

# Week of Meetings 1974-05 Person Who Is Coming

by James R. Cochrane

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*The sermon emphasizes the contrast between Jesus' first coming in humility and his second coming in glory, and the significance of his coming for our salvation and the revelation of God's glory.*

**Duration:** 44:53

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 2:8-9, Ephesians 3:20-21, Titus 2:11-15

**Topics:** "Second Coming", "Gods Judgment"

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## Description

The sermon transcript begins with a hymn, hymn number forty-eight, which calls upon the Lord to engage our hearts and fill us with His love. The speaker then quotes a passage from the Bible, emphasizing the importance of living a godly life and looking forward to the return of Jesus Christ. The sermon highlights the long-suffering of God throughout history and warns of the judgment that awaits those who reject His love and grace. The speaker concludes by emphasizing the transformative power of God's grace and the need for obedience to the gospel in order to truly know Him.

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## Transcript

I would like you to turn this morning to 2 Timothy chapter 1, 1st chapter of 2 Timothy, reading from verse 9, "...who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to life through the gospel. Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles, for which cause I also suffer these things. Nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." And then I'd like you to turn over just a few pages to Paul's letter to Titus chapter 2. Titus, the second chapter, and we will read from verse 11, "...for the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." It is our prayer this morning that God would speak to our hearts through these two portions of his word which we have

just read. I would like to share with you very briefly this morning a few thoughts concerning the person who has promised to return and to receive us to himself.

I noticed during the week that Mr. Willie has shared with us on two or three occasions a number of books that are in the bookstore at the back of this building, a good number of them related to prophetic events. And all of us today who love the Bible, read it regularly, are fascinated by the things that are happening in our world. It is true that on many details we may not be clear.

It's also true that in some details we may not be of one mind. But there is one matter which always brings joy to our hearts and in which you find unanimous thoughts and opinions, and that is the person who is coming back. About that there is no doubt, and we rest this morning on the authority of his promise when he said, if I go away I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also.

Perhaps we can only clearly see the person who is coming if we pause for a moment and look back two thousand years and remember the person who was born in Bethlehem and came into our world so long ago. It's true that when he came, the men and women of that generation, speaking generally, did not know him. I'm reminded this morning of an occasion just two years ago when I arrived in a city in Canada that I'd never visited before.

I was there by invitation and I did know one couple who lived in that city. I'd met them many years before in another place in Canada, and it was through them that I was now arriving at that city. It's not a large city.

The airport is not a busy airport, and I anticipated that either the man or the wife would be there to meet me. When I came off of the plane and walked into the terminal, the group of people who were waiting, I looked at them quickly, but there was no one that I could recognize. That happens now and then, and so I just moved to one side and waited quietly.

I thought, well, maybe they've been delayed in getting to the airport. I'll wait five or ten minutes, and if they don't turn up, then I'll phone. While I was standing there, a very smartly dressed woman came over, and she looked me right straight in the eye, just for a moment or two, and then she passed on.

And I said to myself, she's certainly looking for someone, but I'm not the person that she's looking for. And I watched her as she looked at other men, most of them businessmen, that came off the plane. Eventually, I saw her go up to one or two and say something.

I couldn't hear what she said, but there was no doubt about it she was looking for someone. Well, my five or ten minutes went by, and my friend did not arrive. I looked at this woman again, and I thought, I wonder if she might be looking for me.

And so I took up a little courage, and I went over to where she was, and I said, you wouldn't be looking for Jim Cochran, would you? And the look of surprise and shock on her face, that's the man she was looking for. Well, I said, that's my name. Well, she said, I was looking for a man much younger than you.

Her husband, whom I didn't know at that time, she and her husband were strangers to me, but it came out that I'd known her husband 30 years ago in the city of Vancouver, when we were boys. And he must have tried to explain to her what I looked like, more or less, forgetting that 30 years had gone by. And when I arrived, I was the right person.

But she had a totally wrong idea of what I would be like. Now, the application to the thought this morning is obvious. The Lord Jesus was born into the world 2,000 years ago.

There were such strong ideas about what he should be like, that they never recognized him when he came. You may remember that there were some very beautiful exceptions. Simeon was an old man, and the Spirit of God indicated that that is the child, the promised Messiah.

Anna, she was an old woman and a godly woman, and she recognized, under the Spirit's guidance, that this was the child. Generally speaking, from his birth right through to his maturity, people did not expect him to be the Messiah. God worked in the hearts of some.

We mentioned one on Thursday. Peter and the Lord Jesus himself recognized that the Father had touched his heart. That's why he recognized that the Lord Jesus was the Messiah.

This doesn't mean that they anticipated some mystical, majestic expression of deity in the world. No, the Jews really anticipated that the Messiah would be a man born into the world. That's why in Matthew's Gospel, in the dialogue between the Lord Jesus and the Pharisees, the Pharisees are stunned, and they remain silent, and they don't ask him any more questions, because the Lord Jesus pointed out, quoting to them their own scriptures, that the Messiah was not only the Son of David, not just a mere man, but he would be God manifested in the flesh.

That thought apparently had never entered their mind. They had no answer, and they were afraid to ask any more questions. Thus, the Lord Jesus, born into the world, he was an authentic and real man.

But the Jews had an idea that the Messiah would be a man like David, a man of war, a man who would come to conquer the nations that oppressed them, and to bring them that visible manifestation of the kingdom of God. But the Lord Jesus did not come. Maybe some of them thought in John the Baptist what they thought was the more authentic description of the Messiah.

For John came with great force, with a ministry that can almost be described as morally violent, and he hounded on the subject of repentance and turning to God. But the Lord Jesus did not come like John the Baptist. In Philippians chapter two, we read that he, being in the form of God and thinking it not robbery to be equal with God, he made himself of no reputation and took upon himself the form of a servant and was found in the likeness of men.

The contrast is startling that the one who eternally existed in the form of God, surrounded by all the state and the circumstances that belong to deity, he came down in that great act of self-humiliation into our world, and he took on the form of a servant. The Jews never expected that. They never thought the Messiah would come in humility.

We can't really justify their thinking because Isaiah spoke so clearly of the servant of Jehovah. Isaiah 53, that speaks of the sufferings and the death of the Messiah. But there are other portions that speak of the majesty, the glory, the might, and the power that would belong to him, and they were obsessed with that concept of the Messiah.

But when he came in humility, in the form of a servant, they never recognized it. Even the disciples, and we've noticed this in recent days, were perplexed on more than one occasion. I've often wondered what their thoughts were in John 13, when the Messiah, the Lord Jesus who was present, who existed always and then in the form of God, who never for a moment lost that nature that is his by right of deity.

He laid aside his outward garments, and he took a towel and a little pail of water, and he knelt down and he served the disciples. One has said that never was the form of God so clearly seen as in that moment when the Lord Jesus displayed the form of a servant. It seemed inconsistent to the Jewish people, and perhaps to many religious people in the world today, as then that the almighty, omnipotent God could come down into our world and take the form of a servant.

You know, the practical applications of this truth are overwhelming. For Paul says, now let that mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. And most of the problems that we have in our local churches, most of the problems that we have in our outreach overseas, in the service of God, spring from those men and women who want to maintain their rights, and who want to stand on their dignity.

But Paul says the great example is God himself, who out of love and compassion for us, came right down to where we were, and he took upon himself the form of a servant. In a little book that perhaps some of you have read by a man called Guy King, the little book is called Joy Way, writes in that book, and he wrote this many years ago now, that he who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, thought it not forgery to use his signature. Lest the Lord Jesus, born into our world and taking upon himself the form of a servant, nevertheless he used his signature many times.

You may remember during the ministry of the Lord Jesus, for instance in John's gospel chapter 2, at that wedding feast in Cana of Galilee, he turned the water into wine, and John said that was the beginning of the signs that he manifested. Signs that even as a servant indicated who he was, the almighty, omnipotent God who had come down into our world to serve, but who used his signature and his power was seen as he moved amongst men. So many beautiful ways.

You may remember that particular case of the ten lepers. In that story, we are not told how Jesus wrought America. It is simply stated that they were all healed.

Only one came back to give thanks, but think about the ten men for a moment. There were different nationalities, because one at least was a Samaritan, and others would be Jews. They would have different ages, the disease in each one would be at a different stage, different backgrounds from different societies, and yet there they are in a common need, and the Lord Jesus in the exercise of his power gives to each one of them healing.

Or that day when the disciples perturbed in the storm, they watched the Lord Jesus walking on the water. There is no way we can walk round about that miracle. The one who was the creator himself had authority over the creation, and he walks on the water bringing peace and calm to the disciples.

One of the great miracles of the Lord Jesus that we have touched during this conference is recorded in John's Gospel, chapter 11. Some have tried to indicate that the Lord Jesus purposely delayed those days after Lazarus died so that the miracle would be greater than it might have been if he had gone the first day. But any reasoning like that is inconsistent with the personality and the temperament and the character of the Lord Jesus.

It is inconceivable that he should hold back just so the miracle would appear to be great. He held back because of matters related to the will of God, but when that moment came, he went and the stone was removed, and he brought back to life Lazarus, four days dead and buried, but brought back and restored to life. You can think of all kinds of miracles the Lord Jesus wrought while here in this world, each one is like his signature.

An indication that the almighty, omnipotent God had come down into our world clothed in authentic and genuine humanity. And not just a man, because he came to serve and to give his life a ransom for many. Most of the great men of our world are men who have been served, but the Lord Jesus came not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for all.

And at the cross, as we remembered in our communion service this morning, the Lord Jesus gave his life. He died for our sins. Let me go back then once again to the person who came.

Even at Bethlehem, born into the world, a baby held in the arms of Mary, and the poet has written about that, and these are his words, no less almighty at his birth than on his throne supreme, his shoulders held up heaven and earth while Mary held up him. His name was Emmanuel, with us God. But the form in which he came was such that men and women, even trained in the scriptures of the Old Testament, they failed to recognize him.

Oh, they would have recognized him if he'd come like David with a sword in his arm. They would have recognized him perhaps if he'd come like the great patriarch Moses, or any of these great men of the Old Testament. But he came to serve, and they never recognized him.

Now, the promise is that he's coming back again. Now, we've read this morning, in two portions of God's word, about the appearing of the Lord Jesus. He appears in 2 Timothy chapter 1, and his appearing is an expression of the gracious purpose of God.

You must remember verse 9, the last part of verse 9, but according to his own purpose and grace, verse 10, this is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to life through the gospel. The great gracious purpose of God was to free us from death, and to introduce us to life and immortality. Immortality may be an ambiguous term, but it is an accurate term to describe what the Old Testament speaks about in connection with life after death and fellowship with God.

Not clearly defined like the New Testament, but the hope of immortality is there. Now, Paul says God has a great gracious purpose. It became visible when the Lord Jesus was born into the world, and through his coming, and his death and resurrection, death has been abolished for the Christians, and a door has been opened through which we will pass into eternal life and all the glory of immortality with God.

Then, over in Titus chapter 2, reference is also made to the grace of God in verse 11. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, and surely the coming of the Lord Jesus two thousand years ago is that authentic expression of the grace of God. Some of us sat in our communion service this morning, and we have heard the gospel message since our infancy.

We have read the scriptures from those days when we first began to read, and yet the more you read and the more you meditate, the greater becomes the grace of God. Paul, that great man of two thousand years ago, was overcome by the grace of God that should reach down and touch him and bring him back to God and commission him in the service of God. He says, I am what I am by the grace of God.

Now, that grace that we have come to know is personified in the person of the Lord Jesus. We don't know about grace apart from the Lord Jesus, who came down to where we were, and took our place, and died for our sins. But this chapter 2 of Titus also speaks in verse 13 about the appearing of the glory of God.

Now, this appearing of the glory of God is linked to the same person in whom was revealed the grace of God. We look back and we remember his coming two thousand years ago, unknown in the world, without any appreciation, finally cruelly put to death. But that one who came in his coming manifested the grace of God.

In all that he did, he showed forth the dimensions of that grace. And above all, in his death, how rich and how deep is the grace of God. I want to go back a moment and remind you, as we've noted this morning, that the person who came was God.

In the Old Testament, in Malachi, the words go out that the Lord God willed. Well, he came when the Lord Jesus was born. But he came in grace and in humility, and the world never recognized it.

Now, we're looking forward to the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ. He does not come in grace, but it is the revealing of the glory of God in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. There will be undoubtedly a tremendous shock to the world when the Lord Jesus comes in glory.

The reason is that the Bible puts emphasis, in connection with the second coming of Christ, that this same Jesus shall so come as ye have seen him go. The same way he is coming back. Who is coming back? Jesus, who was here 2,000 years ago.

In 1 Thessalonians chapter 1, in connection with the new converts in that city, we are told that they are waiting for God's Son from heaven, even Jesus, over and over again. Emphasis is put on the fact that the man who was here in the world 2,000 years ago is coming back again. How does he come back? He does not come back in the lowliness, in the suffering, in the humiliation that characterized his first coming.

But the person that was rejected by this world, who was spat upon by his contemporaries and crucified on a cross outside of Jerusalem, that same man comes back. But he comes back surrounded by the glory that belongs to the great God. And that glory will be revealed and seen in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The details of his coming we leave to one side this morning. Some of you share with me that joy, that anticipation of being caught up to see him, the redeemed multitude, alone with the Lord Jesus. But as we will see him in his glory, the Bible indicates that the world will see on a coming day the one who was despised and rejected.

They will see him in his power and in his glory. The Lord Jesus himself talked about it while he was here in this world, and he spoke about his coming like lightning that shines throughout the dark sky. Well, the Lord Jesus will come in that way.

Let me read to you just one or two verses from the teachings of the Lord Jesus himself. For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so also shall the coming of the Son of Man be. And they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Thus, the shock in our world on that coming day will be this, that the man that the world rejected and put aside is the man who will come to express, to reveal, to manifest the glory of God. For in that same one person, the great mystery of godliness, all of the grace of God has been manifested, and all of the glory of God will be seen on that day of his second coming. Turn with me briefly to 2 Thessalonians, chapter 1, where Paul speaks about that day.

And in 2 Thessalonians, chapter 1 and verse 5, we read these words. 2 Thessalonians, chapter 1 and verse 5, which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that she may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which she also suffered, saying, It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you. And to you who are troubled, rest with us.

Now, these words may not touch our hearts today, for we are not troubled the way those Christians were troubled in Thessalonica so long ago. They were hounded and persecuted for their trust in the Lord Jesus. This was a word of joy, of hope that Paul sent to them.

And to you who are troubled, rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, on that day of his coming in glory, it is his coming that will bring to a climax the history of our world. It does not happen because of some type of internal combustion within our human situation.

We will not provoke the climax of the ages. It is the Lord from heaven who comes back and he thrusts himself into the affairs of men, and it is his coming in power and glory that will bring eventually the great purpose of God to fulfillment. Now, how does he come? Well, this chapter says in verse 7, he comes with his mighty angels.

One has translated the phrase with his angelic messengers of power. He did not come that way the first time, but as he returns he is surrounded by his mighty angels, and he comes in flaming fire. Now, fire in the Old Testament issues over and over again, burning fire, flashing fire, bright fire as a symbol of the eternal glory of God.

Now, the Lord Jesus at that moment, known only to the Father, will thrust himself back into the affairs of men, surrounded by a great company of angelic ministers of power, and he comes in the full radiance and the glory of God in flaming fire. We wait this morning, the Lord Jesus, for that personal encounter with him, but we cannot break up into little pieces the great truth of his second coming. As we think of it in its fullness, we are reminded this morning that the man who hung on that second cross 2,000 years ago, who was born manifest in flesh, and who, in a supreme way in that day, revealed the richness of the grace of God, that same man will come back surrounded by the power and the glory of God.

Now, there are two great, solemn, precious thoughts concerning the coming again of the Lord Jesus. We have noticed this morning in Titus, and if we had time you'll notice in chapter 1, and then in chapter 2, and then in chapter 3, the phrase, God our Savior. Now, especially in chapter 2, in connection with the coming again of the Lord Jesus, there is a very precious aspect of his coming for us that is related to salvation.

I know that we remember that he came 2,000 years ago, 2 Timothy chapter 1, to abolish death and to bring out into the light life and immortality. That is the foundation of the salvation we have in the Lord Jesus today. But every time I come to Park of the Palm, perhaps more than other places, I am reminded of just how frail we are, for there are always missing faces of those who, through infirmity, have come to the end of their pilgrimage in this world.

But when the Lord Jesus comes back, he comes as the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. And at his coming, when we see him, we will enter into the fullness of our salvation, a fullness that now we can only anticipate by faith. But then our bodies will be raised, or they will be caught up should we still be living, and they will be changed and transformed into the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He who came into this world in a body of flesh, Paul records the phrase in Colossians, is referred to by Paul in Philippians, in the last verse of chapter 3, his body of glory. Now, as we have our body of flesh, not yet redeemed and changed and saved, there is a day coming when the Lord Jesus will return, and we shall see him, and then we shall participate in a way that is impossible now in the fullness of that eternal salvation. You know, coming to Park of the Palm is another precious thing, is the way you sing.

But on that occasion, in transformed bodies, with the mental intellectual capacity that we don't have today, we will sing and praise our God in a way that is truly worthy of him. That will be the moment of our full salvation. But there is a very solemn thought linked to his second coming, and we have read about it here in 2 Thessalonians, for he comes to take vengeance.

May I pause for a moment on the word vengeance? There is no personal spite in that vengeance. Probably all of us here this morning know something of vengeance, know something of those ugly thoughts that have come into our hearts at different times in our lives when we would like to see something happen to somebody who has offended us. And in that thought of vengeance, there is personal spite.

That is totally absent in this concept of divine vengeance. For as you read through the Bible, it is clearly stated that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. The whole purpose of the history, the whole purpose of divine intervention in history, is an expression of the long suffering of God.

But that day will come when those who have purposely rejected the love and the grace of God will receive that vengeance. And it is described in this way in verse 8, them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. How often we use this in the preaching of the gospel.

You can turn that around. The only way a man can possibly know God is through obedience to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And those who have been disobedient, who have turned their back upon that message, they do not know God.

And because of their willful rebellion, that day of judgment of condemnation is coming. And then in verse 9, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction. The word is not annihilation, the word is ruin, everlasting ruin from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.

The greatest possible conception of judgment that could enter your mind this morning is to be excluded from the presence and the power and the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. And to turn that thought around, the greatest possible thought that can enter our mind to describe that coming bliss is that we will be in the presence and we will behold the power and the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So as he returns in the fullness of his coming, the person who returns is the Lord Jesus who was here 2,000 years ago, unknown and rejected then.

But he comes in the power and the glory of the great God. He comes with salvation for his physical, bodily salvation, as our bodies participate in that salvation that he wrought for us at Calvary so long ago. And for those who have rejected the message, punishment, exclusion from the presence of the Lord and from the greatness of his power and glory.

As we close our service this morning, it is our prayer that should any friend be present with us who has never yet made that commitment to the Lord Jesus, had never gone back in his mind and heart 2,000 years ago to watch through the scriptures the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ in the world, the

expression of the grace of God in order to abolish death, to bring out into the light life and immortality. In other words, to give us the foundation of an eternal salvation. It is our plea this morning that you will commit yourself now to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And those of us who have received him and who know him, may God encourage our hearts this morning by faith. We remembered again his death at Calvary on our behalf, but as we look back, we also look forward and we anticipate seeing in the person of that man the glory of our great God and Savior. And then we shall taste, as we've never tasted before, the riches and the wonder and the greatness of that salvation.

Let us take our hymn books now and close this morning our service by singing hymn number 48. O blessed living Lord, engage our hearts with thee and strike within the answering cord to love so rich and free. Hymn number 48.

I suggest we stand and sing these three verses. Exceeding abundance unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

You may be seated.

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