

“The Second Coming of Christ”
Mark 13:24-27
(Preached at Trinity, September 10, 2014)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. After a period of intense teaching in the Temple Jesus turns to leave. As He was departing His disciples came to Him boasting about the beauty and greatness of the Temple structure. Jesus divulges to them that the entire system of Judaism was about to come crashing down. The Temple structure was going to be utterly destroyed. Every stone would be moved from its place.
2. Matthew gives us the fullest account of the disciples reaction to our Lord's words:
Matthew 24:3 NAU - "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"
3. The Temple was indeed destroyed 70 AD but it was not the second coming of Christ and the end of the age. Christ would not return until many hundreds of years later. We are still awaiting His return. This entire period is called the interadvental period.
 - A. This period is characterized by wars and famines and natural disasters.
 - B. This period is also characterized by the church pressing on through persecution.
 - a. The church has from the beginning been the persecuted church, the church militant, and the church triumphant.
 - b. On one hand the church will march forth victoriously. The gates of hell will not prevail against. Like leaven it will continue to increase dramatically. Like a mustard seed it will start small but become a great tree.
 - c. On the other hand, during the interadvental period the victorious church will be the suffering church existing in a world in rebellion against God.
4. Jesus tells us in this passage that after the church has endured and persevered through the persecution of this evil world He will return with power.
Mark 13:24 NAS - "But in those days, after that tribulation"
5. Tonight I want to set before you the blessed hope, the glorious return of Christ. It is the blessed promise.
Acts 1:11 NAS - "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

I. The Second Coming of Christ

- A. First of all, we don't find anything here of two returns of Christ – one for the church—the rapture at the beginning of the tribulation, and the other at the end of the tribulation.
1. We must assume that the church is still present and functioning until Christ returns. In fact **Verses 28-37** clearly teach the importance of being ready. These verses are not teaching of a special rapture seven years before the return of Christ.
 - a. In **Verse 24** we find that Jesus returns immediately after the tribulation
 In one sense it refers to the tribulation of the Jews in 70 AD. But more specifically it speaks of the tribulation experienced by the church for the entire interadvental period – See **Verses 10-13** Jesus doesn't come before the tribulation but after. Matthew adds the important word: “immediately”
Matthew 24:29 NAU - "But immediately after the tribulation of those days"
 - b. Notice the gathering of the elect occurs at the end of the tribulation
Mark 13:27 NAU - "And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven."
 - c. In **2 Peter 3** we find history ending with the coming of Christ
2 Peter 3:10 NAS - "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up."
 2. Jesus is describing a single return and with that return brings the end of the age. Remember the disciples' question in Matthew's Gospel
Matthew 24:3 NAU - "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"
- B. It will be universal – It will be a public display of His glory.
Mark 13:26 NAU - "Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory."
1. It will come when the world has reached the peak of corruption
 2. Paul declared in **2 Thes 2**
2 Thessalonians 2:3 NAS - "Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,"
2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 NAS - "with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, ¹² in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness."
 3. Matthew describes it in terms of great decay
Matt 24:27-28 NAS - "For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. ²⁸ "Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather."

- a. It will be when the world has reached its peak of corruption
 - b. When the world has degenerated until it resembles rotting flesh
Jesus will return – when the cup of iniquity is full
4. Note on the Millennial positions – This scenario seems out of character for both post millennialism and pre millennialism
- a. Post mil - since the return of Christ is linked to a time of great apostasy. Post mil sees Christ returning to a world that has been Christianized.
 - b. Pre-mil - because none of these passages point to history continuing after our Lord returns.

II. The return of Christ will be accompanied by cataclysmic events – **Verses 24-25**

- A. These verses appear in the familiar apocalyptic form
Mark 13:24-25 NAS - "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken."
- 1. These apocalyptic words are often used to describe God's judgment. As we've seen many times with this genre, a strictly literal interpretation must be avoided. Rather, it should be understood as a great upheaval – the kingdoms of this world will come crashing down
 - 2. God's judgment upon Babylon is described in this manner. Isaiah describes a judgment that transcends Babylon.
Isaiah 13:9-13 NAU - "Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it. ¹⁰ For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not flash forth their light; The sun will be dark when it rises And the moon will not shed its light. ¹¹ Thus I will punish the world for its evil And the wicked for their iniquity; I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud And abase the haughtiness of the ruthless. ¹² I will make mortal man scarcer than pure gold And mankind than the gold of Ophir. ¹³ Therefore I will make the heavens tremble, And the earth will be shaken from its place At the fury of the LORD of hosts In the day of His burning anger."
 - a. E. J. Young writes – "One Babylon after another will be destroyed until the last sinner is removed from the earth."
 - b. The highly symbolic language depicts the very elements of creation reacting to the terrible day of judgment—the sun, moon, and stars refuse to shine.
- B. For multitudes of God-hating rebellious sinners it will be a fearful time
- 1. Luke describes absolute terror
Luke 21:25-26 – "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."

2. The Book of Revelation describes multitudes seeking to hide with no place to run
Revelation 6:15-17 NAS - "And the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; ¹⁶ and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come; and who is able to stand?"
3. It will be a day of great joy and great mourning
- a. It is the greatest day for believers
 It is our blessed hope
2 Timothy 4:8 NAS - " in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."
 - b. For the unbeliever it will be a terrible day of mourning
Matthew 24:30 NAS - " and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory."
Revelation 1:7 NAS - "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him."
 - c. They will mourn because the Judge of all the earth has come. They will mourn because all of their loves perish. This is depicted in the Book of Revelation as the people of the earth mourn fallen Babylon, this great world system.
Revelation 18:17-19 NAU - " for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste! And every shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea, stood at a distance, ¹⁸ and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What *city* is like the great city?' ¹⁹ "And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste!'"

III. This great Day will come at a time most unexpected

A. The ultimate sign will be the appearing of Christ

Matthew 24:29-30 NAS - "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken,³⁰ and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky"

1. The ultimate sign preceding the destruction of Jerusalem was when they looked up and saw the approach of the Roman army
Luke 21:20 – "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."
Just as Jerusalem would not ultimately know the time of the end until they saw the Roman army approaching we will not know the ultimate time of the coming of Christ until we look up and see Him
2. He will come forth in all His glory accompanied by His army of mighty angels – He will give forth an ear piercing shout and the voice of the Archangel will also heard and the sound of the trumpet shall go forth. It will be a loud and dreadful sight to the wicked
3. He will send forth His angels to gather together the elect
Mark 13:27 NAU - "And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven."

Conclusion:

1. For the Christian we continue in a state of watchfulness
Hebrews 3:12-14 NAS - " Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end;"
2. The return of Christ stands before us as our blessed hope. It encourages us as we go through the trials of this age.
 - a. Before our Lord left He spoke these words of encouragement:
John 14:1-3 NAU - "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ² "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also."
 - b. Paul spoke of the return of Christ as the great source of our comfort.
1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 NAU - "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words."
3. For the unbeliever, flee to Christ and repent of your sin.
Today is the only time you have. There is no guarantee of tomorrow.