

# Book of Acts Series - Part 7 | the Hope

by Jim Cymbala

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*Jim Cymbala's sermon explores the true Gospel as presented in the Book of Acts, emphasizing the hope of Christ's return and the importance of living a life of repentance and service.*

**Duration:** 41:43

**Scripture:** Acts 2:38, Acts 3:19, 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, 1 Timothy 3:15, 2 Timothy 3:16, Titus 2:11-14, 1 John 4:8

**Topics:** "Book Of Acts"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker describes a powerful and transformative experience they had. They felt a sense of awe and excitement as they were lifted up into the sky, witnessing the earth becoming smaller below them. They heard people rejoicing and proclaiming that Jesus had come. The speaker emphasizes the importance of going through trials and challenges in order to reach the other side, drawing a parallel to the biblical verse about walking through the valley of the shadow of death. They also highlight the idea that true greatness will be revealed when Jesus returns, contrasting it with the fame and success of worldly figures.

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## Transcript

I began a series six weeks ago on the book of Acts. And what we're doing is we're going through the book of Acts, not verse by verse, but sequentially trying to learn about what the early church looked like and what are the lessons for us today. We learned that the book of Acts was written by who? Luke, the only Gentile writer of any book in the New Testament.

A non-Jew, he wrote the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. We've learned so far is Jesus resurrected from the dead, then He ascended, and before He ascended back to Heaven, He told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem to receive the power of the Holy Spirit, which they would need to accomplish the task He had given them to do, which was to spread the good news, the Gospel of Christ. The Spirit fell and there was a wonderful manifestation and a crowd gather and Peter preached the first sermon of the Christian era.

You have to remember that to hear the Gospel and understand it, you have to read the book of Acts and the epistles because the Gospel's not found in its clarity in the Old Testament and even in the Gospels. Jesus spoke about the good news, but He couldn't tell the people the whole picture because He hadn't died yet. He hadn't shed His blood.

He hadn't resurrected. His own disciples didn't even understand that He would resurrect from the dead. So we're taking a careful look at what is the Gospel? What is the message we're supposed to be sharing with the world? Maybe it's not what you heard growing up in your Baptist church, or your charismatic church, your Assembly of God church, or your Presbyterian church, or whatever church.

I certainly didn't hear it growing up in the church correctly that I grew up in. We studied about that Acts chapter 2 sermon and the converts were added and the church formed and they were together and shared and loved. And now in chapter 3 we find Peter and John going to the temple and a healing takes place as the Lord uses them to see a lame man, lame from birth, get up and start walking.

A crowd gathers and now Peter preaches what we have as the second sermon recorded in the Bible of the Christian era. I just want to focus on one sentence of that sermon. In that sermon you can hear the Gospel again, the good news of who Jesus is.

Back in those days they didn't say join the church. They weren't arguing about Calvinism and Arminianism. It wasn't a praise and worship Gospel that you hear a lot of today.

You've got to read to find out what they spoke about versus what we've blended into the Gospel and weakened it thereby. It wasn't a black cultural Gospel. It wasn't a white right wing conservative Gospel.

It wasn't a lot of things that we're used to. It wasn't a prosperity Gospel, that's for sure. It wasn't believe in Jesus and you'll never have a problem Gospel.

You've got to understand when you read the Bible what the real Gospel is. Otherwise we'll never be changed. The reason God put this ladies and gentlemen in the Bible is that He wants us to know what His church should look like because He's the one who's the founder of the church.

People come to me sometimes as I travel and say Pastor, what's your vision for the Brooklyn Tabernacle? I've never had a vision for the Brooklyn Tabernacle. Don't have one now because it's not my church. It's the church of Jesus Christ.

That would be a lot of chutzpah on my part to have a vision for someone else's church. That doesn't sound right to me. Jesus is the one who died.

I don't remember me being on any cross and resurrecting from the dead. So God gave us the epistles of 1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus and the book of Acts to show us what He wants His church to look like. No pastor, nobody has a right to change the church of Jesus Christ into something cultural or something they like or what people want to hear.

We've got to have integrity as we read the word of God. Well while Peter is preaching the gospel, he says this little tidbit in the middle of the message. Let's look at it.

Acts 3 this is part of the gospel. Repent, which means to turn. Repent then and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.

Oh praise God for that. And that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, really it means. And that He may send the Christ, who's He, God that God may send the Christ who has been pointed for you, even Jesus.

He, Jesus must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything as He promised long ago through His holy prophets. Let's just look at that verse there. He, Jesus, must remain in heaven forever, no, until the time comes when's that? It doesn't say.

Until the time comes for God to do what? To restore everything as He promised long ago through His holy prophets. This implies early on in the book of Acts, although there's a previous reference that we'll look at, that Jesus Christ is coming again. That Jesus Christ came the first time 2,000 years ago, was born of a virgin her name was Mary, conceived of the Holy Spirit lived on the earth for about 33 and a half years died for our sins on the cross took the blow for us, was the substitutionary sacrifice for our sins.

He was punished for what you and I did. He didn't do anything wrong to get punished, but He took it for us so that we could know forgiveness and peace and joy and have an inheritance with Him for all eternity. He went back to heaven after spending about 40 days off and on with the apostles, disciples and then He went back to heaven to be seated at the right hand of the Father and His ministry right now according to the Bible is to make intercession for us and to pray for us.

That's a comforting thought that in our hour of struggle Jesus is praying for us He's interceding for us. Well how long will He stay there? This is what Peter now is referencing He's saying until the time comes for the restoration of all things. In other words the final decree about what happens on planet earth will not come from the people on planet earth it will come from God.

God will have the last word right now all kinds of chaos is going on but the Bible assures us that God who sits on the throne He will have the final word and the intervention of Jesus back to earth is going to bring about the end solution to everything that has been rebelling against God for all these millennia Jesus is coming back again that is called in the Bible the blessed hope it's been greatly lost by the Christian church. One of the reasons ministers don't preach about it is the anti-supernatural element that's in the world today and which has invaded the church and the idea that Jesus who was once alive then died went back to heaven, that's wild. Now He's going to come back and then we're going to be raptured up to be with Him.

That's like out there but that's what the Bible says. That's what the Bible says. The other reason it's hardly mentioned is that for the most part especially in America but not in mainland China and not in the Middle East but in America and parts of Europe a lot of Christians don't want the world to end.

They don't want Jesus to come because they're so occupied and taken up with the things of this world that the idea of it ending now I've got to see who wins the Superbowl, I mean Jesus come back I've got to see how this thing ends. And we know that's true but not so for the early church and that's what this study is about how did the early church relate to the what, the who the why, and the when of the return of Jesus Christ. And if it's not the same with us it's not their problem, it's our problem.

We're the losers, not them What and who are we talking about? We're talking about Jesus Christ returning to this earth Jesus, the risen Savior, every eye will see Him the Bible says. You and I, everyone in this building you and I in the future, you will have an encounter with God you're going to see Him up close and personal what the verdict will be at the end, that's up in the air that's why we're preaching the gospel to everyone so that they'll be welcoming His return. This started of course in the first chapter which we didn't read.

When Jesus was with the disciples after a while it came time for Him to leave them so He gave them instructions as I said about praying and waiting for the spirit to come. That's a good thing for us to do Tuesday, let the spirit come in a deeper way. The spirit's already come but to embrace Him more and open ourselves more up to God's presence and power but while He was saying this, look what happened.

He ascended and they were looking up intently up into the sky. Why? Because He was going up as He was going. When suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.

Men of Galilee, that's the disciples they said. Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus who has been taken from you into heaven will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven. Let's analyze that verse, see what it's teaching us.

This same Jesus who has been taken from you into heaven will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven. How did He go into heaven? In the clouds, supernaturally. How's He going to come back? In the clouds, supernaturally.

This same Jesus so it's a physical, literal, personal return of Jesus. You know Reverend Moon from Korea recently died who was a false Christ, an imposter and his teaching was that he was Jesus who had returned and what he had said was I am the new Jesus returning. But of course Acts 1.10 does away with that because there's no black Jesus white Jesus, Polish Jesus, or any other kind of Jesus coming back that same Jesus is coming back.

And He's going to come back in the same way that He left. He left in the clouds, supernaturally. He's coming back that way.

But Pastor Simba that's never happened. That's the point. There never was a baby born of a virgin.

There never was an ascension into heaven. We have to shake off the cobwebs of unbelief that is filling the world and the church and hold on to Scripture and celebrate. Jesus is coming back again.

Come on, can we put our hands together? Jesus is coming back again. This of course was the message that the historians say gave Christianity such a different take compared to the ancient world. The ancient world, the Greek Roman world that they lived in was the most hopeless world that you could imagine.

The Greek and Roman thought was not leading to any consummation of anything. It was cyclical and repetitious so there was no hope in anybody's soul about some moment when there would be a beautiful victory of shall we say righteousness over evil. There would be no ultimate joy and peace.

There was nothing to look forward to because there was nothing. But the message of the cross was different. The message of Christianity was believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.

Let your sins be forgiven. God will come into your life and do marvelous things. But that's not ultimate salvation.

Jesus will come back. He told the disciples I go to prepare a place for you that where I am you may be also. We don't lose in the end.

We win in the end. We're with Christ forever and ever and ever. Can I please remind you with all the love and carefulness in my heart one billion years from now you and your children and your mother and your father if they're alive, your sister, your brother, everyone's going to be somewhere one billion years from

now.

There's no extinction of the soul unless Jesus is an imposter. Everyone's going to be somewhere and what went on in this earth is going to seem so nonsensical and unimportant who back ended your car and who won American Idol and what happened in the sports world or the political world. It won't even register for a millisecond in our minds because we're going to be with the Lord forever, forever, forever.

Come on. Can we say amen to that forever? The early church didn't promise an easy ride for the believers who followed Jesus. They did not.

But they said he who endures to the end shall be saved. If we suffer with him we will the American theology has totally that turn that totally around to sell Jesus and Christianity where cherry picking verses mostly from the Old Testament and say serve Jesus and you'll have a better job and drive a Mercedes and all of that. That of course is unheard of in the Bible.

That's nonsensical because they were otherworldly my their mind was not on earthly things. Their mind was on heavenly thing. What is going to happen when Jesus comes? We know the who and the what he's coming but why is he coming? I should say why is Jesus coming back? Well let's look at a verse in Hebrews that helps us.

So Christ was sacrificed once on the cross to take away the sins of many people and he will appear a second time not to bear sin but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him. Let's read that verse out loud everyone. Okay start with me.

So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people and he will appear a second time not to bear sin but to bring salvation to...now there's two interesting thoughts about that he's going to bring salvation. Well wait a minute I thought we are saved. How is he going to bring salvation? Well you see there's three parts of salvation.

You were once saved you are being saved and enjoying it but final salvation, the final payoff, the resurrection body that God has prepared for all of us is going to prepare for all of us in heaven with no more temptation, no more stress no more every tear wiped away, no more devil to fight, no more battles to fight like we fight here on earth, no more spiritual warfare. That salvation, full salvation none of us have experienced yet because we're still here on earth fighting the good fight. So we were once saved, I was saved as a child, then I am being saved, he's keeping me, I'm enjoying salvation now.

But full salvation the early church was always looking for the payoff let's endure whatever we have to because if we suffer with him we'll reign with him. So will you put off with something for a little while because in the end Paul says what's waiting for us you can't even compare anything you go through now to the glory that is waiting us, the joy and the peace and he'll wipe away every tear. So that was the mindset of the early church.

They were looking for Jesus to come back. They were anticipating and waiting. I would say that that's one of the great losses over the last 25 years in the church.

All the praise and worship courses I'm thinking of right now that have been written in the last 25 years, I can't think of one right now that's like the song I heard when I was a child he's coming soon he's coming soon with joy we'll welcome his returning it may be morning, it may be night or noon we know he's coming

soon. I don't hear too many Christians saying that. Do you? Let me bring you to Bangladesh where I was last year where a Christian minister there in that Muslim nation won a lady to the Lord and his wife was so happy rejoicing that she got saved.

She went home and told her husband Muslim, I'm a Christian now. He went totally nuts, got a gun, went to where the pastor was and shot him in the face didn't kill him but I met him scar tissue all over his face, the bullet ricocheted all around and you know what he did when he got healed? He went right back to the village to tell more people about Jesus. Why? Because he knows Jesus is coming soon listen, when Jesus comes it will see there's another song I'm just thinking of, it will be worth it all when we see Jesus.

See the idea of suffering it's like the problems with the budget that we have in our country and the finances no politician's gonna ask for sacrifice, the White House is not gonna ask for sacrifice, they're too smart the Republicans, Democrats, no one's gonna basically say the truth is you know what, we can't keep this up. Someone's gotta stop we gotta make a sacrifice somewhere along the way, we can't pay for this Europe is finding out that if you don't make sacrifices the whole thing can fall like a house of cards. Why? Because no one wants to hear you deny yourself anything this is a consumer mentality, just give me, give me, give me, give me how are we gonna pay for it? I don't wanna know about that, just give me, give me, give me am I right or wrong ladies and gentlemen? It's the same way in the Christian world, spiritually so no, look I just want the good life, you only go around once no, the early church said no, it will be worth it all when we see Jesus.

See this lady in Haiti, Elsie Larrison, a missionary from this church who's poured her life out, has aged prematurely I think feeding children that's a great woman. When Jesus comes you'll find out who's really great not the athletes, not the movie actors not the singers, the hip hop stars, who knows where they're gonna end up, may God have mercy on us all but the great people, they're not gonna shine until Jesus comes you don't know who's great, hopefully God gives us some spiritual insight so that we start appreciating great people now but they're not well known, they're not gonna be in the newspapers they're gonna be the ones doing the Lord's work until He comes back because they wanna hear, well done my good and faithful servant this was the characteristic of the early church when Paul, the apostle Paul, who we're gonna learn about later and his conversion when he went on a missionary journey, his second one, he went to a place called Thessalonica and men and women were converted into the Christian faith and he writes a letter back to them and he's remembering the tremendous witness that their conversion had to other people who heard about them. And he describes them, and I wonder how many churches today are described this way.

What we have today in this world is a shallow kind of, how nice is the building, how many are they running, how many people, you know, numbers and all of that but we don't find those things so much in the New Testament at all really. And look how the early believers were described they tell how you turn to God from idols they really got saved. What they used to serve and be interested in they did away with it.

They turned from their idols to serve the living and true God. Notice they turned from idols to serve. They became servants of God.

They wanted to do what God wanted. That's what real New Testament conversion looks like. And notice they not only turned and served and to wait for his Son from Heaven whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Notice how quiet it got here. Pastor Simba, you mean the Bible? God is love? He talks about a coming wrath? Yeah. There's a coming wrath.

Like God punished the earth in Noah's day. Like Sodom and Gomorrah was visited by God. You don't think everything that's going on here today in this world, and you know what I'm speaking about where sin is being glorified, where politicians are glorifying every abnormal thing, everything against God's Word and if you say a word you're full of hate and all of that.

God is watching the whole thing. He will have the last word. Listen, He's going to judge the people who have known better and still rebelled against His command.

That's not for you and I to rejoice in and not for you and I to judge. God will judge. Let's just ask God for mercy because there but for the grace of God goes you and me.

How many say amen? Amen. So I don't like that spirit of let's give it to them. No, Jesus wept over Jerusalem.

We're to weep over New York. We're not to say you're going to get it one day. No, that's not the spirit of Christianity.

But there is a warning here. Jesus is coming back and they were waiting for Him. Why? Because He's coming back to rescue us from the coming wrath.

You and I are not going to have wrath. We're going to have mercy. We're not going to be judged.

We're going to be blessed and brought to heaven all because of Jesus Christ and our faith in Him. But there is a wrath coming and that's why the early church looked at it like this. He came once, died, resurrected, went back.

He's coming again and in this span that's the only time we have to tell people about Jesus. There's going to come a moment when you're not going to be able to tell Saul about Jesus. You know your boss, your sister, your co-worker, whoever, you won't have one more chance after that.

There's an end. There's a period that God is going to bring about. And then there's going to be judgment.

And He rescues us from that. And now the early church was looking and waiting for His coming. Oh Holy Spirit do something in us so we get back to looking for Jesus to come again.

The early church had a habit they said in those first years, decades, that they would wake up and open their wooden shutters and they would look out into the air and they would say, even so come quickly today Lord Jesus. May this be the day that Jesus comes back. I want to live like that because that's how you enjoy life the most.

That's how you live careful. That's how you walk careful. That's how you keep your garments clean.

That's how you avoid sin. That you know Jesus could come at any moment. Let's just talk about that as we close.

We talked about the who and the what and now we've studied the why. But how about the when? The when? When is He coming? When is Jesus going to come? Nobody knows. I'm not going to give you all

the verses but you can look them up.

Jesus when He spoke about that says, nobody knows the moment when I'm returning. Only the Father knows. But I'm going to come like a thief.

In a moment that you think not so will I come. He likened the time of the very end to the days of Noah when everybody was going about their business and nobody ever dreamed that the end would come. He said as it was in the days of Noah.

Everybody would be getting married, having babies, celebrating life and doing everything and then boom! Then too late. He said that. I didn't say that.

He said also it would be like the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. And Peter tells us that righteous Lot was just so grieved and tormented as he saw all the ungodly things they were doing in Sodom and Gomorrah. That reminded me last night that as I read that passage in 2nd Peter that Christians have a hard time as the world gets more wicked it's harder for us.

Come on, how many just get grieved by some of the things you see, right? And that you hear. Someone just said to me yesterday they were somewhere and they were just worshipping God in their heart and they went in a store and the person next to them just got in a fight with somebody that they were with and they just said, for Christ's sake would you give me... And when they said that the person told me, pastor, it was like somebody stick a sword in my heart. Have you ever had that happen when you hear them just use the name of Jesus, you know? Isn't that something? They'll forbid every politically incorrect word to say, and they should.

All these nasty words that people use, they should ban them all. But isn't it something nobody ever has a crusade to ban the J word and say we shouldn't say Jesus and Christ because lots of Christians are hurt by that. No, no, the media will not back that.

No politicians will back it. But every other kind of politically incorrect word Jesus said, you'll be hated by all men because of my name's sake. But that's okay.

He's coming back. We can put up with it, can't we? How many can put up with anything knowing that He's coming back or we're going to die? Come on, let's put our hands together. We're going to be with Him forever and ever.

Here's what we learn now. Jesus said like a thief. That's repeated often in the epistles and Jesus Himself.

Like a thief. So what does like a thief mean? No warning. Thieves don't send emails and say, look, try to be in next Thursday.

I'm going to just rob you blind and leave cookies and milk out so we can have a little snack. They don't do that. They come when you don't think of it.

So that means His return is imminent. Imminent. Everybody say imminent.

That means at any moment. Now in fact, and this is a very interesting thing to discuss. If we had a Bible discussion, talk about it.

And commentators have an interesting subject to peruse. The apostles were looking for His coming then. Oh yes they were.

Every indication is that Paul and Peter thought He would come in their lifetime. Read what they said. So it's so hidden that even His choicest servants don't know when He's coming.

But notice what God's will is. He wants us all to live with that tension of that He could come at any moment. Because that's a good tension for our lives.

Otherwise we forget about His coming and we start living in a way that would be very disastrous should He come. I once heard a minister say when I was a kid, just watch anything, go anywhere, do anything as long as you're ready to do it and watch it and go there if Jesus should come in the middle of it. I said that referees everything.

Talk about anything. You want to talk about somebody's behind their back? Say it. Just remember in the middle Jesus could come.

You want to watch that movie? You want to go there? Just fine. Go wherever you want. We're not under law.

But just remember He could come in the middle of it. That's a good rule for living, isn't it? Now they thought He was coming and He hasn't come. And then Peter said that's going to lead to something that we're going through right now today.

Because He's delayed. Why has He delayed? Why do we have this unknown, imminent, never sure when, but always be ready. Be ready.

Jesus said don't be sleeping. Be awake. Be ready for it in a moment.

You think not. Keep your garments clean. Be looking.

Be waiting. Don't be like the five foolish virgins who were sleeping and had no oil. All of that has to do with His second return.

The gospel is about Jesus not just coming once. He's coming again. The reward is when He comes.

If you're looking for your reward here, you're in for real disappointment. Because here we have trouble. We have persecution.

Life is full of hassles. Yes, we have Jesus. We have peace.

We have joy. But you don't think that's the real peace you're going to have in heaven. You don't think you're experiencing the joy you're going to have in heaven.

You got little bubbles now. We just have little bubbles He's given us. The real peace.

The real joy. Oh my goodness. Peter says this, look.

First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, where is this coming He promised? Ever since our fathers died everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation. But do not forget this, he later says, Peter.

Don't forget this one thing, dear friends. With the Lord a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise about coming as some understand slowness.

No, He's patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repent. So one of the reasons why He hasn't come yet is like that song I told you I heard from a guy in West Virginia singing. I was 14 and he had a guitar on the platform.

Just a little longer, please Jesus There's so many still wondering out and saying Just a little longer, please Jesus Just a few more days to get our loved ones in. Not bad theology. Why hasn't He come yet? Well we can count this one reason He doesn't want anyone to perish but we're the only ones who can tell the world we're the only ones who can invite people to church and to put it off is disastrous.

It's foolish because we don't know in a moment that you don't know He's going to come like a thief in the night and then no more witnessing no more telling anyone. Just think if some of our loved ones haven't really been talked to and prayed over and you intercede for them why don't you come on Tuesday and we'll just bury ourselves with God and start to intercede for people that we've talked to but their hearts are hard. But He can soften their heart.

Who's going to fight for them if it's not you and me? I'm seeing some of my nephews who I've been praying for for years and nothing happened. I'm seeing some motion now some things are happening with them. God answers prayer but now it's not a good time to curse the darkness.

You've got to light a candle to sit back and say the world is evil. So what else is new? What else is new? Some people think that's spiritual. Oh you don't know what's happening in the world.

We get it. It's not good out there but what are we going to do in response? Jesus hasn't come so that we can share the gospel. You know what the last thought is in the Bible don't you? Look.

He who testifies to these things says, Jesus says yes I am coming soon. Amen. What does amen mean? Come Lord Jesus.

I'll tell you today I wish He would come now while I'm preaching. I know there's work to be done. I don't want to be selfish but there's nothing in this world that I'm interested in hanging on to.

Nothing. Even so come quickly Lord Jesus. So I wasn't going to share this but let me and then we'll dismiss it.

So I've only had three visions or dreams in my life, three or four that I can say were from the Lord. For those of you who have heard this may share it. I rarely talk about it but those of you visiting you haven't so let me tell you.

And then you can judge whether I made it up or not. I was on a vacation with my wife didn't have my mind especially on the things of God. Read my Bible that day.

Was trying to enjoy the vacation. Went to bed at night and had a dream. And I was in Brooklyn.

I thought of that last night as I was praying because I'm back in Brooklyn. I live now in Brooklyn again. And I was walking down a certain street.

I could tell you where the street is and I could tell you exactly what parts of the street I was walking on. And ahead of me was this terrible purple, gray, black, no gray, purple nasty cloud. But it wasn't a cloud up there.

It was something you had to walk through. I realized for me to keep going I have to walk through this. So I was just like I got to go through this.

You got to walk through it but it's not comfortable. It's not nice because you lose your vision. It's just surrounding, just embracing you.

As I was walking through it, I just was walking through it, walking through it. I knew it was difficult but it was just a thought came to me. I got to get through this.

Listen, you got to get through it. Whatever you're going through you got to get through it. Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

You got to go through something as I heard someone say recently before you can get to the other side. When I came out of it I saw the street again. It was night time and suddenly I just heard everyone screaming.

I just heard everyone celebrating. There was a sound above me in the heavens. And suddenly windows were flying open on the apartment buildings which I could show you right now in Brooklyn on this street.

I saw the apartment buildings, not all the windows but windows were opening up and people were sticking their head out and believers were saying it's here. He's come. He's come.

It's here. He's come. Everyone was just screaming and celebrating and I just caught their elation and their exhilaration and their joy.

I just my heart started to pound and I saw them and I'm saying what's happening? There's never been a moment like this that I could remember and suddenly boom boom we were flying up. I was moving so quickly north and going through that when I looked down the earth was like small and then when I looked down again it was minuscule and I'm just heading up, up, up, up. We're all going and everyone's screaming and rejoicing.

Yelling like you've never heard. You don't even know what noise is until you heard what I heard. And I realized this, the Lord has come.

The Lord has come but what are we doing? Where are we going? What's happening? And then I looked up. I was looking around me. I looked down but then I looked up and I realized that there was some bright cloud of glory, something up there.

It was overwhelming and we were heading toward it, you and me. And here as I'm going up, up, up, up, up, up, up, we're going and as we're getting closer to it I realized I can't go in there. It'll kill me.

It's too awesome. Whatever it is, it's too majestic. It's too overwhelming.

I can't go in there. I'm drawn to it. I'm heading toward it but I don't want to go in it.

It's like I can't take it. It's going to overwhelm me. It just was glorious.

And then just as I'm heading and entering into it and I'm almost afraid that the joy will kill me. I know that sounds crazy but I'm telling you the best I can. I woke up and sat up in the bed like I had a heart attack.

My wife woke because she heard me jerk up and she said Jim are you okay thinking I had a heart attack. And I said no, God gave me a dream. And for the next day or two I couldn't shake it.

Everything on this earth would to God I could live like that. I don't. The only thing that mattered was Jesus.

See a lot of us here you have religion but you've lost the personal touch of Jesus. You even have Christian faith but Jesus is not precious and real like He wants to be in our life. Christianity is about Jesus not about the Brooklyn Tabernacle.

Let the name Brooklyn Tabernacle rot but let the name of Jesus be proclaimed forever and ever and ever and ever and ever and ever. But listen it's more than just the name. He's real.

He's alive. He's coming back. Every eye will see Him.

You and I are going to see Him. You're going to see the nail prints in His hands. I didn't see Him.

I didn't see Him. I told you what happened. It was cut short but I know that I didn't make that up because you have a dream for some other reason that doesn't stay with you for days.

What a failure I would be if all of you here in this building aren't ready to meet Jesus. What a failure as a pastor if the people behind me and in front of me aren't waiting for His appearing, looking forward to it. I do not know about you but I'm in a good place today.

I want to get out of here pronto. I appreciate this country. I don't want to stay in America.

I want to go to my real home. My real home is in heaven. I'm not Polish-Ukrainian.

I am not Caucasian. I am a Christian. That's my first identity.

Can we say amen to that? Come on. Let's really just thank God that we're Christians today.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/25/SID25019.mp3>

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