Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Why Jesus Must Return to Earth, Part 3
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: 1322

Tonight we come to the third in our series of messages on why Jesus must return to earth. The Bible which, of course, is the standard of the Christian faith, and has been since its completion two thousand years ago, nearly, the Bible records for us in the Old Testament, of course, was completed some 400 years at least before that. But the Bible itself relates to us the beginning and the end of man's day.

The Bible records God's account of the creation of the earth and the creation of man. The Bible records why God made man in the very beginning. The Bible also records at the very end of it in the book of Revelation how it's all going to conclude.

And so you have God's record of the beginning and God's record of the end in the Bible. And in between you have the history of man. From the beginning to the person of Jesus Christ, and a little bit after. And within that history our principles for living, principles for living with our fellow men. Principles for living in this world. Principles for living with God and principles for living in the world to come.

We are studying particularly the end. How everything is going to wrap up. God is very clear about how it all began and God is also very clear about how it's going to end. And the Bible portrays vividly, repeatedly the final scenes of man's day on the earth. Just as there was a beginning, there will be an end. And the Hebrew prophets seem to indicate to us some very clear pictures and some very clear prophecies of what the end is going to feature. So that if we look carefully at what's happening in the world at any given moment, we can pretty well ascertain what time it is on God's clock.

There are some very specific things that the prophets have said in regard to the end times and I want to just share two of them to begin tonight. In Daniel Chapter 12, verse 4, the Holy Spirit, who is the author of all of this Scripture speaking to Daniel says this. "But thou Oh Daniel shut up the words and seal the book even to the time of the end."

Now you have a very direct statement there, "the time of the end," referring to the fact that man's day is coming to an end. "Seal up the words, close the book until the time of the end." Then he goes on to describe a couple of the features of the time of the end. "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased." One of the great signs of the end is going to be an increase in knowledge. And just along that line, I want to share with you some things that I have picked up of great interest that

seem to indicate that knowledge has increased sufficiently to give us great cause to feel that this might be closely akin to the time of the end.

For example, of all the scientists who have ever lived in the history of man, 90% of them are alive in 1973. 365,000 hardback titles are published every year, 1,000 per day and that doesn't include paperbacks or magazines. Science and technology produces 60 million pages of information a year. Experts, if there is such a thing, when 1,000 new books come out every day, nobody could be an expert. But some experts say that all of man's knowledge is doubling in less than five years.

Bob Phillips who is a good friend up in Hume Lake has written a book called When The Earth Quakes. And in that book he has some most interesting things. One of them is a little chart which I reproduced for you. You'll notice that the little yellow square represents all of man's knowledge from Adam to 1845. And it's one inch on a relative basis. From 1845 to 1945, man's knowledge on a relative basis is the equivalent of three inches. From 1945 to 1970, it would be the height of the Washington Monument, 555 feet.

That is the tremendous increase in the knowledge of man. Daniel said, at the time of the end there will be a knowledge increase. Some of the things that have recently been presented to us as scientific features of tomorrow and today are these, the ability to select the sex of the newborn, creation of life in a test tube, growth of fetuses in artificial wombs, genetic control and micro-surgery by radiation and laser beams, development of ova and sperm banks, control of the aging process with the life expectancy of 100 years, elimination of two decay by welding enamel on teeth with laser beams, there goes Crest. Spot welding of the retina of the eye and extended use of the bloodless knife in surgery. The bloodless knife is a beam which cuts the skin and cauterizes the blood vessel while it cuts.

The extended use of artificial organs such as plastic corneas for the eye, metallic bones, Dacron arteries, artificial hearts, computerized electronic muscles, development of synthetic foods, development of ocean farming and possibly undersea cities, general immunization of the world against common diseases, experiments in human hibernation. And here's one we all long to see, development of effective overweight control programs, development of a worldwide money and credit system. Development of fantastic cities of the future. Herman Kahn, for example, in the book The Year 2000 suggests there will be cities of 50 to 100 million people.

He calls them megalopolises. And he humorously names them from Boston to Washington as BosWash, from San Francisco to San Diego is SanSan and from Chicago to Pittsburgh is ChicaPitts. Household robots in operation by 1984. Not to be confused with your wife, right? Wideband radio communications with hundreds of channels to choose from, automated libraries and central encyclopedias that will make possible the procurement of almost any information by using the telephone. Doctors and lawyers will be able to call data clearing houses for advice on any medical or

legal problem they may encounter.

Improved weather forecasting and control of weather fronts. Sophisticated teaching machines which allow children to attend school in their own homes. A television command center with which the President of the United States can view any trouble spot in the world. Increasing use of nuclear reactions to supply electrical power. Electrical power from solar converters and satellites. Development of large laser tunneling machines that will replace present tunneling methods. At MIT it was found that unfocused 1.1 kilowatt gas laser beam could crumble granite and marble in less than 30 seconds.

The use of automatic shovels or nuclear bulldozers. Excavation similar to the Panama or Suez Canal could be easily dug by using a chain of these nuclear powered vehicles. And so it goes. Absolutely unbelievable things happening scientifically. Daniel said one of the signs of the end, the increase of knowledge.

Another interesting sign of the end that Jesus Himself mentioned is Matthew 24:7. He said this, and we're going to study this chapter in detail so we'll just pull one thought out. "For nation shall rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom," believe it there's going to be war right up until the end, "and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in various places." One of the signs of the end is earthquakes and we know that there are more earthquakes now as far as the people who are experts know than there have ever been.

But look at the word famine. Jesus said at the end there's going to be famine. Paul Ehrlich and The Population Bomb said this, "The battle to feed all of humanity is over. In the 1970's and 1980's, hundreds of millions of people will starve to death in spite of any crash programs. There are only two kinds of solutions to the population problem. One is a birth rate solution in which find ways to lower the birth rate. The other is a death rate solution in which ways to raise the death rate, war, famine, and pestilence find us." And that's exactly what's going to find us according to Scripture.

Food production is restricted by pollution and so it goes. And so we're living in a day in a world that is facing the reality of extinction. The Bible clearly predicts when it's going to happen in terms of the things that will be going on, though it never predicts the year. Now we believe we who are Christians and committed to the truth of the Scriptures believe that it all ends in the return of Jesus Christ to the earth. The reason we believe that is because the Bible says that. And the reason we believe the Bible is true is because every time the Bible has ever said anything, it has been right.

And since it has a perfect track record, we also believe that Jesus is coming because that's what the Bible also claims. Literally, physically Jesus will return to the earth. This is not a false hope, this not a vague dream. This is a settled fact based on absolute evidence in the Scripture as verified by the Bible's accuracy in history. Jesus must return. Now we started two weeks ago to give you nine

reasons that Jesus must return. We've given six and we'll conclude tonight.

Nine reasons that Jesus must return. The first three reasons involve the person of God. Because of who God is a Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Jesus must return. The three were these. One, the promise of God demands His return. In the Old Testament, God promised a Messiah and God promised that when Messiah came He would do certain things. We told you that there are no less than 333 prophecies about Messiah.

When He came the first time, He only fulfilled 109 of them, approximately. Which means there are yet 224 prophecies that must be fulfilled by Messiah. Now if God is true and does not lie, then He must come back to fulfill those promises. And so we believe that Messiah will return because the character of God is at stake. God is not a liar. The New Testament says God who cannot lie. And so we believe that if God says Messiah will do these things, He'll do them. If He doesn't do them the first time, He must return to do them. That's exactly what God said He would do.

The second reason that we believe Jesus is going to return to earth is because the statements of Jesus Himself demand it. When Jesus was on the earth He promised that He would go away and return, John 14. In Matthew 24 and 25, Jesus Himself described His return. In Luke Chapter 9, Jesus Christ vividly illustrated His return in the transfiguration which we studied last time.

And then in Revelation we find that at least six times He shouts from the clouds of heaven and says, "Behold I," what, "I come quickly." And so the credibility of Jesus is at stake. If Jesus doesn't return to earth He's a liar.

The third reason dealing with the person of God is the guarantee of the Holy Spirit demands it. All throughout the New Testament, the Holy Spirit through the various writers claims that Jesus is going to return. The apostle Paul, James, John, Peter, Jude, all of them writing in the Epistles of the New Testament make the claim for the appearing of Jesus Christ on the earth. That's the Holy Spirit's testimony, for all the New Testament writers were writing from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Remember what Jesus said on the night before His crucifixion. He said, "the Holy Spirit is going to come and He is going to teach you all things and He is going to bring all things to your remembrance." That was a promise primarily to the writers of the New Testament.

And so the Holy Spirit promised the return of Jesus. God said, Jesus said it, the Holy Spirit said it. The credibility of the Trinity is at stake if Jesus doesn't return, then God is a liar, the Bible is a waste, Christianity is a joke and we are doomed and damned forever because we put our hope in a false issue.

The second area that demands a return of Jesus is not only God's person, but God's program. Clearly in the Bible God has a specific program in mind. And there are three features to God's program that demand the return of Jesus. Feature number one, the program for the church demands it. Now God has a specific program for the church. He is going to take out a body of people from Jews and Gentiles and then He's going to take them to Himself.

Look at 1 Thessalonians for just a brief moment and I know you're familiar with the passage, but let me remind you of it, because its such a glorious thing. Verse 13, 1 Thessalonians, Chapter 4, now Paul is writing to these who are in the church, Christians, believers. This is what he says. "I would not have you to be ignorant brethren." That's a common phrase in the New Testament when something of great importance is going to be said. "Don't ignorant concerning them who are asleep." They were worried about some people who had died who were Christians. What would happen to them in the rapture. If Jesus came to get the church and they were dead, what happens to them?

Verse 14, "If we believe Jesus died and rose again even so those who have died in Jesus will God bring with Him." The dead aren't going to miss anything. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord," in other words, I'm not just shooting of my mouth this is right from God Himself, "that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord won't proceed those who have died. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, the voice of the archangel, the trump of the God, the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we who are alive and remain shall be caught together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Now there is a picture of the rapture, the calling out of the church. Christ is going to come gather His church. Now when an individual dies, his spirit goes to be with the Lord, but his body has not been resurrected. But Jesus is coming and the bodies of those who've already died, obviously new bodies, because you know, decomposition has obviously set in. But new bodies are going to come out of the graves and then we who are still alive are going to be caught up together to meet them in the air and we're going to meet the Lord.

Now, that's not the coming of Christ to earth. It doesn't say His feet touch the Mount of Olives. This is the meeting in the air, it's the rapture. And He takes His church out. That is the beginning of His second coming. That's the first phase of His return. And so you see He must return for His church. He has promised to do it. Paul says, "this we say unto you by the word of," whom, "of the Lord." This is His promise to His church. He's coming to gather them out.

Jesus must return the church demands it. His plan, His program for the church. Remember we saw last week that the church is like a virgin waiting for the husband to come and consummate the wedding. And so He must return for His bride.

And then fifthly in our list of nine, and secondly under God's program, the program for the nations demands it. You see God has promised to judge the ungodly. God has promised to judge ungodly nations. Nations that reject Him are judged. He did it in the Old Testament, He's going to continue to do it. And last week we looked at Joel Chapter 3 and we saw that God had prophesied very clearly that He was going to judge the nations.

Now I want to just call to your attention a couple of thoughts from Joel 3 so that you understand this most, most important point. Joel a little prophecy, the beginning of the minor prophets, 3. Just listen if you're not there, 3:1. "Behold in those days and in that time when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations."

Now here God says in the end time, I'm going to gather the nations together. Then over in verse 14, He says, "multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision." In verse 16, "the Lord shall roar out of Zion." Now what happens here is God is gathering nations together for judgment. And the Lord is going to come and fiery judgment roaring He is pictured.

Now God's program for the nations then is a program of judgment. They're going to be gathered in the valley of Jehoshaphat. You say well, how will they get them all there? They'll already be there. You say why will they be there? Because they came there to fight against God and against His Son and against Israel. They came there for the battle of Armageddon. All the nations are going to be converging. The king of the south, the king of the north, the west, the east all massing in Israel. They come together to fight God and they wake up and realize they're at the judgment bar of God about to be destroyed.

Satan does the gathering, God does the harvesting. And so all the nations are gathered there and Jesus then says in book of Revelation, returns to earth, they turn to fight Him in the sky and He judges them immediately. The plan for the nations beloved demands that Jesus return. Now Jesus is the judge, isn't He?

Back in Psalm 2, listen to this, "why do the nations rage and the people imagine a vain thing? Listen, the kings of the earth set themselves. And the rulers take council together against the Lord and against His anointed." Who is the anointed? Messiah. The world is going to get itself against Him. And verse 4 is a tragic verse. "He that sits in the heaven shall laugh. The Lord shall have them in derision." It's a joke to think that the world is going to get together and fight God and God's Son.

And the Father says of the Son, verse 6, "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." You're not going to defeat, He's going to come and set up His kingdom. And verse 8, He says to the Son, "Ask of me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance." Verse 9, "You'll break them with a rod of iron, you'll dash them in pieces like potter's vessel."

You see the prophecy was that there were going to be nations gathered for judgment and that the Father would commit to the Son the judgment. That He would give the Son the rod of iron to rule. In John Chapter 5, Jesus announced to the world that He had been given that right. John 5:22 says this, "For the Father judges no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Now listen, if God says I'm going to gather the nations and judge them and God says my Son will be the judge, then His son must return to earth. Do you understand?

In order for it to happen and it happens. Matthew 25 describes it. "The Son of man comes in His glory," verse 31, "all the holy angels with Him, He'll sit on the throne of His glory and before Him shall be gathered all the nations." Matthew 25:32, this is Jesus Himself saying that they're going to be there gathered and He's going to be there judging.

"And He shall separate them one from the other as a shepherd divides his sheep from goats. Some go into the kingdom, some go into everlasting punishment." The Son is the judge. He is going to sit on the throne of judgment. And so Jesus you see must return to earth not only to take His church, but He must return to earth to judge the nations. That's in the prophecy of the Old Testament and the New Testament. The program for the church demands His return. The program for the nations.

Thirdly, in this second and sixthly overall, the program for Israel demands that He return. We read last week in Romans 11:25-26 that when the fullness of the Gentiles is done, then all Israel is going to be saved. God's going to take out His church. The fullness of the Gentiles just means the church. When the Gentile church is full and complete the church goes out and then God begins to deal with Israel. Their blindness is lifted, do you remember? They look on Him whom they have pierced. And Romans 11:26 says, "So all Israel shall be saved."

Salvation for Israel. You say well He wouldn't have to come back just for that, but there's an added thing. Psalm 72, "once Israel is saved," listen to this, this is very important, "once Israel is saved, then they have the right to receive," what, "the kingdom promised to them." The reason they didn't get the kingdom the first time Messiah came was because they wouldn't accept salvation.

Once Israel is saved then Messiah comes to set up His kingdom. Look at Psalm 72, tremendous Psalm. If you want to read a Psalm that'll give you the pattern for government as it ought to be, this is it. Here's how Christ is going to rule in the kingdom. "Give the king they judgments Oh God, and thy righteousness under the king's Son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness and thy poor with justice."

A system of justice that's always right. Wouldn't the world like that? The world's going to get that in the kingdom. "The mountains shall bring peace to the people and the little hills by righteousness." His righteousness is going to bring world peace in the kingdom. And look at the poverty program in

verse 4. "He shall judge the poor of the people. He shall save the children of the needy, shall break in pieces the oppressor." Everything's going to be equalized, tremendous poverty program.

Verse7, "In his days shall the righteous flourish, abundance of peace as long as the moon endures." A peace program that does more than just talk about it. Verse 11, "Ye all kings shall fall down before Him. All nations shall serve Him." Now people if He's going to be worshipped by all nations, He's going to have to be here. He's going to be reigning on the throne of His glory. He's going to bring about a world situation where poverty is dealt with and justice is dealt with. Peace becomes the reigning theme and the nations bow down to Him.

Now watch verse 19, "And blessed be His glorious name forever," now watch, "and let the whole earth be filled with His glory." Where is the glory going to be during the kingdom? Where? On the whole earth. He must come back, that's the promise. That the earth is going to be filled with His glory. This earth, which God originally created to manifest His glory and place the kind of glory right in the garden didn't He? And then the glory departed when man began to sin. The glory will be back and it will fill the whole earth.

Believe me, Jesus must return because the kingdom is going to be on earth. He is going to reign on the throne of David. His glory is going to fill the earth and the nations of the earth are going to bow to Him. In fact, the man says return to the earth. And there are many, many prophecies. And when we get into the study of the kingdom, we'll get into this in detail.

But listen to Isaiah 2, and the word of the...the word that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, A-m-o-z, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Listen, "It shall come to pass in the last days, Messiah's time, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established." Where? In heaven? No, "in the top of the mountains shall be exalted above the hills and all nations shall flow into it and many people shall go and say come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to the house of the God of Jacob. And He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His path."

Now listen, "For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Did you get that? Where is Christ going to be then during the kingdom? In Jerusalem. The program for Israel demands that Jesus return to earth. If you read Isaiah Chapter 11 you'll find in Isaiah Chapter 11, you don't have to turn to it, just read it on your own some time, you'll find that there are earthly features to the kingdom that demand his return to earth literally.

In Isaiah 59, verse 20, listen to this, and the Redeemer shall come to Zion and under those who turn from transgression and Jacob saith the Lord." Where's He going to come again? To Zion, that's a mountain in Israel. "As for me, this is my covenant with them saith the Lord. My spirit that is upon thee, my words which I put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds seed saith the Lord from henceforth and forever."

The Lord is going to come and grant His spirit on earth. Isaiah 61, verse 1 and verse 2, talks about Christ coming to earth. And if you look carefully, interesting, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to preach the good tidings to the meek to bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to those who are bound."

Now Jesus said that that was fulfilled in Him didn't He? He said it right in Nazareth. It was fulfilled on earth. Second part of the prophecy 2, "To proclaim the acceptable year of our Lord, He also claimed was fulfilled the first time He came," then this, "and the day of the vengeance of our God."

Now if Jesus earthly fulfilled all the first, believe me the second He'll fulfill earthly as well. And so the kingdom must come to the earth.

Zechariah 14:9 says this, listen, "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth." How people can come up ah-millennialismthat there's no earthly kingdom, I'll never understand. Jeremiah 23:5, "Behold the days come saith the Lord that I'll raise unto David a righteous branch, a king shall reign and prosper, shall execute justice and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, Israel shall dwell safely." That's in the earth again. It's in the earth. Jesus went away, two angels said "This same Jesus who is taken up from you shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go." He went from earth to heaven, He'll come from heaven to earth. Just as literally as He left, that's the promise of Acts 1, verse 11.

What am I saying? I'm saying the program of God for the church, for the nations, for Israel demands a literal return. Finally, three last things and they're very brief. Not only God's person and God's program, but God's priorities demand that Jesus return to earth.

God has three priorities that fit in here. Number one the humiliation of Christ demands that He return. The humiliation of Christ demands that He return. You see Jesus must return to vindicate Himself. I mean, in my mind, and I'm sure in yours, it is absolutely inconceivable...I say that advisedly, it is inconceivable that the last view that men would ever have of Jesus Christ is the view of a bleeding, dying, crucified criminal covered with blood and spit and flies hanging naked in a Jerusalem sky. That's inconceivable that that's the last view that the world will ever have of Jesus.

Don't you believe it, it is not the last view. You say well what about after His resurrection? After His resurrection beloved no unbeliever saw Him. The Bible's very clear about that. 1 Corinthians Chapter 15 gives you a list of the people that saw Jesus and there's not an unbeliever the in the group. It tells us in 1 Corinthians 5, "He was seen of Cephas of the twelve of 500 brethren. After that of James, then of all the apostles, last of all seen by me, Paul."

That's the list. And not an unbeliever in the bunch. There's no evidence to realize to believe that Jesus was ever seen after His resurrection by any unbeliever. In fact, isn't it the early church preachers who continue to say we were the eyewitnesses of His resurrection? The last Jesus the world has ever seen, people, is the Jesus dying and hanging on the cross. That's the last one the world ever saw.

They never saw His glory, and I'll tell you something they will see it. He will return because His humiliation demands it. He must return in exaltation. The writer of Hebrews is clear. Listen to this, verse 20...well, let's look at verse 24...well, verse 26. "But now once in the end of the ages He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Christ came once to die, right? Watch verse 28, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. And unto them that look for Him, shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Is He coming back? Yes, only next time it's without sin. What does that mean? No more sin bearing, no more humiliation. The next time believe me He comes in exaltation. You know, the Old Testament saw that, Psalm 22, Psalm 22, verse 16. Listen here's the description of the first time He came. "Dogs have compassed me, they pierced my hands and feet, I count all my bones. They look and stare at me, they part my garments among them, cast lots for my vesture." When did that occur? On the cross.

Psalm doesn't end there. Beautiful climax, verse 27, "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord. And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee for the kingdom is the Lord's, He is the governor among the nations." Listen, He's coming back in glory, isn't he? Look at Matthew 26 and you can see this graphically presented by Jesus Himself.

Matthew 26:57, And Jesus has just been captured, arrested, and it says in verse 57, that "And they that had laid a hold on Jesus lead Him away to Caiaphas the high priest where the scribes and elders were assembled. Remember what happened don't you? They mocked Him, played games with Him, plucked His beard, humiliated Him, executed Him. Is that all? I mean, is that end of Jesus in the eyes of the world? Is that how it all ends? Is that what the world's going to see the last Jesus they see?

Look at verse 63, "Jesus held His peace. And the high priest answered and said unto Him, I adjure you by the living God that you tell us whether you be the Christ, the Son of God. I command you to speak in the name of God." Jesus said unto him, "you said it." "Nevertheless, I say unto you," you ready for this one, "hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven."

Is He going to be invisible when He comes? No, you shall see. Oh the high priest flipped out. He tore his clothes. "He hath spoken blasphemy." Verse 67, they spit in His face, buffeted him,

smashed Him with the palms of their hands saying prophecy unto us Christ who smote you." Is that the last the world is to see of Jesus?

Don't you believe it. You shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of glory. The last view the world hasn't yet seen, He'll be back. He'll be back. You say well are people going to see Him? Oh are they going to see Him. Revelation 1:7, listen to this, "Behold he cometh with clouds," with clouds, not necessarily in them, He'll shine through any cloud believe me, "He cometh with clouds and every eye shall," what, "see Him." You say oh yeah that's believers. Oh? And everyone who pierced Him and all the kindreds of the earth shall wale because of Him."

Oh they're going to see Him. Beloved Jesus must return to this earth because His humiliation demands it. Do you see what I'm saying? It is not right. It is inconceivable that the last view of Jesus the world would have would be of a defeated, dying, bleeding, criminal. He'll be back.

In Luke 21:25, Jesus said, "And there shall signs in the sun and the moon." You know there's going to be a forewarning. You realize that? God turns out every light in heaven. The stars fall like untimely fig trees. The heaven is rolled up like a scroll, God turns out ever light in the universe and then here comes Christ blazing in the sky. You couldn't miss it.

And there should be signs in the sun and the moon and the stars and the earth, the stress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves are going to roar, men's hearts are going to fail them for fear. There are going to be heart attacks all over the world. What's going to happen? "For looking after those things which are coming on the earth for the powers of the heaven shall be shaken." Now watch, "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the cloud of power and great glory."

They're going to see it. The humiliation of Christ demands that He return. He returns that He might receive the glory that is due Him. The eighth point in the second one under the last. The exaltation of Satan demands that He return.

This is another priority. You know, the word of God talks about Satan, it talks about the devil. He's the most powerful creature God ever created. He has access to the heaven of heavens. He appears night and day before God accusing us. He rules of kingdom of spirits we call demons. He is called in Ezekiel 28 the anointed Cherub and the Bible seems to indicate that the cherubim were the highest ranking angels. He was a super angel. He was the angel of all angels.

When our Lord was being tempted by Satan up on the mountain, do you know what Satan did to...it says in Luke 4, verse 5, I think it is, it said that "Satan showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time." That's power. Satan actually could reveal to Christ the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. He's an amazing being. Not only did He reveal them to the Christ, but He then said I'll give them to you, which means He has them. Do you know that Satan runs the world?

You ought to know it. Three times he's called the prince of this world. In 2 Corinthians 4:4, he's call the god of this age. In 1 John 5:19, John says, "the whole world lies in the arms of the evil one." Satan runs the world. And for thousands of years since the fall he has the run of the world. He's had free reign to run all over the earth. Exalting himself and receiving worship.

You want to know something, he's a usurper, he has no right to rule. Who is the king of this earth? The Lord Jesus Christ. But who's going to overthrow Satan? Satan's running around doing whatever he wants. Who's going to take back the earth? We can't legislate it back. No man that I ever met could do it. No committee. Who's going to get it back? That was the dilemma of Revelation 5. Look at it.

In fact, it was such a dilemma John started crying in his vision. Revelation 5 he says, "I saw on the right hand of Him that sat on throne," that's God, John, his vision sees a throne of God and God's got a scroll in His hand. And it was written all over the place. The scroll was written front and back and everywhere, which meant it had a lot to say.

Roman law required that any kind of a will, this was a will, this was a title deed to the earth God had in His hand, any title deed or any will that was to be transferred had to be sealed seven times according to Roman law. So God had a seven sealed scroll, the title deed to the earth.

And a strong angel proclaimed with a loud voice, who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals, which means who is going to take back the earth from Satan and give it back to the one it belongs to. Who can do it?

And verse 3, "And no man in heaven or in earth, neither under the earth was able to open the scroll and look on it." Nobody came. The angel had made an announcement. "Who's going to take back the earth from Satan?" Nobody could do it. And John started crying, verse 4, "And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and read the book to look on it. Who's going to take it back?" I love this.

"And one of the elders said unto me, stop crying John, weep not. The lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David hath prevailed to open the scroll and loose it seven seals. And I beheld and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures," four angels, "in the midst of the elders stood a lamb as though it had been slain having seven horns," horns a symbol of power, seven the symbol of perfection, perfect power, "and seven eyes," which are the seven spirits of God of the seven fold Holy Spirit, "sent forth into all the earth and He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him that sat on the throne." Who is the lamb? Jesus Christ. Who's the only one that can take back the earth? Jesus Christ. Oh did they get happy. They started singing like crazy, playing harps and everything in verse 8.

Verse 9 they sang a new song "thou art worthy to take the scroll and open its seals," and oh they had a great time before the chapter ends, all of heaven is just having a halleluiah chorus.

That's where the halleluiah chorus, part of the great work of music came from that chapter. Well, you see what happen, there's only one in all the universe who can take the earth back, right? Now listen to me people, that's just one more reason that Jesus has to return to the earth. Why? Because He's the only one that can take possession of it and arrest it from the hands of Satan. Do you see?

And incidentally beginning in Chapter 6, Christ starts to take it back. And from Chapter 6 right through the end of the book of Revelation is the story of Jesus taking back the earth. And you know how He breaks the seal, the first, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh seal and out of the seventh seal gushed the trumpets and a vials and all the judgments and so forth. That's Jesus Christ taking back the earth.

Now Christ has already showed His power to Satan according to Hebrews Chapter 2 Satan only had one weapon and that was death and Christ took that away from him. Hebrews 2:14 says that "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death," that is the devil. And when Jesus died on the cross he ripped death out of Satan's hand, right? Because he came to the grave and he said "because I live," what, "ye shall live also." And so Christ has already taken the only weapon Satan has and He's the only one that could take the earth back and so He must come.

He must come to deal with the devil. In Revelation Chapter 20 shows you what happens when He does it. "I saw an angel come down from heaven having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand." Here comes an angel out of heaven, and John says he's got a key and big chain.

"And he laid whole on the dragon that old serpent who is the devil and Satan and bound him a thousand years." Wrapped him up and binds him and casts him into the bottomless pit and shut him up and set a seal on him. And keeps him there almost the whole thousand years. And remember he's let loose a little bit at the end. He deceives the nations of the earth, but that doesn't last long. Verse 10, "And the devil that deceive them was cast in the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever. And I saw a great white throne and Him that sat on it from whose face the earth and the heaven flood away and there was found no more place for them."

And who was on the throne? Christ. Satan is banished to hell forever. Only Jesus Christ can defeat Satan ultimately. He must return to earth. Listen to this word from beloved John. Listen to it. Here's what he said. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested." What purpose John? "That He might destroy the works," what, "of the devil," 1 John 3:8.

Jesus must return people, because He's going to take back the earth from the usurper. That's a priority on God's calendar. And so two priorities demand Jesus' return, His humiliation and Satan's exaltation. Both have to be reversed.

Lastly, on one other priority necessitates the return of Jesus. Are you ready for this one? The hope of the saints demands it. Did you know that God's not in the business of giving false hope? You are beloved of the Father, did you know that?

You...He loves you just the same as He loves Jesus. That's right, because He loves you in Christ. And you are the most pampered, select object of His care. You are the center of His heart, you are the joy of His existence. And He knows you're expecting Jesus, right? And He's not in the business of giving false hope.

The old I come quickly six times and finally John says "even so come Lord Jesus." You can't imagine God saying, nope I changed my mind. God doesn't do that. He knows what we're waiting for doesn't He? He knows the longing of my heart. He knows that I'm loving the appearing of Jesus Christ. " The trial of your faith," said Peter "being much more precious than the gold that perishes. Though it be tried with fire, might be found under praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ whom having not seen you love." I'm waiting for the fulfillment of my love.

I don't think God's going to disappoint me. James, same hope that Peter had. Every good gift, every perfect gift that's from above comes down from the Father of Lights with whom there's no variableness neither shadow of turning if God said, He'll do it. I like what Paul said to the Philippians 1:6, "being confident of this very thing that He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of," what, "Jesus Christ." The day that He returns.

And then perhaps mostly wonderfully 2 Thessalonians 1:5, listen, "this is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God." You want to know God is righteous? Here's a token to prove His righteous. Ready? "And to prove that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you." In other words, God's going to prove He's righteous by giving trouble to those who've troubled you. But watch, "And to you who are troubled, rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels."

Paul said to the Thessalonians you wanted some proof that God is righteous. One He'll punish those who've troubled you. Two, Jesus will come and take you out of the trouble. The righteousness of God is at stake. God gave us a hope and believe me God is in the business of fulfilling that hope.

And so we look for the day when Jesus comes. You know, there's a countless multitude of spirits in heaven and their bodies haven't come out of the grave yet. Do you know that? And they're waiting for resurrection when they get reunited with their bodies so they can enjoy eternity like it's going to be enjoyed forever.

I mean, they're just kind of spirits now, they need bodies so they can really maximize heaven. They're waiting for the resurrection. I always think about Revelation Chapter 6 where the souls under the alter are saying "How long Lord, how long? When are you going to go down here and do it?"

Listen the dead in Christ are waiting. They've got a guarantee that they're going to have a resurrection and that's the resurrection of Christ, right? 1 Corinthians 15. That not only the dead in Christ are waiting, we who are alive are waiting for Jesus to come.

We're waiting for that marvelous day. Titus 2:13, "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." That's us. We're looking for Him to come. And because we're looking John says, and I love this, 1 John 3:2, "Beloved now are we the children of God," that's nice to know right? "But it doesn't yet appear what we shall be." Can you imagine that? But we know one thing when He shall appear, we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.

We're waiting to be like Jesus and He that hath this hope in himself does what? Purifies himself. Oh there's so many other verses, many, many. That's the blessed hope. Those are priorities with God. The humiliation of Jesus demands that He return and get the glory He deserves. The present exaltation of Satan demands that Jesus return and take the earth back from him and the hope of the saints demand that Jesus return because God doesn't give His people false hope. And Christians all over the world are looking up aren't they? They're looking up.

There are nine reasons that I believe Jesus is coming and I believe He's coming soon. And I'm thrilled that I can say in my heart because I put my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, even so come Lord Jesus.

Let's pray. Father we are loving the appearing of Christ. Oh to be like thee, blessed Redeemer. To be as pure as thou art. Father we want Jesus to come. The only thing that would want us...that would cause to want to linger would be the fact that there are some who have not yet come to know thee. Some who have not yet put their faith in Jesus Christ. And were Jesus to come they would be left. Father we pray that tonight there would be no one would reject the blessed Christ who died for them, who suffered the humiliation, who bore their sin on the cross. Father that there would be no one who would reject that in favor of following the usurper, Satan who rules the world. For Jesus and all who love Him will be some day exalted and Satan and all who love Him will some day be damned.

Father we pray that those who are here making a choice will choose well. Will choose wisely, will choose Christ. Father we love to think that Jesus is coming. Father some of us are Christians and if we think long enough about it we may feel a little guilty because we know we've not yet done the things we should have done. Lord we just pray that when He comes He'll find us working and watching and serving faithfully.

If you really want to know Jesus Christ and be ready when He comes, and believe me, He's coming, you can be ready simply by putting your faith in Him, simply saying I realize I'm a sinner. God, I know you're going to judge sin. I want to accept Jesus Christ and have my sins forgiven that I might go when Jesus comes. Just that simple prayer places you in His kingdom and you will go when He comes if you mean that from your heart.

Seal decisions in our hearts tonight. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Available online at: http://www.gty.org
COPYRIGHT (C) 2014 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright).