also characterizes them. That is the meaning of "Philadelphia." "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren." The Lord Jesus loves them, and this shall be made known (Rev. 3:9). "I have loved thee," He says; and till He returns He sets before them "an open door, which no one can shut." This remains. If some complain and murmur and do not avail themselves of

it, there is no reason why others should swell their complainings. Let us avail ourselves of the great grace of our Lord, and enter into the positive and abiding things that are ours until He comes, taking full advantage of His unfailing favour.

Granted that this description of those who are in practical readiness for the Lord's return is scriptural, it remains for us to examine ourselves in God's presence, to see if we bear these marks; and, if not, it is high time to bestir ourselves, for His coming draws nigh. There is grace abounding for us to draw upon. We have but to feel our need of its supplies, and receive from Him who "gives more grace," so that we may be in a state that is well pleasing to Him. May we indeed be like unto men that wait for their Lord, and give a glad as well as ready response to His call when He comes.

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