



The Parousia

Mark 13:24-37 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Hebrews 9:11-28

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THERE ARE THREE EVENTS in world history that affect every single person ever conceived. These three “once and for all” events are totally God’s work alone, and their effects last throughout the history of the world.

The **FIRST** “once and for all” event was the **Creation of the World**. God the Father created the heavens and the earth and everything in them in six days, and He rested on the seventh. The earth --- and life itself -- are signs of God’s grace and goodness to His creation; God has created every single human being and has given them life.

The **SECOND** “once and for all” event that affects every single human being is the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus made **atonement** for all people: in His sacrifice on the **cross**, every single person’s sin was paid for. In His **resurrection** from the dead on the third day, every single person is declared forgiven of their sins. Jesus’ death **covers over** the sins of all people: God provided His Son so that the entire world is **reconciled to Himself**. Jesus’ death and resurrection; His **atonement**, is the second “once and for all” event in the history of the world.

These first two events – **Creation** and **Atonement** -- have already occurred; their power, blessings and effects are **ongoing** until the end of the world. Even if someone denies and rejects the Lord as Creator and Savior, the truth remains: God is Creator of all things seen and unseen, and His Son is the Savior of the World.

The **THIRD** and final “once and for all” event will be the **Parousia** on the Last Day. “**Parousia**” is the New Testament word that means “**return of the King**”. It is used to describe the Last Day, when Jesus will *return as the King of all things*. Jesus will return to judge the living and the dead; it will be visible, every eye will see Him, history will end, and the dead will rise.

The New Testament word

“Parousia”

means “return of the King”. It is used 24 times in the NT; 17 of those in reference to the Return of Christ on the Last Day.

Other words that the New Testament uses for Christ’s return are “*epiphany*” which means His “appearing”; and “*apocalypse*” which means His “revealing”.

(“*Apocalypse*” is also the Name of the Book of “*Revelation*”, as God “reveals” truths about the End Times to us.)

Believers will spend eternity in Heaven; unbelievers will be condemned to hell. When Jesus returns on the Last Day -- **at the Parousia** -- it will be judgement day for every single person ever conceived. The **Parousia** is the third and final “once and for all” event in earth history.

Here is how the Book of Hebrews teaches the **Parousia** to us:

Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, 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 those who are waiting for Him. Hebrews 9:27-28

On the Last Day, Jesus will return visibly, with all his holy angels, and in great glory, power and might. It will be a dreadful and frightening judgment day for unbelievers and it will be wonderful and awe-inspiring day of salvation for those who trust in Him.

Jesus teaches us several things about the **Parousia** in the Gospels.

THE TIME IS UNKNOWN

One thing Jesus highlights is that **NO ONE KNOWS WHEN** He will return. The date and the time are completely unknown.

"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. MATTHEW 24:36

It is not important for us to know when Jesus will return. And in fact, it really doesn't matter **when** the **Parousia** occurs --- it is enough for us to know and believe that it **will** occur.

Jesus does not teach us when the Last Day will arrive, but rather He teaches us how to live until the Last Day arrives.

LIVE WITH EAGER ANTICIPATION

One thing that Jesus teaches us is that we are to live our lives **alert and aware** of His return. Jesus compares it to the fruit on a fig tree.

"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that He is near, at the very gates. MARK 13:28-29

The point is that we know that Jesus is coming, and the signs of the end are everywhere. We are to be **alert and aware**, recognize the signs, and understand the times that we live in. Later on, Jesus says that you are to **be on your guard** and to **stay awake** so that the Last Day does not sneak up on you suddenly and unexpectedly.

What this means is that you are to be **“EVER-READY”**; **live your life as though the end could come at any moment**. It includes vigilance, watchfulness, alertness and awareness. It's like we are *“on the edge of our seats”* with **eager anticipation** waiting for the Parousia to happen. Make sure that you do not let your faith grow cold; be sure not to get tangled up in **unrepentant** sin; always be aware of what and who is influencing you. Stay alert and aware! Be on your guard, the Last Day may come today!

DON'T BE CAUGHT UNPREPARED

Another thing that Jesus teaches us is to be prepared for the Last Day; don't let it catch you **unprepared**. Jesus compares His return to a sudden and unexpected return of a homeowner.

It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning-- **lest he come suddenly and find you asleep**. MARK 13: 34-36

The way to stay awake and prepared for the Last Day is to live with an **attitude of repentance**. As Christians, our sin is always before us; we are constantly aware of our sinfulness and our need for God's mercy and grace. We live lives of faith in Jesus Christ --- trusting in His mercy, always confessing and receiving forgiveness from God, always turning away from sin and towards God. We live with an **ATTITUDE OF REPENTANCE every moment of every day!**

Christ is coming back on the Last Day. It's great news for us who believe in Jesus – it is the Day of Salvation that we long for, the long awaited “homecoming” and reunion with our loved ones who have died in faith. Until it happens, we live our lives alert, aware, and with repentance.

But today, if you do not believe in Jesus Christ, then listen carefully, because I am about to tell you the the most frightening news you will ever hear.

God is coming on the Last Day to judge you.

There will be no place to hide, there will be no escape from judgment, no excuses will be listened to, and there will be no question about your guilt.

God is coming on the Last Day to judge you.

Don't be caught unprepared! Today repent of your sins, and believe in Jesus while there is still time! Jesus is the One who faced judgment for you on the cross so that your sins are forgiven! The way to be prepared for the Last Day is to repent and believe in Jesus as your Savior! His death and resurrection “saves” you from Judgement Day; He turns Judgment Day into a day of salvation and great joy!

BOOK OF REVELATION

We might not know when the **Parousia** will happen, but the Lord has taught us how to live in the End Times. He has done that by giving us the **Book of Revelation**. The last book in the Bible is about the Last Days of earth history. The “End times” began with Jesus’ **Ascension** and will end with Jesus’ **Parousia**. We are living our lives in the End Times.

This summer, our summer sermon series will be looking at the **Book of Revelation** and letting God teach us about the End Times and how we are to live our lives in these Last Days. The Lord doesn’t give us a lot of details about the Last Day, but He is crystal clear about one thing: **IT WILL HAPPEN!**

Therefore,

- you must keep watch!
- You must be ready!
- You must be prepared! . . .
- *because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.*

AMEN!