

Believers Conference 1970-03 John 11;33

by Stan Ford

Jesus' coming is a promise of deliverance from death and sin, and a reunion with believers, which will happen when he returns and the church is raptured.

Duration: 28:55

Scripture: John 11:33-35, John 12:27, John 13:21, John 14:1-3, Acts 1:11, Revelation 22:20

Topics: "Conference"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of remembering that Jesus Christ may come again, which should motivate believers to witness and live faithfully. The preacher highlights four things that will happen when Jesus comes: raising the believer, removing the believer, reuniting the believer, and rewarding the believer. The sermon references the Gospel of John, particularly chapters 11 and 14. The preacher also acknowledges that there are numerous mistakes and misconceptions about the coming of the Lord, but encourages the audience to focus on the message and promises given in the Word of God.

Transcript

The Gospel of John and the 14th chapter. Now, before we turn to the 14th chapter, I wonder if you'd turn with me into the 11th chapter. The 11th chapter of the Gospel of John, please.

Some time ago now, I was going through the Gospel of John again. And as I went through it, I was somewhat stuck. And I'd like to share with you something that was a real chore to me that morning in my own quiet time.

A real thrill. I was reminded of it as Brother Mr. Miller pointed out that he had one of these very wonderful books of Mr. Vine. And as I was going through the 11th chapter of John, I came across verse 33.

And when Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping, which came with her, he groaned in the Spirit and was troubled. And was troubled. And I noticed that this was a slightly different word than the word that's usually translated trouble.

And not being a Greek student, only just as it were in some small measure playing at things, I went to Mr. Vine and I opened him up and I found that the word troubled here, Mr. Vine suggests it's a word associated with the shaking of the body. The shaking of the body. He was troubled.

And I read on and I thought, well, the depth of the sorrow of our Lord that had affected his body. But then I came to the 12th chapter. And do you know I began to start to say hallelujah.

For as I came into the 12th chapter, I looked and I saw in the 11th chapter that he was troubled with Bobby. And in verse 27 of the 12, now is my soul troubled. Now is my soul troubled.

And then I went on into the 13th chapter and I read in the 13th chapter, verse 21, and when Jesus had that said, he was troubled in spirit. Troubled in body, troubled in soul, troubled in spirit. But do you know what happened? I came to the 14th chapter.

Oh, hallelujah. Oh, bless God. He was troubled in body, he was troubled in soul, he was troubled in spirit and he said, let not your hearts be troubled.

You believe in God? Believe also in me? My father's house were many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go and prepare a place for you.

If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again. And that's what I want to talk about this morning. I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am, there ye may be also.

I have a strong conviction in my heart that there should never be a period of conferencing like this, unless at some time we have brought before us the wondrous, blessed truth that Jesus Christ is coming again. And this morning as I opened my eyes and just thought of the day, I thought, well, maybe the Lord would have me think with you again. Remind you, not tell you, for I have nothing to tell you.

Just remind you of the things that I surely believed amongst them. That we might hear him say, let not your heart be troubled. As we look at this tremendous subject, I must begin by asking your indulgence.

Asking your indulgence, as I do remind you of things you know. It is not my purpose this morning to take up the political affairs of this scene and draw from them an illustration of the great truths of the word of God. I am sure that this would be heartwarming.

I am sure that it would make us realize that the coming of the Lord draws nigh. It is not my purpose to take the 24th of Matthew and find in it those great truths of things which must surely come to pass. But I just want to talk with you about the simple fact of the promise of Jesus that if I go, I will come again.

I want to talk to you first about some of the mistakes concerning his coming. And they are innumerable. I want to talk to you not only of the mistakes of his coming, but I want to talk to you about the message of his coming.

I want us to see what will happen when Christ returns. What is the message that has been given us in the word of God concerning the fulfillment of this promise. First of all, let's look at some of the mistakes concerning the coming of the Lord.

The tragedy is this, that they do fall mainly into two distinct parts. There are mistakes concerning the moment of his coming, and there are mistakes concerning the manner of his coming. Now, the mistakes concerning the moment of his coming we are all so familiar with.

There are men and women who have set the moment of his return. And they have made a mistake concerning the moment of his return in the fact they have fixed it. You know as well as I know that there are large companies of folk today who are setting a definite year for the return of Jesus Christ.

And over the past years how many times there have been folk who have arisen and have dared to say that Christ was coming at a certain time, at a certain place. We all know this, and it has turned the whole truth of the return of the Lord in the eyes of millions of men of the world into a subject of laughter. But never let us forget that we were told to expect such things.

Why the Lord himself, blessed be his name, in that great 36th verse of the 24th chapter of Matthew, dared to say that of that day knoweth no man. Not even the angels in heaven. No man knows the day or the hour.

And whenever you find a man who makes a mistake and says that the Lord is coming at such a time, don't believe him. The Bible says no man knoweth the hour. No man.

And then they make a mistake not only concerning the moment of his return in as much as they have fixed that moment as the day yet to come. But they have made a mistake after the moment in as much as they have said that it has already passed. And there are large companies of men today who are there to tell us that Jesus Christ came.

Some tell us he came in 1914. Some tell us he came in 1917. Some tell us he's already come.

And how many of us remember the hoardings being marked with vague slogans, thousands now living will never die. They made a mistake. And it wasn't that they made the mistake about the day of his coming in the future, but they made a mistake in as much as they said that he's already come.

When Jesus dared to say in the 23rd verse of that 24th of Matthew, If any man shall say, Lo, here is Christ, believe him not. Don't believe him. And Jesus has made this definite statement.

Now if there are mistakes concerning the moment of his coming, there are innumerable mistakes concerning the manner of his coming. For instance, there are great companies of men, and I'm sorry to say that some of them are those that are in the family of God. Now don't let's forget that.

Well then, let me just emphasize one thing. Life is not light. There are thousands of men and women who have life.

But because of our failure to teach the truth, they've not light. I believe there are thousands of men and women who have been born into the family of God. They've life.

But the tragedy is their light concerning such things as we're considering because of our failure is so, so very, very little. And there are many men and women who have dared to tell us that they believe that Jesus spoke the truth when he said, If I go, I will come again. But you see, he came at Pentecost.

Oh yes, when the Spirit of God came and Christ fulfilled his promise, he came at Pentecost. I think this is answered very simply, don't you? I think it does us good just to remind ourselves that after the day of Pentecost, there are 120 mentions of the coming of Jesus Christ. You don't talk about someone coming when they've already come.

After the day of Pentecost, there are 120 mentions of the coming of Jesus Christ. And I go to the last book and the last chapter of the Bible, and you can't go beyond that. And I hear the statement of the blessed risen Christ.

Surely I come. Quickly. There are those that have made a mistake not only concerning the manner of his coming inasmuch as they have suggested that Pentecost was his coming, but there are those that have suggested that indeed conversion was his coming.

Oh, we sing with the children, Into my heart, come into my heart, Lord Jesus. Come into day. And how many men and women have said, Jesus said, If I go, I will come again.

And I bowed my knee and I opened my heart to him. And he knocked and I opened my heart and he said, I will come in. And conversion is the coming of the Lord.

Well, thank God that's true. But it's not the coming of the Lord of the fourteenth of John. For you will remember indeed the statement of the apostle when he went to the church at Thessalonica and he said, Ye turn to God from idols.

And if that's not conversion, tell me what is. And they proved it. To serve the current living God.

Ah, but to wait for his son from heaven. Conversion of the coming of the Lord. You wouldn't deny that the church at Thessalonica was a church indeed.

You wouldn't deny that they had opened their lives to Christ. They perceived him. They turned to God from idols.

They served the current living God. And they were waiting for his son from heaven. So conversion's not the coming of the Lord.

Then of course there are those, and don't misunderstand me, if I'm opening up old wounds, oh please, I don't intend to. But there are those that tell us the coming of the Lord is death. How many times have I gone into a home where bereavement is being seen and felt? And I don't go in when someone says to me, Oh, Mr. Ford, the Lord came for him.

I don't wag my finger at them and say, Oh, you're theology. Of course I don't. I understand what they mean.

And I sympathize. And I trust that the grave side and the chapel I'll seek indeed to emphasize the truth of the Bible concerning the matter in such a way that comfort may be brought to them. But death isn't the coming of the Lord.

For if it is, what do you do with one Babylonian for? That the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the truth of God? And people die? No, but death in Christ's eyes. And we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together. No, no, death isn't the coming of the Lord.

Oh, there are mistakes concerning his coming. There are mistakes concerning the moment of his coming. There are mistakes concerning the manner of his coming.

So let us look at the message of his coming. Let us see this morning exactly what the word of God has to say. And let our hearts be warmed by his word through the Spirit.

But we might go from this place, say, perhaps to death. Do you know, I was most interested in where he got to in Tasmania. I got into the car of a dear friend of mine who originated from England.

And as I sat next to him in his car, my eyes almost popped from my head. For on the dashboard of his car, this is what he had, a little printed slip. Please note, the driver of this car may suddenly disappear.

He told me that that gave him more opportunity of witnessing the people he gave lifts to than anything that he'd ever had on his car. You know, brethren, sisters, he's coming. And this surely should be one of the motivations of our witness for him.

This should be one of the motivations of our joy and our happiness in this scene that before long we'll be with him. Ah, but before long, there may be left behind those that they'll never have the chance to speak to of Jesus again. I believe that one of the lackadaisical things that has come to the Church of God has come because we have forgotten that Jesus Christ may come perhaps today.

And we have become lackadaisical in our witness, lackadaisical in our living because we've forgotten, he said, if I go I will come again. Now when he comes, let's look at the message of his coming. May I point out to you very simply that there are four things going to happen when Jesus comes.

First of all, he's coming to raise the believer. And then he is coming to remove the believer. And then he is coming to reunite the believer.

Blessed be God, then he is coming to reward the believer. First, he's coming to raise the believer. 1 Thessalonians 4 says, the dead in Christ shall rise first.

But isn't it wonderful to know that Christ is in us? But I say, isn't it wonderful to know that we're in Christ? All the wonder of it all, to know that the man or the woman that trusts the Lord Jesus is in. And I never want us to forget that when death comes we are still in Christ. But there is coming a day when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.

I'm glad of that. The voice of the archangel, I'm glad of that. The trumpet of God, I'm glad of that.

For have you noticed those three things? The voice, first of all, the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout. His sheep hear his voice. When Christ comes, it will affect the church.

The voice of the archangel, whenever the voice of the archangel is spoken of, it is associated with Israel. That when Jesus Christ comes back, not only will his church know it, but Israel will know it. And the trumpet of God, the Gentile, the world at large will know it.

And when he comes back, blessed be his name, first he's coming with a shout and his own folk will know it. The church will know it. The dead in Christ shall rise first.

And I'm so glad of that. I'm glad that when one stands by the side of a grave to commit to that earth the remains of someone that's once loved, I'm glad that I'm able to stand there and I must confess that again and again I've felt I'd love just to roll up my sleeve and shake my fist and say to death, just you wait. For hallelujah, one day that last enemy to be destroyed will be dead.

One day it will be completely destroyed and for believers, though unto the end, the dead in Christ shall rise first. So he's coming to raise the believer. Would you notice he's coming not only to raise the believer, but to remove the believer.

For the dead in Christ shall rise first and we which are alive and remain. I rather like the we, don't you? Seems to me that the apostle Paul was linking himself with those that were there alive. He wasn't looking

forward to a great long period before Christ came.

He was expecting him then. And we which are alive and remain. Oh in the mercy of God that time of his return has been put off because there are perishing men and women around us and God's love is for all men.

And he's extending the day of grace in his mercy. And I want to live as though he may return today that I may be linked with the we, we which are alive and remain. Oh he's coming to raise the believer but he's coming to remove the believer.

That those that love him at that moment when he comes, oh blessed be his name, caught up together to meet the Lord in the end. When one thinks of the fact that he's coming to raise the believer, I'm not unmindful of the fact that death, the penalty of it, sin. And I see that death is the penalty of sin.

But when Christ comes in a real sense, the Lord will bring deliverance from it. I am not unmindful indeed that death is painful. But the Lord's return is not painful, it's delightful.

I'm not unmindful of the fact that death, it leaves a man looking down weeping. But when Christ comes it leaves a man looking up rejoicing. He's coming to raise the believer but he's coming to remove them.

Now I don't know why it is, we've heard a terrible lot about books today and I confessed to you the other day, I don't read very many books. But when I was first converted, there was placed in my hand a little paperback book of one of the greatest men, if not the greatest man I ever knew, H.P. Barker. H.P. Barker wrote a lot of books.

This little thing on the Holy Spirit is still one of the finest things that ever has been written. But he wrote another one, Coming Twice. As far as I know it's not in print today.

When it was given me it cost one and six pence. Well I'm just asking. About 15 pence.

About 15 pence. And it was a book. Now I am not speaking about the content of the book, it was the finest thing that as far as I'm concerned has ever been written on the coming of the Lord.

H.P. Barker's Coming Twice. I don't know why it hasn't been reprinted. I only know it was the most wonderful thing.

But Mr. Barnes published it at that price and it was the jacket on it that I was interested in. It showed a great magnet flying towards that magnet. It showed a representation of men and women coming twice.

And I need not remind you that when the Lord comes, he's going to catch to be with him his own. It has well been said that just as a magnet draws to itself the same thing as it is made of, a magnet will never draw brass to itself but iron. So in that day Christ will only draw to himself, may I say it reverently, that which is made of the same stuff as he's made of.

Having been born from a barn, having received the life of Christ, in that day he's going to catch us to be with him. He's coming to remove us. He's coming not only to raise the saints.

He's coming not only to remove the saints. But isn't this wonderful, he's coming to reunite the saints. For the dead in Christ shall rise first and we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together.

Hallelujah. Oh bless God, he's going to reunite us. I'm glad of that.

I don't just want to play on emotion here. But I know this, it touches emotion. Just a few months ago we stood by the grave and saw the last remains of the mother put under the saw.

She'd been with us a long time, we'd had her for 89 years. And as we stood there, she was only a wee little lady, my mum didn't stand any higher than this. I used to look at her and say, Mummy, you scared me.

Just a wee jaw of a lady was my mum. As far as I know, she was the first person I led to Christ after I accepted the faith. And we stood by the grave and we saw our Lord under.

And the Father must tell, for he was the second person I led to the Lord. We turned away from the grave and I slipped my arm in his and I said, Bill, it's till he comes. Till he comes.

Till he comes. And there that marks the little resting place of a mum, we've got the text, till he comes. He's coming and we're going to be reunited.

And you may come to me and ask me about knowing one another in eternity. And I only know this, look brethren, I can't show you a passage in verse that tells me I'm going to know my mum. I can't tell you a passage in verse that tells me I'm going to know you folk when I get to glory.

But I can show you a passage in verse that tells me I'm going to know Moses and I'm going to know Elijah. And I've never seen them in my life. Why, if I know them, I've a feeling I'm going to know them.

Oh, listen here, that's it. Caught up together. Caught up together.

That when he comes, he's coming not only, blessed be his name, to raise the believer. Not only to remove the believer. Not only to reunite us, caught up together.

He and a bit of things to be told then. But to reward us. I sometimes hear even Christians talk about he's gone to his reward.

Ah, bless God, the reward is going to be at that day at the judgment seat. He's coming and he's going to reward us. I wonder if I may be permitted, I don't wish to take more time than I should this morning.

But I wonder if I'd be permitted, for the sake of my younger friends, just to go through very, very quickly and briefly an outline of God's plan for me. You know, the word of God has much to say about day. We are living in this day of salvation.

The day of salvation will come to its close. And there will be ushered in the rapture of the church. There will be ushered in today.

The day of Christ. And whenever the day of Christ is spoken of in scripture without exception, it is occupied with heaven, not earth. Where in heaven is the day of Christ on earth, is the day of Jacob's trouble.

And the day of Christ starts with the rapture of the church. It continues with the judgment seat of Christ. Then it goes on.

The marriage supper of the Lamb, the presentation to the Father. And this is all during the day of Christ. This is all in heaven.

On earth there is the day of Jacob's trouble. And the day of Christ and the day of Jacob's trouble comes to its close with the day of the Lord. That day which lasts for a thousand years, beginning with the battle of Armageddon, for it starts with judgment, and it finishes with the great white throne, and it finishes with judgment.

And then there is ushered in, following the day of Christ in heaven and the day of Jacob's trouble on earth, there's ushered in the day of the Lord, that great millennial reign, and it comes to its close as they've ushered in the great day of our God. Oh, what a day that'll be. The great day of our God.

You know, I don't often speak about the eternal state. And if you'd like me to talk about the eternal state, do you know where I go? I go to the book of Genesis. Because the book of Genesis has more to tell us about the eternal state than any other part in the Bible.

What was God's original program, which seems somehow to have been thwarted with sin, it will be fulfilled. And all that God had promised the man of, blessed be his name, he'll fulfill it. In that eternal state, when Christ will present all to the Father, everything will be found in God.

All this is God's purpose. He is coming to reward, and at the day of the day of Christ, when the judgment seat of Christ is set up. And please, please, don't you ever think the judgment seat of Christ has anything to do with sin.

It doesn't. Sin was dealt with at Calvary. The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from all sin.

The judgment seat of Christ is the time of the giving out of the rewards. Every man shall receive praise of God. I wonder how much praise you'll have then.

I wonder how big you'll be in eternity. For I'm persuaded of this, you know, that in eternity all, all men without exception, in eternity all men will understand as fully as they can the wonders of Christ. But it just does depend a little bit on how big our capacity will be in that day.

What sort of capacity are we building that in that day we will have? Or we'll all fully understand Christ as far as we can understand Him. But some will have a bigger capacity to understand. Oh, in that day when He gives out the reward.

He's coming. Please God, you and I shall receive praise of God. I want just to draw to a close, reminding you of something else.

That the coming of the Lord, the second coming, is as we know in two parts. The rapture and the revelation. When Christ returns then at the end of the day of Christ, to set up the great day of the Lord, there are four things that will happen for Israel.

He is coming to the church to raise the believer, to remove the believer, to reunite the believer, to reward the believer. But when He comes there are four things for Israel. He's coming first to rescue Israel.

Zechariah 14. He is coming secondly to redeem Israel. He is coming thirdly to reposition Israel.

And hallelujah, He's coming fourthly to reign through Israel. Oh, I do not believe that God has finished with His earthly people. I do not believe that God has finished with those that He called His own.

He has given to you and me as He's gone out into the Gentiles, the wonderful blessing, the glorious blessing of being the bride of Christ, the body of Christ, and Israel is never that. Our position is much greater. But remember, whenever you come across these people who speak about our aim and element, millennialism as you call it, pardon me, would you never forget the great statement of the second chapter of Luke.

The message that was given concerning the Christ that He should be great. And in that great 32nd verse it says, And He shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever and ever and ever.

And of His kingdom shall there be no end. Now never in the church of God has Jesus reigned on the throne of His father David. Never in the church of God has He reigned over the house of Jacob.

But He will do. He will do for the promised shore. But today you and I look forward to the return of Christ.

To the rapture. For brethren, sisters, I don't understand all it means. But we shall reign with Him.

We shall reign with Him. Are He coming? Please God that our hearts may be thrilled. Again in the very simple statement of things surely believed amongst us.

I trust that our hearts may be thrilled.

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