

The Second Coming of Christ

by J. Frank Norris

J. Frank Norris emphasizes the certainty of Christ's return and the necessity of faith in His promises amidst a world seeking peace through human efforts.

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:16

Topics: "Eschatology", "Salvation"

Description

Dr. Norris passionately preaches about the imminent return of Jesus Christ to establish His Kingdom on earth, emphasizing the difference between Pre-Millenarians who believe in Christ's personal return and Post-Millenarians who rely on human efforts for a golden era. He underscores the need to focus on eternal salvation and the certainty of Christ's reign as the Prince of Peace, contrasting it with the world's failed attempts at peace through human governance. Dr. Norris urges the congregation to prioritize spreading the gospel and preparing for Christ's return, emphasizing the importance of faith and righteousness over worldly achievements.

Transcript

DR. NORRIS: I want us this morning to sit down together just a little bit, and talk to you on a very important question. I submit two passages of Scripture, one if found in the fourteenth chapter of Zachariah; one that I didn't know was in the Word of God until I had been preaching for twenty years. This one, a Christian, a member of the Greek Orthodox Church gave me when I was with him. What a fellowship we had together! Every place we would read, stop and read in the Scriptures what took place there. One day, standing on Mount Olivet, we stood there and read it. This was 22 years ago. How clear is the sky in Palestine!

I said, "George, what an opportunity would have been yours if you had come to America." He was a great deal older than I, about seventy years old, but one of the most cultured and devout men I have ever known. No doubt he has long since gone home to God. He shrugged his shoulder; he was a magnificent fellow, broad shoulders, long beard. He lifted his eyes and looked across the Jordan River to the mountains of Moab; then to the mountains of Samaria toward the north; to the hills of Judea to the west; then glanced down to the valley of Jehoshaphat; to the garden of Gethsemane; to Jerusalem spread out in front of us; Bethlehem the little city, the birthplace of Jesus, seven mile away; and then he turned and said, "Let me ask you a question. Do you believe that Book?" "Do you believe that Book?" twice. And then the third time, "Pardon me, but do you believe that Book?" I said, "I certainly do." He then turned to the book of Zachariah, the fourteenth chapter and read the fourth verse. He said, "Read it" and I read it, these words:

"And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south."

Then lifting his eyes, he said, "You know, I have a feeling it won't be long: If it pleases God I want to be here to see His feet stand on this Mount. When He left this place, when He went up; will you turn to the Acts of the Apostles chapter one, verse eleven? Would you mind to turn and read it?" I SAID, "I will be glad to."

"Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

He said, "Do you believe that?" I said, "I certainly do."

"That's going to take place right here on this spot where He stood one day surrounded by a small group of disciples that had seen him come and go through forty days of resurrection life. Suddenly, without any warning, He arose, He went up; they looked up and saw Him, until the cloud received Him out of their sight; there they still stood and looked, for they expected that He would come through the clouds again, But instead, two angels came and stood right here and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" this same Jesus," not another, this same person, not His influence, "This same Jesus," that talked to you, that was crucified and buried with the nail prints in His hands and side, see the scars, "this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven."

I turned and said to him, "I have not found so great faith in all the world as I have found in your soul."

I told you how, when I returned, the Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral having two sons, (Both went down in the war); I saw pictures on the wall, I said, "Is that one of them?" He said, "Would you like to see his pictures?" And he brought out pictures from a baby until he was grown. He said "That picture of the Colonel was taken just before he went down at Dunkirk." He was magnificent, the head of St. Paul's Cathedral. I didn't say anything. He turned and said, "You know, I shall hold him again in these arms when the Lord comes." I said, "Dean, do you believe in the Coming of the lord?" He said, "This same Jesus ... shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

I received a letter the other day from Earl Browder, noted communist. He is the nicest fellow you ever met. He has a book out "After the War, What?" He and his fellows, other communists, think after the war they will turn this county into communism. Therefore, hid book "After the War, What?" That's the question in the minds of everybody. There isn't any doubt about the war terminating, but after the war, what? Everybody is wondering.

After the subduing of the African gold coast pirates, Stephen Decatur said "My Country, right; My country, wrong; My country, right or wrong." That's the spirit. I will not speak on that, but I do know this, that whatever may come; I do not know what a day will bring forth, between this and next Thursday, Thanksgiving week; I do not know the outcome an forms of different governments we shall have after the war; I do not know the course of human history; but I know according to His predeterminate counsel, we need to realize in these strenuous days with gold stars increasing in number, we need to learn again, that our God is from everlasting to everlasting.

We need to learn again that He who was born in Bethlehem's manger, held in the arms of a mother like our mothers held us; He grew like any other boy; see Him again at the tender age of twelve surrounded by the Doctors of the law compounding questions that they could not answer; see Him again; see Him again at the marriage feast as he sanctifies that most holy of all human relationships; see John and the two disciples, seeing Jesus, say "Behold, the Lamb of God; see Him again in the baptismal waters of the Jordan River with John, and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove light upon Him; see Him again in the wilderness with the arch-enemy of the race, meet every temptation that could ever come to us; see Him again as He says to the storm of the sea 'Peace be still'; see Him again as He takes the little ones and blesses them; see Him again as He takes the five loaves and two fishes and blesses them and five thousand men are satisfied and the boy has twelve baskets left; see Him again as He stops on the wayside and heals the unclean leper, makes him every whit whole; see the man in the tombs of death, no man could bind or tame him, and Jesus casts the devils out of him and sends him back to his wife and children to a happy home and an honest living; see Him again that last night celebrating the Jewish Passover commemoration the deliverance from the darkness of Egypt; see Him again as He walks down the dark mountain side, eleven disciples follow Him; see Him again as He says to the three 'Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder'; see Him as He falls on His face, praying 'Let this cup pass from me...'; see Him as He stands before the judgment of Pilate; see Him led away to be crucified; see Him as he sits down on the cross and is nailed to it without a murmur "as a lamb brought to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth"; see the sun turned to darkness, no stars look upon that awful scene; see Him as He cried "It is finished," to all principalities and darkness, to all coming time, "It is finished"; see Him as they take His lifeless body, wrap it in clean linen and bury it in the rich man's tomb, Joseph of Arimathaea, instead of being buried with the wicked as was the custom; see Him as He arose upon the first day of the week as a King, King over hell and death, all powers; King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; see Him as He goes out to the Mount and ascends into Heaven, the most established fact of the Old Testament and New Testament prophets is the visible return of Jesus Christ to establish His kingdom on the earth.

PRE-MILLENNIAL TRUTH VERSUS POST-MILLENNIAL ERROR

My next proposition is, after establishing the fract in which all Christian people believe in, I call attention to the two views of this question. Some very devout people believe that this old world will run along by education, science, etc., and will gradually become a place made fit to live in; that after a period, a golden era Christ will come and reign; they are called Post-Millenarians. The word "Post" means after, "Millennium" means "a thousand years." They believe in His Coming at the end of the thousand years; brought about by education plus a little gospel. That's the view of a great many people, all ecclesiastical machines, whether Roman Catholics, Methodists or Baptist. That is Post-Millennialism.

On the other side, "Pre" means "before". Pre-Millenarians believe that Jesus is coming in Person to establish His Kingdom upon the earth. Just as well expect to have daylight without the sun as to expect to have the Kingdom without Christ. Sunrise is at the beginning of day and not at the end of the day.

A Post-Millenarian uses human aims, "peace conferences," puts his faith in the government of men. We have tried that for six thousand years to no avail, the world, is a mess. Post-Millenarians take God out, saved by education; Pre-Millenarians believe the gospel is the power of God.

The Pre-Millenarians don't believe the government of this world will ever bring about peace; that peace can only come through a Person;

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isaiah 9:6-7.

And He shall sit upon the throne of His father, David; that did not take place when He first came. Not the throne of his father, David, but he stood before the throne of Caesar. Thank God the day will come when His throne will be established upon the earth.

A day we remember, November 11th all the streets of Fort Worth were roped off, all the streets of America were turned into sensual revelry, all night long they danced, said the war has come to an end, we will have no mote war, preachers said "we are going to have peace," "have disarmament." When President Warren G. Harding called a Disarmament Conference in 1920, he practically committed national suicide; he junked our battleships, sent them to the bottom of the sea, but Japan didn't. We were unprepared for this war because the government in Washington looked for peace to come; there cannot be any peace until the Prince of Peace comes!

Oh, someone says, you talk as though the world is going to end. I am glad tragedy will end; I am glad sorrow will end; I am glad we will see no more of our boys marching to war; I am glad the family circle will be unbroken; I am glad the graveyard of the world, of sin and war, will end, and Jesus will come and establish His Kingdom. That's why I am a Pre-Millenarian. I would hate to be a Post-Millenarian, with their broken down denominationalism. Every time you put a dollar into that Post-Millenarian program you are denying the Word of God.

That's why the First Baptist Church is different; and multitudes of other Baptist Churches; that's why we "come out from among them and be not partakers" with them.

I talked to a chaplain, he was head chaplain, he was saying what a difference between this and last war; they didn't preach then, gave them cigarettes; they don't do it now. He said "I want to give these boys the gospel." This old war will soon be over. The world will stand aghast at what it has cost us, cost us everything we have.

In England I saw people standing in line, even when the blackouts came, didn't make any difference what church it was, Baptist, Methodist, Congregationalist or Anglican, they fell down on their knees and prayed. One of the most beautiful sights, the King and Queen of England go every morning to the house of prayer, don't have to have any guards.

This old world is not going to turn to God, only a certain number. How many? That's the secret of The Most High.

What shall I do? One of these nights you will hear the trumpet of God sound. You will not ask what it is. I do not believe in a secret rapture. A "great trumpet: Isaiah says, "shall be sounded." The Trumpet of God shall be sounded and it will be heard the world around. That trumpet will be heard in the grave yard, where the flowers withered. "The dead in Christ shall rise first."

I go back whenever I can to Mothers' grave, not because she is there, but as a sweet association, and as I look upon that little moss covered tombstone, I think:

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption."

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

"And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

That's what will happen when the trumpet of God shall sound.

When Christ comes and the trumpet is sounded every cannon in the world will be silenced. There will be no disputes in Congress over gas rationing then; every debate will be stilled. Christ the Lord is coming? Then the question, "What did I do with my time? What did I do with my money?" I held it in my hand. God said, "Bring to me what is mine," and I said "No." We are spending it by the millions. Right now most of you are wondering "What am I going to give for Christmas?" They said in Great Britain "We'll have no presents, we are giving everything to our boys who are fighting for us." Wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone would have a part in the \$5,000.00 we need to build a building where soldiers can hear the gospel at Fort Sam Houston? Wouldn't it be wonderful if before yonder sun sets in the west I could say I have won somebody to Jesus Christ? Then we will have three great preaching places at three army camps.

Did you read the other day, that story, how that Colonel from the cruiser that went down, he leaped off, the Colonel a good swimmer, saw one of the boys, an Ensign, come up and then down. He reached him, asked him "Are you hurt?" He said, "I am shot in the legs." He couldn't swim. The Colonel said, "Hold on lad," and he took that lad to safety.

When the trumpet of God sounds, it won't be "how much money, how important I am, how much fame."

Daniel knew what fame was. He lived through four great empires. Who is the wise man? The world says the man that makes money, a builder of empires; but Daniel says "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Go out at midnight, see yonder polar star, watch it, it is steady; see the old dipper go around the polar star every twenty-four hours; see them as old Isaiah calls them by name; see them as Abraham numbered his posterity by them; see them as Paul said "One star differs from another star in glory;" yet Isaiah says:

"Lift up your eyes to the heavens and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished."

Let us stand, with every head bowed. I want this great audience to whisper "Rock of Ages." Who will accept Christ tonight, and this minute where you are?

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