

# Being Ready For Christ's Coming (Video)

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of being prepared for the second coming of Christ, highlighting the need for purity of heart, endurance in the face of trials, and forgiveness towards others. It recounts the challenges faced by early Christians and the ultimate reward of being with Jesus in eternity, free from sorrow and pain.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:8, Luke 21:10, Revelation 21:1, Philippians 3:20, 1 John 2:28

**Topics:** "Preparation for Christ's Return", "Endurance and Forgiveness"

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## Description

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## Transcript

We have been thinking about Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. I want to tell you what our eternal home will be like. When Christ comes back and all the very bad things that are happening in the world today, wars and earthquakes and floods and famines.

These will become worse and worse. But we must not be disturbed. Because people in the world will have fear.

We read in Luke's gospel and Luke's gospel chapter 21. In the verse 10 and 11. Nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom.

There will be great earthquakes, plagues, famines, many terrors and signs from heaven. And verse 17, you will be hated by everybody because of my name. But Jesus said when these things happen we must lift up our head because it is an indication that Christ is coming back.

Verse 27, then you will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But before that, when these things begin to take place, verse 28, don't look down discouraged. It says straighten up, lift up your head.

And it says here your redemption is drawing near. So when you read about wars and all types of problems and when you read that Christians are going to be persecuted, people of other religions will come and trouble Christians. Jesus said that 2,000 years ago.

He said they did that to me and they'll do that to you. The world rejected Christ when he was on earth. They treated him like a criminal.

They crucified him. So we are not supposed to be big people in a world that crucified our savior. In the church, people may love us and appreciate us.

But the world will hate Christians. Because they are two different spirits. It's like black is the opposite of white.

So there is always conflict. Now if you are not a wholehearted Christian and you allow some black to come into you and the white becomes slowly more and more black, then the world will accept you. You behave like the world and talk like the world and do things like the world.

Then the world will be your friend. But when you say no, I will not do that. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ.

You'll be persecuted. We have not faced anything in our country so far like people faced in the first and second century, just after Christ died and rose. Many of those early Christians were persecuted like anything.

Sometimes one young mother would accept Christ. And the husband is an idol worshipper. And her parents are idol worshippers.

But she has accepted Christ. And the government will come and take her away from her child and everything and put her in prison. And torture her.

And even old people. I heard of one Christian who was a disciple of the Apostle John. His name was Polycarp.

From a very young age, he had loved Jesus and given his heart to him. When he was 85 years old and he was a Christian leader, they arrested him. And they would take him before the magistrate, the judge.

And the thing they would say is, say that Caesar, which is the name of the king there, Caesar is lord. This man said, Jesus is lord. If you say that, we'll kill you.

Say Caesar is the king, is lord. He said no. And he said, see, more than 80 years I've served my savior.

He's only done good to me. How can I deny him now? Caesar is lord. No, Jesus Christ is lord.

I will not say Caesar is lord. Jesus Christ is lord. And so they killed him.

Sometimes they would tie them to a pole and burn them. Sometimes they would chop off their head. See, we have not seen such things in India so far.

But those Christians, even young women and older men, they all stood faithful to the lord. So, if we suffer a few little things because we are disabsorbed Jesus, it doesn't matter. What we experience are like little mosquito bites.

Or ant bites. Because mosquito sometimes gives sickness, but ant bites. Ant bites give a lot of sickness.

Ant bites give a lot of sickness. That's nothing. They were eaten by lions.

So, we must be bold. We must say, lord, give me the power of the holy spirit. And then, one day when Christ comes, we will be with him forever.

And all the sorrows we have gone through on earth will be forgotten. See, it says in Revelation 21. It says, there is a new heaven and a new earth will come.

Revelation 21, verse 1. And the first earth is passed away. And in the new earth, there won't be any sea. That's what it says here.

See, the sea is what separates us from another land. But now, there will be only the earth, no sea. We can move freely from one place to another.

We can move freely from one place to another. God himself will dwell among his people. And in that day, he will wipe away all the tears from everybody's eyes.

See, all of us, as long as we live on this earth, we have to cry for something or the other. We cry sometimes out of pain in our body. We cry when some loved one is seriously sick or dies.

This world is a world of tears. Many sorrows. And it's not only poor people, rich people also have many tears.

But when Jesus comes back, he will wipe away the tears from our eyes. And there will no longer be any death. There will no longer be any mourning or crying or pain.

All this is in this earth. Mourning, crying, pain, death. But it's all passed away.

And the Lord says in verse 5, I am making everything new. And then it says in verse 7, concerning us, if we overcome, God says, I will be his God and he will be my son. And then you go to chapter 22.

It says in verse 3, there will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and the Lamb will be there. The Lamb means Jesus Christ.

Because he died as a sacrifice for our sins. He is called the Lamb because we will always remember he died for our sins. You know the Bible says that when Christ comes again, we will get a new body.

Philippians chapter 3. Verse 20 and 21. Our citizenship is in heaven from which we eagerly wait for our savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. And then when he comes, verse 21, he will change our body of our humble state into the body of his glory.

You remember when Jesus rose up from the dead? He could pass through a wall and suddenly go away to some other place. Now we can't pass through the wall with this body. And we can't fly away.

We have to walk. But the new body that we will get when Jesus comes back, we will be able to fly, we will be able to pass through walls and we will never get sick. There will be no blood in that body.

It will only be flesh and bones and all sicknesses will be taken away. You won't recognize me when you see me there. You say, is this Zak Purnan? His hair is black, he is not wearing glasses.

He has got plenty of hair because my body will be like Jesus Christ. And yours also. I think we will recognize each other by our faces.

You will see who your brother was, who your wife was, who your husband was. But all sickness will go. See, wearing glasses is a sickness, baldness is a sickness.

It will all go, we will be healthy and we will never get sick for eternity. It's wonderful to look forward to that. I want to live like that with Jesus forever.

That is the thing that encourages us while we go through this little difficult time on this earth. And we will really live in a world of love and we will be able to love them and they will love us. And it says here, in this wonderful thing, in Revelation 22, See, all our sicknesses will go.

Some people who lost one arm, they will get their arm when Christ comes back. Everybody's body will be perfect. Except Jesus.

Only in his, there will be the nails, hole in his hands. There will be a hole in his side. If you have an injury in your hand, that will get healed when he comes.

But Jesus' mark of the nails and the spear side will remain forever. There is a song in English which says, when I get up to glory, how will I recognize Jesus? Because I have never seen his face. How will I know who is Jesus? He says, I will recognize him by the holes in his hands.

That will remind us for eternity that we are there because he died for us. Imagine that you and I are going to be there forever and ever and ever. So, we must be faithful here for the short time.

See, maximum most people can live is 90-100 years, not more than that. Many people die even before they are 80. But some people may live up to 90 or 100.

Very few people live beyond 100. I am not praying that I should live beyond 100. If you let me live up to another 20 years, I can serve you.

I can bring some more people to Christ or encourage some more people. Otherwise, I would rather go and be with Christ than live in this rotten old earth. If I live here, Lord, it is only to help other people, no other reason.

I am not interested in anything here. But we don't live beyond a certain age. Even if you live for 100 years, that is such a short time compared to eternity.

So many lakhs and crores of years. I can't even count them. That's how long I am going to live.

And all those who have loved Jesus and died, they are there already. If God has allowed you to live, it is because He wants a witness on this earth now. A good witness.

That's why we have these conferences. So that we can prepare God's people to be good witnesses for Christ, wherever they are. And God's aim is always to keep the church pure.

Blessed are the pure in heart. They will see God. And it says here in verse 4, Revelation 22 verse 4, they will see His face.

And His name will be on their foreheads. We will see Jesus face to face. And His name will be on my forehead saying, I belong to Jesus Christ.

Wonderful in all of us. It's going to be wonderful when we see Jesus face to face. When we see Jesus face to face, we will be surprised to see how much He loved us.

When I see His face, I will be amazed. Lord, you love me so much, I never even knew. Now we don't know how much He loved us.

Oh, we only say He died on the cross. Those nails must have pained Him a lot. But do you know what pained Jesus more than that? That He was forsaken by the Father for three hours.

The world became dark from 12 noon to 3 o'clock. When Jesus was hanging on the cross, it became midnight. All dark.

And it's 12 o'clock in the daytime. Because those three hours was dark because Jesus was taking the punishment for our sin. That is the punishment He took for our sin, not just the nails.

You and I should have been forsaken by God for our sin. That is what hell is. But Jesus says, I will take that.

Don't let them be forsaken. I will be forsaken. In other words, when He was hanging there for three hours, He was experiencing hell.

When He was hanging on the cross for three hours, He was experiencing hell. At that time, the Father of Heaven always called Him Father. At that time, He said, God, why did you forsake me? Some people say, I prayed, but God didn't give me an answer.

Jesus also, when He asked, why did you forsake me? There was no answer. He was asking a question. No answer.

Silence. For three hours, silence. When you are forsaken by God, He doesn't even give you a reply.

He didn't get a reply. That is the proof He was forsaken. There, He was suffering the agonies of eternal hell for three hours.

He need not have gone there. But He wanted to save you and me from going to hell. Since we are going to hell, He is going to save us.

He told His Father, I will die for them. Somebody has to take the punishment. Because God is a just God and He must punish sin.

Every sin is a very serious thing. Sin is not like your little boy breaking a plate in the house. That is nothing.

You say, okay son, it's alright, forget it. But sin is serious. Even a small sin in your thoughts, in your words, is so serious.

It is worse than murder in God's eyes. We don't understand that. If you have bitterness in your mind against somebody, God says that's like murdering him.

Do you see it like that? If I have bitterness and murdering somebody, if you are angry with your wife, God says that's like murdering her. The world says it's only anger but God says it's murder. That's how serious sin is.

God says, I can't overlook that murder. You may look, you just got a little angry. But I see it as murder.

You have to be punished. You have to go to hell. Jesus says, no, I'll go.

Jesus says, no, I'll go to hell. You let him go to heaven. I will understand that fully when he comes again.

I began to understand a little bit about it about 30-40 years ago. I was praying one day. I said, Lord, what did you say? Take this cup away from me.

That was this cup of being forsaken. And the father could have said, OK, you don't have to die. You didn't sin.

Come to heaven. But the father says to him, but Zakpoon will go to hell. Jesus in Gethsemane felt like this.

Zakpoon will go to hell. No, I don't want him to go to hell. OK, I will be forsaken.

When I understood that, I saw it was not only the nails or the crown of thorns. He was forsaken and experienced hell because he loved me. I remember the first day I understood that.

I wept and wept before the Lord. I'll tell you something. When you get little revelation of how much Jesus loves you, you really weep.

If you have never wept before the Lord thinking of his love, I'd say you are not yet close to God. You have to be very hard-hearted not to weep when you understand the love of God. It's really true.

You don't have to produce the tears. It will come automatically. When you see how much he loved you, he doesn't frighten us.

He just shows us how much he loves us. God doesn't frighten me at any time. But I weep when I think of his love for me.

When I think how much he has forgiven me and how he had to hang there only with an underwear. Everybody laughing at him. Forsaken by God.

The devil torturing him in his mind. It was all for me. Don't say for the world.

Say for me. God loved the world. God loved me.

Then we realize it. And it is only so that we can be with him forever. So, it says they will see his face.

So when I see his face that day, I believe I will fall on my face and I will weep and I will weep for a long time. Then it says he will wipe away the tears from my eyes and he will embrace me. I believe that.

I want you to be there too. But we got to love Jesus now for all that he did for us. We got to love him for all that he did for us.

We should think how much he suffered for us. Why did he suffer? Because of my sins. That is why he called him father.

That is why he called him father. Because he was not standing before his father then. He was standing before the judge of the universe.

And the judge of the universe says you have to be punished for Zakpoonan's sin. So that Zakpoonan doesn't go to hell, you have to go to hell. So Jesus says okay.

And in three hours, the concentrated punishment of eternity he suffered. And then he said it is finished. The punishment is over.

Then he looked up and he didn't call him God. He said father, I commend my spirit to you. That's how I know the punishment is finished.

The punishment started when he called him my God, my God. Three hours later when he said father, I am putting my spirit down. I know the punishment is over.

Three hours later when he said father, I commend my spirit to you. That's how I know I won't get any punishment. It's like if you have a debt of hundred crores of rupees and somebody who loves you pays your bill and gives you the receipt.

and somebody who loves you pays your bill and gives you the receipt. When you see that, you will think, he paid my hundred crores of rupees. I don't have to go to jail now.

How grateful you will be to the man. You won't just say one thank you and forget it. You won't just say one thank you and forget it.

Whenever you get time, you will be grateful to him and ready to do anything. That's why I served the Lord. That's why I served the Lord for 60 years now.

That's why I said, I will never live for myself. That's why I said, give me some more years of health, I will serve you more. I will tell you how grateful I am to you.

You will think like that. You will think how much I loved you. You will never ever feel, I have done enough.

I don't feel like that. You can say, oh brother Zach, you served the Lord for so long. You count in terms of years.

I count in terms of the love Jesus had for me. It's like an ocean. What I have given back is one or two drops.

I am willing to suffer anything for your name's sake. I never want to let you down by anything I do. I don't want the devil to come and get any place in my heart.

My heart is completely for you. How do you show your love for Jesus? Is it just by saying, oh Lord, I love you, I love you, I love you? That's easy. It is by making sure that no hatred comes into your heart.

That's why Jesus said, love your enemies. We have many enemies when we are Christians. Not only non-Christians, even some Christians are our enemies.

Because they don't like the stand we take. We make the light shine from the word of God. And show the wrong practices that other Christians are doing.

Jesus shone the light in his day on what the Pharisees, wrong things the Pharisees were doing. He says, you are cheating poor widows of their houses. And they got angry and they killed him.

So, we also shine the light of God's word on all the wrong things going on in many churches. And I know that many people hate me, they wish Zak Kurnian would die. But I am not going to die.

There was a servant of God who said, There was a servant of God who said, I think it was John Wesley. He said, Nobody can kill me till my life's work is done. Because my life is in God's hands.

No cancer, no accident, nothing. That's for you also. If you love Jesus, you say, no, I only want to do your will in my life.

You don't have to be afraid of sickness or enemies or anything. You got a job and somebody will throw you out of that job. And you will be like a beggar on the street.

Impossible. You are a child of God. How can God leave his child like a beggar on the street? Impossible.

I left my job 53 years ago. I had already worked in the Navy for about 8 years. I was getting a big salary and I saved all that money and gave it for God's work.

My bank account was zero. My bank account had no money. I said, Lord, I am going to serve you.

We were poor. My wife and I were very poor when we started. But we were never on the street.

We never had to beg anybody for money. Not even once. We never took money from people and we never wrote people asking for money.

God is a loving father. He is your father also. Be faithful till Christ comes.

And when he comes, you will have great joy when you meet him. How do you want to meet Jesus when he comes? Do you want to somehow scrape your way into heaven? No. I want to meet Jesus and he should say to me, well done, good and faithful servant.

Don't you want to hear that from Jesus? All the medals and honors and Bharat Ratna and all is nothing compared to Jesus saying well done. That is the greatest heaven's Ratna you can get. See, when Jesus comes, there will be two types of people among the believers.

You read about that in 1 John 2.27 1 John 2.28 Little children he is talking to believers, abide in him. So that when he appears, now you read about the two types of believers who will be there when he comes. One who has confidence and says, yeah Lord, praise the Lord, you have come, I want to see you.

And the other, shrinking away, oh Lord, I didn't know you were going to come so soon and they are ashamed, they want to cover their face. You see there are two types of believers when Christ comes again. Why are these people hiding their face and ashamed? Because they have not confessed all their sins.

They still kept a bitterness against somebody. They kept some hatred against somebody whom they didn't like. But Jesus has taught us to forgive everyone.

Please remember this. We cannot fellowship with all believers but we can forgive everyone. So many believers are so selfish and they do so many wrong things.

We can love them but we can't work with them. We can't fellowship with them. We can't hate them.

There are many believers in the world who disagree with me. Some of them hate me and say I am a false prophet and all that. And they write articles against me.

I don't have time to read all of them. I love them and I say, God bless you. I can say this before God.

Today it is impossible for me to hate anyone. Once I could hate people but now God has done such a work in my heart. He showed me how much he loved me.

I cannot hate people. God has given me his nature. Even Jesus could not fellowship with the Pharisees.

I cannot fellowship with many Christians. But he loved them. He loved them so much he died for them.

I have not come to that level of being willing to die for people. That is still some higher level. But I want to get there.

I want to love. I really say I can love my enemies today. Not enough to die for them like Jesus but little less than that.

But no hatred. No bitterness. People have done harm to me.

I have forgiven them long ago. If people speak evil of me or say CFC is preaching all wrong teaching I say, Father forgive them. They don't know what they are saying.

So you must be like that. Forgive. Be good to people.

People have hurt you perhaps. Sometimes our relatives hurt us. Mother-in-law, sister-in-law.

They treat you badly. Or they rob the family property so that you don't get it. I say take it.

I don't want it. I am not going to carry that to heaven. So forgive.

You will be a happier man. You will be able to sleep peacefully at night. I sleep peacefully at night because I don't have anything against anybody.

My conscience is always clear. If I have accidentally hurt somebody I ask forgiveness. I go to bed peacefully because of good conscience.

If you live like that when Christ comes you will not shrink in shame. You will say praise the Lord. I am ready to meet you Lord.

So dear brothers and sisters God has done a wonderful work here in these parts of Karnataka. Some of you know that the church in Hubli went through a little difficult time. I came here many many years ago.

Do you remember when I came first brother? Who was here when I first came? Anybody can tell me which year it was? I forgot. 83? Really? That is 36 years. I don't think it was 83.

Maybe a little later. Anyway, it has been a long time. I don't know who all were here for the first meeting I came to in Hubli.

Mary Malekar. She was here then. Do you remember which year it was? Anyway, it doesn't matter.

It was a long time ago. Daniel Malekar arranged those meetings. But it was a I never knew.

At that time there was no church here. I didn't start the church. God started the church.

He only gathered different people. But unfortunately the church did not have good leadership. And therefore when a leader begins to become like a dictator that's not the spirit of Christ.

That destroyed this church for a long time. It's like these dictators who rule different countries. A true elder must be a servant.

They did not have a servant here as a leader. So, God is very patient. We say, why doesn't God remove a person like that immediately? Because He gives a person time to repent.

Why didn't God, Jesus, remove Judas' character as soon as He knew he was a crook? He waited. He waited. God is very patient.

We like to remove a person immediately. I remember in another church it was a CFC church where also there was a difficult man who was a dictator type of leader. He took advantage of many people.

But I discovered it only after many years. Like in Hubli also. I discovered it only after many years.

I didn't realize that some people had left and there was a split here for 6-7 years. I never knew all this because I hadn't come here so often. For some years.

Then in the other case when that man was causing a problem and I had to remove him from eldership. I said, Lord, why did you not show this to me earlier? That was in another town. Not here.

And the Lord said, because if you had known it, you would have removed him immediately. But I am very patient with people. Even with very bad people, I wait, I wait, I wait, give them a chance to repent.

Like he gave time to Judas Iscariot. He was such a thief. He gave him time to repent.

I said, Lord, thank you. I am learning how patient you are with people. I said, Lord, thank you.

I am learning how patient you are with people. When the time came, Judas Iscariot was exposed. It is better for him that he is not even born.

It is a terrible thing to do harm to God's work. Anybody who does harm to God's church, I will say the same thing. It is better he was not even born.

Particularly if it is a good church like CFC has been. Anybody who comes in like a dictator and harms the church, I say in Jesus' name, it is better he is not even born. What a lot they have to repent of.

What a lot they have to repent of. In that other place, God took that person, put another person, and solved the problem. The same thing happened here also.

God removed someone and brought back those who left. It is very important that those who were here and those who left become one with each other. There must not be the feeling, this is my group, that is another group.

There are no groups in the body of Christ. So you have to grow out of this feeling, this is my group, that is another group. We are one in Christ.

We have all made mistakes and God has been merciful to us so we must be merciful to others. As I said, we can't fellowship with everybody. There are many Christians in Bangalore, most of them I cannot fellowship with.

Because they have a wrong attitude to money. I told you about this other brother in another town. They have a wrong attitude to money.

Here also the problem is a wrong attitude to money. And wherever there is a wrong attitude to money, the church is destroyed. Like Judas Iscariot.

If God removes such a person, then he will build the church. So that's what God is doing here. We don't hate anyone.

We don't even hate those who call us the devil. Even if they call us the devil, we will forgive them. But we can't work with them.

We work with those who wholeheartedly want to follow Jesus. Who have no interest in money and who have no interest in ruling over other people. Elders must be like Jesus washing the feet of people.

That's what I pray. Lord, I want to wash the feet of my fellow believers. I am ready to clean their chappals or do whatever.

Jesus was a servant and I am a servant. And a true leader is a servant. Otherwise you will be like these worldly leaders who are big big people.

If anybody comes like that in the church, God will one day remove him. And God has removed such people in the past. I can think of at least 5 or 6 elders in the last 45 years God has removed from CFC churches.

That's not a big number because we have got about 150 elders. 5 or 6 is a very small number. So God has been very good to us.

He has protected us from all these lovers of money. But you know this happened in the days of John also as an apostle. I see 3rd John verse 9 He says, I wrote something to the church 3rd epistle of John which is just before Revelation.

Verse 9 I wrote something to the church the diatrophist who loves to be the first does not accept what I say. And what does he do even when I send somebody to the church verse 10, he does not receive them and throws them out of the church. So what did John do? He says, I am going to come there.

I am not afraid of him. And I will call attention to all his deeds. You say, brother is it right to speak about the wrong things some elder did? Elder Diatrophist is the elder.

John says, when I come there I am going to tell the whole church of all the wrong things this elder did. Because John was an apostle he had authority. So what I am saying is even in those days there were problems.

Diatrophist was an elder whom John appointed in that church. And the church was blessed because of John's ministry. But diatrophist thought, oh it is my ministry that is blessing the church.

And his head became big. God withdrew his grace from him. And then John had to go and put him out.

There was another good man there called Demetrius. He has got a good report from everyone. He was 12.

So there were some good people in that church. And in every church there are good people. And we pray those good people will come forward.

And lead the church to a greater height to become more like Christ. So we need to be ready for the second coming of Christ. Heavenly Father please help us to remember all that we heard today.

Your name be glorified. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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