

The Second Coming 02 Why He Is Coming Again

by Stan Ford

Jesus Christ is coming again to take His people to be with Him and to reward them for their service to God.

Duration: 40:30

Scripture: Isaiah 55:7, Matthew 6:33, John 1:12, John 14:3, Acts 20:21, 1 Corinthians 15:22, 1 Thessalonians 4:13

Topics: "Second Coming", "Eternal Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being ready for the day when believers will meet the Lord Jesus. He assures the congregation that nothing can prevent them from coming to Christ if they are willing. The preacher uses the three words 'Here, Take, Hang' to convey his message. He also reminds the audience of the credibility of the one who promised to come again, highlighting that it is God himself. The sermon concludes by discussing the four things that will happen when Christ returns, including the resurrection of believers and their removal from the earth.

Transcript

Let's make one thing very obvious. Do you understand everything? Do you hear? Do you raise your hand? Of course, thank you. Thank you.

I had so many folks came last evening and said they couldn't quite hear. A little bit of my English and a little bit of the microphone and there we were. But if you can't hear tonight, please let me know afterwards and I'll try and do something about it.

Those that were with us last evening will remember we commenced our thinking together of the coming of the Lord by reminding ourselves of three very special things. We thought, first of all, of the credibility of the one who said, If I go, I will come again. And we came to understand in a very real way that the one who said it was none other than God with us.

He who cannot lie, whose credibility will stand the searchlight of heaven and stand the searchlight of earth and hallelujah, shut the very forces of hell. Then we went a little further and we thought not only of his credibility, but we thought of his concern. Oh, we realized the treachery and the trouble and the desperate trial of the days in which we lived.

And we saw how that was reacting in the day of the Lord's evil. We saw the treachery of Judas. We saw, indeed, the trial and trickery of those high priests.

We pondered for just a little bit something of the things those early Christians had to pass through. And we found that in the midst of that, to strengthen, to bless, to encourage, Jesus said, I will come again. Oh, what a concern is in the heart of the Lord's evil.

He doesn't desire that men shall be rebellious against heaven. He longs and longs deeply that men and women shall know him as their savior. And then we thought not only of his credibility and of his concern, but we listened for a while to his commands.

And we heard him say to those that asked him, I am the way. Do you want to know your way back to God? I'm the way. Do you want to know how to live for God? I'm the life.

Oh, I say, do you want to know and understand something of the mind of God? I'm the truth. And we realized that this great subject of the coming of the Lord is not just something that deals with a day that's yet to come. It deals with our day.

I was speaking along at one of the works today to the men and the women that were there, and I reminded them of something I said last evening. I told them that I believed, and I want to say it again tonight, in case you didn't hear it last night. I said to them just today, as I was speaking to them, that I believe that the world today needs happiness.

And Jesus is the one that died on Calvary's cross to bring happiness. Happy is the man whose transgressions are forgiven him, whose sin is covered. I said this whole world of ours needs not only happiness.

Oh, I say, it needs help. It needs someone who will walk by the side of the person that trusts the Lord. And we found out that that's just what the Lord promised to do.

The Lord is my helper. I will not fear what men shall do unto me. And then we realized that the world needed hope.

There were so many hopeless souls today. They're not just found in Cuba. They're not just found in Iran.

They're not just found away in what was called Rhodesia. But they're found here in this country, as they're found in my own. Men that need hope.

And Jesus says, I will come again. He offers hope to men and women. But tonight, we're moving along.

And we're not just going to think of the general principle that Jesus Christ said, if I go, I will come again. But we're going to face together the great question, not only is he coming again, but why is he coming again? And so to this end, I have but one book to turn. It's the only book that bears the stamp of heaven.

And I'm going to read with you, if I may please, the lovely words in the fourth chapter of 1 Thessalonians. 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4, facing the question, why is the Lord coming? Verse 30, "But I would not have you ignorant brethren." You've got all sorts of brethren, aren't there? There are beloved brethren. There are, well I'd better not say, but here are some ignorant brethren.

Some that should have known better. "I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye follow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so then also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. And the dead in Christ, in Christ, shall rise first, and we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore, come forth, exult one another with these words. All may the Lord at His blessing, and the majesty of the transfigured glorious expression." Why is He coming? You know, there is one thing that all of us, when first we read our Bibles, were struck with, I am sure. We were struck with the fact that the little phrase, I will come, is a phrase that covers almost every part of the existence of the Lord Jesus.

For instance, the expression, I will come, is the expression which is the greatest act of history. I turn in thought to the glorious words of the 40th Psalm, and I hear that seventh verse, and I realize that Jesus, the very Christ of God, said, I will come, I will come. I turn indeed to the third chapter of the book of the Revelation, and I find it's not only the greatest act of history, it's the greatest act of experience.

Jesus says, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come, I will come in. But if it be the greatest act of history, and if it be the greatest act of experience, never let us forget this, that it is the greatest act of prophecy.

We look back and we hear the Lord say, Lo, I come. In the volume of the book he has written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God. We hear the Lord say, I will come in and sat with him, and he with me.

We turn to the last book, and the last chapter, and almost the last words of the book of the Revelation, and we hear the Christ of God cry, I behold, I come, and I come quickly. I cannot isolate one of those texts from the other, for I believe that the coming of the Lord must be seen in the light of his first coming. I believe the coming of the Lord must be seen in the light of Christian experience, and I believe that the coming of the Lord must be seen as the center of all prophetic truth, as it founded him.

You know, the words we read last evening from the 14th chapter of John have been thrilling my heart as I've been thinking of them again today. The Lord used glorious words, didn't he? There are so many things I'm told about the Lord in those words. For instance, I'm told of the Lord's truthfulness.

If I go, I will come again, he said. Ah, but he said more than that. When I think of the truthfulness of the Lord Jesus, I hear him say, if it were not so, I would have told you.

You know, isn't that glorious? If it were not so, I would have told you. This is something you can believe on. This is something you can pin your life to.

Sir, madam, I dare suggest to you that Jesus Christ, and I say this very reverently, Jesus Christ stands on all on the truth of this thing. If it were not so, I would have told you all the truthfulness of Christ. I say, not only the truthfulness of Christ, but all the tenderness of Christ.

Let not your heart be troubled. You know, I say with some shame, I say with some shame, that if it had been me, I've got a feeling I would have looked at those disciples who were filled with trouble, and I would

have said to them, whatever's the matter with you? Haven't you learnt anything yet? Why, you've walked with me for nearly three years. You've observed the miracles I've performed.

You've listened to the sermons that I've preached. And now you're not prepared to believe what I've said. What's the matter with you? You know, you'll forgive me.

I must confess, I would have felt like clanging their heads together. But not the Lord Jesus. He understood their hearts.

He knew what lay deep within their breasts, and He said to them, all the tenderness of it. Let not your heart be troubled. Don't be troubled about the things that are surrounding you, and the things you don't fully understand.

Remember my truthfulness. If it were not so, I would have told you. And I thank God, not only for His tenderness, but His truthfulness.

And I thank God for His thoughtfulness. His thoughtfulness. Why as I ponder these words, I have to say, how thoughtful for the Lord to tell me, me who just confessed with Peter, that I'm willing to lay down my life for you.

How thoughtful of Him to say this. Why, if you were thoughtful to lay down your life for me, it's the day don't dawn, when you'll have to lay down your life for me. Don't you forget this, that in my Father's house of many mansions, there's something over and beyond death, there's something beyond that dark cloud, that mysterious valley.

Why, in my Father's house of many mansions. And sir, madam, I won't say this to you as a man, I thank God for a Savior who is so truthful. I thank God for a Savior who's so tender.

I thank God for a Savior who's so thoughtful, that He tells me, amidst all that's happening in this world today, amidst all the problems of life, He dares to tell me, that beyond the shadow of death, there's a mansion for those that trust the Savior. And if, and if, the time comes that the church is full, and the body of Christ completed, then oh, hallelujah, I'm coming. I'm coming again.

Both for those that have gone by the way of the grave, and for those that have never fainted, I'll come again. The glorious words of 1 Thessalonians 4 are words that all of us have been thrilled with over the course of years. The Apostle Paul went to the church at Thessalonica.

He said, Thessalonians 4, I don't want you to be ignorant concerning those that are asleep. I don't want you to be ignorant, brethren. I want you to be knowledgeable, brethren.

Then listen, the day will come when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we which are alive and remain shall be pulled up together to meet the Lord of the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. If there is one thing that I am persuaded of, it's this, that the next great happening in God's prophetic program is that Jesus Christ is coming back again for His church.

It has well been called, and you know, it has well been called the rapture. Now, that word rapture is not a Bible word. You may search from Genesis to Revelation, and you won't find the word rapture.

But I tell you what you can do. You can go home and look up your Webster's Dictionary as I did today. I say, you can go back where you're staying and look up, if you like, an Oxford Dictionary.

You might get a better definition in that one. But nevertheless, go and do it. You will find that the word rapture simply means the taking away, the taking away, the carrying away.

Oh, isn't it wonderful that one day He who carried our things away is going to carry us away, take us to be with Him. And we'll look forward to that the next great day in prophetic program of our God when the Lord Himself shall descend. You know, I'm always thrilled when I read those words.

If there is one thing I'm certain of, that the rapture of the church will affect everyone who lives. I hear people speak of a silent rapture, and I understand what they mean. I hear people speak of a secret rapture, and I understand what they mean.

But when I look at this verse, I don't see any silence in it. The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout. Oh, there's nothing silent about a shout.

But I know this, that when He comes, His sheep hear His voice. And that shout will affect every blood-borne child of God. His sheep hear His voice.

I say, I believe it will not only affect the church of God when Jesus comes back, but I believe in a real way it will affect Israel. We will be thinking in coming days of Israel, of her restoration, of what God is going to do to her as the Scripture prophesies. And never you forget that when the Christ comes for His church, Israel will be affected.

There will be the ushering in not only of the day of Christ, but the day of Jacob's trouble. My Bible says, the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel. And never you forget this, that nowhere in the Bible is the archangel mentioned without there is a reference to Israel.

The archangel is always associated with God's earthly people, the Jew. And when the Lord comes, His sheep shall hear His voice. But, ah, more than that, Israel will hear the voice of the archangel.

I believe that the church of God will stand for, and the whole world will be influenced by the coming of Christ. But tonight we're going to think of the Lord as He steps on His throne in heaven. The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.

Please, not coming to earth, coming to the air. We're going to be caught up to meet Him in the air. The Lord is coming, and He's going to take His home to be with Him.

May I please remind you of four simple things that will happen when Christ returns. You know them. You were taught them in Sunday school.

But let me remind you of them again. When the Lord Jesus Christ comes back, the first thing that will happen is that He will raise the believer to death in Christ. He's going to raise the believer.

He not only is going to raise the believer, but oh, thank God, He's going to remove the believer. The dead in Christ shall rise back, but we, which are alive and remain, we in the church, we members of the church of Thessalonica, and the church here in, in, in, what's the name of it? Oh yes, so it is. Augusta, I say.

The Lord is going to raise. But the Lord will not only raise, the Lord is going to remove. He's going to catch those that are alive who love the Lord Jesus, and He's going to beat them in the air.

But the Lord is not only going to raise the believer, and the Lord is not only going to remove the believer, but oh, hallelujah, the Lord's going to reunite the believer. Quota. Do you hear the word? Quota.

Together. I say, isn't it wonderful to be together? I look around tonight, and I see so many friends, and I want to tell you this. It's good to be together.

It's good to meet friends again. I see my good friend, Mr. Hersey, who I've known for so many years. Come down from Columbia.

Is that right, Brother Hersey? You've come from Columbia. Did you come on your bike? You did very well. I say, isn't it wonderful that we're together? It makes the fellowship when we're together.

What a day that will be when united with those that have gone before who love the Lord. We're quota together to meet the Lord. Oh, to be with Him.

To see Him. To gaze into His blessed face. But not only is He coming that He might raise the believer.

Not only is He coming that He might remove the believer. Not only is He coming that He might reunite the believer. But, oh, praise God, He's coming that He might reward the believer.

For then the judgment seat of Christ will be set up, and every man shall receive praise of God. And what fortune it is. Oh, please let me reemphasize to you, Christians, the judgment seat of Christ has nothing to do with sin.

Sin was dealt with by the blood of Christ on Calvary's cross. Sin was dealt with by He who took my sin and my sorrow and made it His very own. Or my burden to Calvary and Puffin and Dinah, though.

Oh, the judgment seat of Christ has everything to do with service. And we shall all receive praise of God. I say, my friend, what sort of praise will you receive? How much? Well, let's think for a moment.

I said when the Lord comes back, He is coming first to raise the believer to death. Ah, but would you notice this? In Christ. Oh, how thrilled I was when Brother Larry sang the glorious invitation hymn.

I must confess, I was a bit surprised that you didn't shout Amen. But there we are. You don't do that very much here, do you? But I said it anyway.

I said it. Isn't it wonderful to know that the Lord Jesus will receive us to Himself? Not only will He come into our life, but He will receive us into His life. The dead in Christ.

Oh, thank God for those words. In Christ. Please, don't tell anyone, but I've got a new Bible today.

I'm afraid my old one, I'd rather punch to pieces the back and come off in it. And I've got a new Bible. And I hope you don't ask me to find quickly some of the minor prophets.

You know, I'll be... But not only have I a Bible, but they gave me from the Augusta Bible Store here, they gave me a little bookmark. Rather a cheap one. But nevertheless, it's a little one.

Let me place my bookmark in my Bible. Now the bookmark's in the Bible. I say, let me put my Bible over here on this side.

The bookmark's on that side as well, isn't it? It's in the Bible. Let me put my Bible on the ground. I'm not going to, but let me do it.

The bookmark's on the ground because it's in the Bible. I say, let me take that Bible out of this building tonight. And the bookmark goes out as well because it's in the Bible.

Isn't it wonderful to be in Christ? To know this, that while our body may have gone to that grave, we are in Christ. That where He is, we are also. Oh, don't you come to me and tell me there's no heaven.

I'm going to preach one night about God's heaven. Aye, and I'll preach one night about God's hell as well. But I'll preach about God's heaven.

And I'll remind you that those that have trusted the Lord, they're in Christ. In Christ. Oh, and one day those bodies will be raised.

Those in Christ. What a wonder. My friend, can I ask you something? Are you in Christ? Have you trusted the Lord Jesus? Has He made you His own? Can you say, I'm with and in Him? Oh, death is an awful thing.

You know, the Bible speaks of death in three ways, doesn't it? The Bible speaks of death, first of all, as a spiritual experience. It talks of men and women who don't know Jesus Christ the Saviour, and they're dead, it transposes and says. I told you in Augusta before a story that comes readily to my mind.

May I tell it again? Most of you have heard me tell the story, but the story is told of an Englishman who went away to Scotland for a holiday. And while he was there, he had the bad manners to die. And they didn't quite know what to do with him, you know.

They didn't know whether they ought to bury him in Scotland or send him home to England. And telegrams were sent back and forth, and eventually they decided to bury him in a little courtyard in the heart of Ayrshire, away in Scotland. When the funeral was over, everyone thought it was finished with, but oh no.

At the next parish meeting, I'm not quite sure what you call them in America, but at the next parish meeting, one of these Scots agitators, you know, one of these Scots ashlers, got up and said, Listen, our graveyard's nearly full, and you're burying this man there. I propose that never again shall anyone but the people in this district be buried in our churchyard. And there was a lot of discussion, you know, but it was carried.

And eventually they put a notice in that little courtyard, and it said, This courtyard is reserved for the dead living in our village. And I'll tell you something, there are a lot of dead folk who are living in Augusta. Oh, friend, they're healthy and strong, they're alive, but as far as God is concerned, they're dead.

They're dead. Spiritual dead. Dead, yet trespasses and sins.

Ah, but if they're spiritual dead, they're physical dead. Time, if the Lord be not come, when all of us shall face the swelling of Jordan. The fruit of sin, for as sin came into the world, so death.

And one day, if the Lord does not come, and please God, he might come, and he might come tonight. If he be not come, then we'll go that way. Death.

But there's another death. Oh, the book of the Revelation calls it the second death. And it says those who were not found written in the Lamb's book of life were cast into the lake of fire.

We're told there's a second death. Hell. Oh, isn't it wonderful there's coming a day when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, those in Christ's death forever will be vanquished.

They'll be raised firm about you. But I've often said that I don't look forward to dying, do you? Not me. I've got a lot of reasons I don't want to die.

I've got a wife. I've got two children. I've got four grandchildren.

Oh, I've got scores of reasons why I don't want to die. Oh, how I'd love for the Lord to come back. We'd all go together then.

There'd be no party. When he comes back, I'll tell you something more. I've got a little old mother that didn't stand any higher than this, just a little don of a lady she was.

The first person I led to Christ after I was made was my own mother. She's gone on to glory. But when the Lord comes, oh, what a joy that'll be.

What a joy that'll be. I only know this, my friend. He's going to raise those that are in Christ.

Are you in Christ? If you're not in Christ, you're going to be. Joy is the resurrection when Jesus comes. But there's going to be some sorrow.

I don't know about you, but I've got loved ones, nephews, nieces. If I couldn't knock them into heaven, I'd have hit them into heaven years ago. But I can't do it.

Every time I meet them, I can almost hear them say, He's at it again. He's at it again. And please, God, I'll be at it till I go to glory.

Please, God, I'll be at it telling them of Jesus. Oh, how I long that they'll come to know the Lord. But if they don't, should the Lord come back? See, loved ones left behind.

The church removed. Oh, if I'm talking to someone here tonight, and your mother loves the Lord Jesus, and your father loves the Lord Jesus, your wife loves the Lord Jesus, but you don't, my friend, ever use again. The coming of Jesus Christ will be an awful thing for you.

An awful thing. Not only to raise and not only remove, but all to reunite. To be with loved ones gone before, but best of all, to be with Him.

And John tells us when we shall see Him, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. What a day that'll be. I've never seen the Lord Jesus.

I've never gained to do His things. See, I've never heard His voice as a voice booming out of heaven. I'll confess this to you.

If I was to hear the Lord Jesus shout from heaven, Lord, of all men I'd be most frightened. Why, my knees would knock. I've never heard these clear voices I hear some folks talk about.

But I've heard His voice. Every day I open His Word and let Him speak to me. I've seen His face.

As day by day I've read that which tells me of Him whose face was marred more than any man had. Oh, I've never heard His voice in actual fact. I've never seen His face physically.

I'm going to one day. I'm going to. Oh, friend, are you going to? You're in Christ? He's going to reward those that love Him.

Can't tonight talk about the judgment seat of Christ? I will one evening. We'll get there. Don't you worry about it.

We'll get there. But for tonight I haven't time. I only have to say this to you, that I believe there comes a time when every one of us in this place who know the Lord Jesus will meet Him, and we're glad when we meet Him, stand before Him to receive His praise.

Are you ready for that day? Are you ready? Oh, if you're not ready, may I say this to you, you can be ready. There's not a power in heaven or earth or hell, the power of your own free will, that will stop you coming to Christ. If you are willing tonight to come to the Savior, He's willing to receive you.

I want, if I may, to close my remarks with three words, three simple words. The three words, here they are. Thank her.

Thank her. Oh, do you want to be sure that you'll be with Him? My Bible says, let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his courts, and let him return unto the Lord. When the apostle spoke to those in the 20th chapter of Acts, he said, this is the gospel, repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus.

Oh, you know what it means to repent, to turn. It simply means to turn your back on that which is opposed to the mind of God. They turn to God from idols.

Look to turn to Him. Leave thy deadly doing down, down at Jesus. Take, isn't that lovely? Isn't that wonderful? It's a hallelujah word, isn't it? To as many as received Him.

To them gave He the right to become the sons of God. Even to them that believe on His name. Oh, the wonder of it.

Friend, He's willing to receive you, that you might be in Christ. If you're willing to receive Him, that Christ may be in you. Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Oh, blessed be His name. To me, when He turns, and takes, the night He looks at you, the night He looks at me, and He says, Oh, thanks. Thanks.

Don't you think it's about time that men and women, knowing what Christ did for them, when He died on Calvary's cross, when He was raised from amongst the dead. Don't you think it's about time when men and women know what Christ is doing today. He ever live us to make intercession for us, when we realize what He's going to do to us.

Come again for His own. Don't you think it's about time, as Christians, we bowed our knee and said, Thanks be unto God, for His ones, people again, the great gift. You can't thank Him for the gift till you receive it.

You've got to take it first. I wonder, tonight, Elizabeth, Oh, we're not a large company, but I wonder tonight if there's someone who's willing to say, Lord Jesus, I'll take these, if you'll take these. That's what He wants us to do.

Could I help you do that? Our last hymn is going to be again the hymn of 149. 149. I have a feeling that many of you thought I would choose this hymn, just as I am.

And I do know this as well, friends. I know that this hymn has been used so much. All of us could sing it without a hymnal.

As a song, it's just become words. Please, oh please. Very lovingly, I want to say this.

Don't let it be just words. If you're going to sing tonight, oh Lamb of God, I come. Sing it and mean it.

Sing it truthfully. Say, Lord, I want to come. Number 149.

Lord, Lord, come. I wonder if there's someone here who's going to really mean it. Prepare to say, just as I am, I come.

Is it wonderful He'll receive us? If there's someone here tonight, are you willing to trust the Lord Jesus? You're willing to receive Him? Friends, as we sing the last verse, I'm not going to ask again. We're not going to sing it twice. I don't have that sort of appeal.

If there's someone here tonight who's willing to take Christ as their Savior, as we sing the last verse, would you care to leave your seat and just walk and stand here in the front? As a public confession. Jesus said, if you'll confess me before men, I'll confess you before my Father who is in Heaven. Coming to the front won't save you.

But it'll confess the fact of your willingness to trust the Lord. Will you come? Your friend by your side will come with you if you'll come. Will you come? If you will, as we sing this last verse, the opportunity's yours.

Just as I am, I come. The last verse. Pray.

O God and Father, we bless thee for giving us the opportunity.

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