

Appearing at the Appearing – First Peter 1:6-7

I. Introduction:

- A. Last Sunday we looked at Peter's words: *"ready to be revealed in the last time."*
1. You *"are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation **READY** to be revealed in the last time."*
 2. The message had four points: **God's inheritance** is ready, **God's saints** are ready, **God himself** is ready, but the time is not right. **Time is not ready.**
 3. This afternoon we take Peter's thought *"the last time"* a step farther to *"the **APPEARING** of Jesus Christ."*
 4. At the appearing of the Lord, glory, honor and praise will be on full display.
 5. But that is not all. Many other things will appear at the appearing.
 6. Peter refers to a couple things in this chapter and another later in the epistle.
 7. But some additional thoughts develop when we consider the word *"appearing"* in the rest of God's Word.
- B. The Greek word translated *"appearing"* is *"apokalupsis"* (ap-ok-al'-oop-sis) or as we say, *"apocalypse."*
1. It is found 18 times in the New Testament ending with **Revelation 1:1** – *"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servant things which must shortly come to pass..."*
 2. The Book of the **Apocalypse**, or as we more often put it, the **Book of Revelation** was given to us by the Holy Spirit to show us things which are to shortly coming to pass.
 3. And that is precisely to what Peter refers, but from a slightly different direction.
 4. You *"are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be **REVEALED** in the last time.*
 - a. *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:*
 - b. *That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the **APPEARING** of Jesus Christ:*
 - c. *Whom having not seen, ye love..."*
- C. Let's consider what shall appear at the appearing of Christ Jesus.
1. Of course, it is all about the Lord, but aspects of the appearing relate to God's saints, and some are declared to be about unbelievers.

II. What will take place for God's SAINTS at the appearing of God the Son?

- A. Peter had been talking about the *"temptations"* – the **trials** by which those saints are **tested** in this world.
1. As we saw in our last lesson, they are **seasonal** and at times **heavy** and **grievous**.
 2. **BUT...** they are of more value than purified gold, because at the apocalypse of the Saviour they will be found unto praise, and honour and glory.
 3. Some of my commentaries suggest that this praise, honour and glory will belong to Christ.
 4. Of course they will belong to Christ, because He will be their administrator, and He will be glorified in their application.
 - a. But most of the experts say that those blessings will be given to the saints.
 - b. And that is the way I understand it – but I can see the other side as well.
 5. So the application is to both the glorified Lord Jesus and to the disciples of Jesus.
- B. I smiled, when, after I read one commentary I turned to another, who said, don't worry about the differences between those three words: *"praise, honour"* and *"glory,"* because they are synonyms amplifying themselves.
1. But the first man pointed out that *"praise"* involves **words**, while *"honour"* is **more practical**, but they pale before the word *"glory."*
 2. As today's young people might say, *"Whatever."*
 3. When Christ Jesus appears, those whom He has saved will receive appropriate *"praise, honour" & "glory."*
 4. Among the sweetest and most uplifting words in that day will be: *"Well done, thou good and faithful servant,"* coming from the lips of the Saviour.

- C. Later in this letter, Peter again refers to the subject of earthly tribulations, before returning to our subject.
1. In **I Peter 4:12** he says, *“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as thou some strange thing happened unto you:*
 2. *But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s suffering; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with **exceeding joy.**”*
 3. When Christ again appears within His creation, one of the effects will be **overwhelming joy** in hearts of His people.
- D. The Lord Jesus used this same word **“exceeding joy”** in His **Sermon on the Mount**, and in the same context.
1. *“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be **exceeding glad**; for great is your reward in heaven...”*
 2. Something I found interesting as I studied this word is that of its 21 uses, all but two come from the pens of Jesus’ first disciples, and one of the two others was a paraphrase of an Old Testament scripture.
 3. Paul never used this word, but Peter and John loved it, apparently because they heard it from Jesus’ lips.
 4. It speaks of **exuberant joy**, and one Greek expert said that it involves **jumping for joy**.
 - a. That reminded me of the joy David had when the Ark was being brought into Jerusalem.
 - b. David couldn’t contain himself because the symbol of God’s presence was coming home.
 - c. It was the apocalypse of the Ark, just as Peter is referring to the apocalypse of the Saviour.
- E. Why will we be filled with such joy? Peter tells us in **verse 9** of our opening text.
1. At the revelation of Jesus Christ will come the fulfilment of our faith, *“even the salvation of (our) souls.”*
 2. I don’t think that any of us can fully imagine what that day will be like.
 3. *“As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (I Corinthians 2:9).*
 4. We could probably take the happiest day of our earthly lives and multiply that joy a thousand times before we would actually reach the **exceeding** joy of that great day.
- F. I hope you are familiar with the life of the Patriarch Job.
1. Job was a servant of God who was tempted by Satan with trials most mortals would barely endure.
 2. He lost his **wealth** and then his **children**; he lost his **health** and then his **soul-mate**, his wife.
 - a. He had nothing left.
 3. Then while the effects of those testings continued, three former friends came to sit with him in his grief.
 4. Chapter after chapter they failed to comfort the poor man, actually sprinkling salt into his wounds, trying to get him to confess the sins which they believed must have caused all the problems.
 5. Job was nearing his lowest point, the nadir of his life, when he cried out in **chapter 19**:
 - a. *“Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.*
 - b. *Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?*
 - c. *Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!*
 - d. *That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!*
 - e. *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:*
 - f. *And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:*
 - g. *Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.”*
 6. Job may not have been able speak of the revelation of his Saviour with the joy to which Peter refers.
 7. But he was sure that his God was coming, and that he would see him.
 8. He was convinced that at the apocalypse of the Lord, everything that life had thrown at him would be corrected.
 9. With the exception of one word, he might have agreed with Paul, *“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (II Corinthians 4:17).*

- G. As we saw last week, at the revelation of Jesus Christ will come the **manifestation** of the **sons of God**.
1. Paul said in **Romans 8**: *"I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."*
 2. *For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.*
 3. *Even we ourselves (are) waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."*
- H. At the time of Christ's apocalypse, the blessings which the Lord has in store for His saints will, in a sense, reach their apex.
1. There will be the complete salvation of body, soul and spirit.
 2. There will be praise, honour and glory, along with exceeding joy.
 3. We will enter our Heavenly mansions in glorified bodies.
 4. And we will begin a new and improved relationship to our Saviour and His Father.
- I. Sadly, in stark contrast to these things will be...

III. What falls upon the **UNBELIEVERS** at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- A. As I said earlier, the **Book of Revelation** is all about this apocalypse of Christ.
1. The Apostle John is being led by the Spirit to reveal the revelation.
 2. In his introduction, **Revelation 1:7**, he says, *"Behold, (Christ) cometh with clouds; & every eye shall see him, & they also which pierced him: & all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."*
 3. What about the return of Christ that will bring all the kindreds of the earth to wail in uncontrollable grief?
 4. The rest of **Revelation** reveals the reason.
- B. I am convinced that John's reference to *"coming with clouds,"* does not mean *"coming IN the clouds."*
1. The Lord Jesus is going to return to this earth in the very near future with a **multitude**, or **cloud** of others – with an entourage, with a posse of witnesses.
 2. There will be perhaps millions of His angels, who are often described as *"hosts"* or *"armies."*
 3. And with them, I believe, will be all those saints which God has previously taken up from the earth and from their graves.
 4. In other words, the people to whom John refers, who see Christ descending on that great day of revelation from their perspective on earth, will be those who have rejected or refused to love, worship and serve Him.
 5. Those who have pierced Him, will include Jews and Gentiles, Israelites and Romans, whose ancestors were responsible for the crucifixion of the Saviour.
 6. When they actually and literally see Christ, perhaps even catching a glimpse of the wounds in his hands and feet, they will be struck with their folly and their hearts will fill with terror.
- C. They will be afraid because at point they will know what is coming next – judgment.
1. Paul speaks to the Jews who were involved in the crucifixion in **Romans 2**:
 - a. *"Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.*
 - b. *But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.*
 - c. *And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?*
 - d. *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*
 - e. *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds."*
 2. At the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ will be the revelation of **the righteous judgment of God**.

- D. And what does “**righteous judgment**” mean?
1. Picture a man who was raised in a Christian home and was taught honesty, Biblical morality and various other good and beneficial traits.
 2. But that man never surrendered to the authority of Christ.
 3. He may think that his inoffensive and productive life might somehow have earned points with God, but such things do not.
 4. **II Thessalonians** more clearly defines that “**righteous judgment**,” and he doesn’t fit into it.
- E. **II Thessalonians 1:7**: “It is a **righteous** thing with God to recompense (repay) tribulation to them that trouble you;
1. And to you who are troubled rest with us, **when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed** from heaven with his mighty angels (**the apocalypse**),
 2. **In flaming fire taking vengeance** on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:
 3. **Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;**
 4. **When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe... in that day.”**
- F. Paul tells his friends in Macedonia about the revelation, the apocalypse, of the Lord Jesus.
1. He says that the Lord is coming with his mighty angels, as part of that cloud of witnesses.
 2. And a part of the purpose of that coming will be to inflict the vengeance of God – with flaming fire.
 3. Upon whom will that vengeance fall? Those who **know not God** and that **obey not the gospel**.
 4. In other words, it doesn’t matter how moral or “**nice**” someone is.
 5. If they don’t know the Lord, because they have rejected the gospel, Christ’s fiery wrath will fall upon them.
 6. That person will be punished with **everlasting destruction** from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.
 7. At the time when Christ is glorified in the glory He gives to his saints, He will be further glorified in the righteous judgment of the unbeliever.
- G. Every saint of God should look forward with anxious anticipation for the glorious appearing of the Son of God.
1. It will be the time when they receive the end of their faith, even the completion of the salvation.
 2. But it will also be the cut off date for those who have refused to put their faith in Christ.
 3. For God’s people, that day will be one of exceeding joy.
 4. But for the unbeliever it will be a day of exceeding weeping, wailing and terror.
- H. If that revelation took place this afternoon, on which side of the equation would you be found?
1. Are you a child of God through repentance and faith in Christ Jesus?
 2. Or are carelessly living your life without love and trust in Lord?
 3. We all need the Saviour. We all need the Lord Jesus Christ.