

Preview of the Second Coming, Part 1

Scripture: Matthew 16:27-28

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Turn in your Bibles with me to Matthew chapter 16...Matthew chapter 16. We're going to be looking this Lord's day and next as well at one passage of Scripture. And although there is a chapter break in the middle, it really is out of place, for the text flows together beginning in Matthew chapter 16 at verse 27 and going really all the way down through verse 13 of Matthew chapter 17. This is one of the highlights, one of the great moments in all of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ and I believe in the life of His Apostles and in our lives surely as well as you'll find out as it unfolds for us. In fact, I'd like to title this section, "A preview of the Second Coming...A preview of the Second Coming."

Now the sixteenth chapter of Matthew is a marvelous chapter. It contains some monumental realities. It's startling how many great truths are clearly put in focus in this chapter. Remember now that it's just a few months until the coming of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. And as He moves rather rapidly now to the passion time, He senses the great need to prepare His Apostles for what they're going to endure and then for the resurrection, the ascension and their consequent and subsequent ministry. And so this is a time of rather intense teaching. And in this particular chapter, He begins to speak to them of all that's involved in the heart and soul of the gospel. For example, in chapter 16 He has them affirm that He is the Messiah. They say, "Thou art the Christ," through the voice of Peter. And then they affirm as well by the revelation of God that He is the Son of the living God. And so the chapter then focuses on His Messiahship. It affirms and confirms also His deity.

Then in verse 18, He says, "I will build My church," and it tells us that the plan is on schedule, that the unfolding of God's Kingdom is moving ahead as indicated. And then He adds, "The gates of Hades which is simply a phrase referring to death will not prevail against it." Death itself can't stop it and so here He speaks of the power of His Kingdom.

So, He has told them really through the inspiration of God, the revelation of God itself that He is the Messiah, that He is the Son of the living God, that He will build His Kingdom and that death itself will not be able to stop that. And so they begin to sense the unfolding of the plan. Then He tells them startling in verse 21 that He will die and rise again the third day. And so, He has revealed to them His death and His resurrection. All of this in the brief space of the second half of chapter 16. And that

leaves one other great reality, Christ has come, He is the Messiah, He is God in human flesh, He is building His Kingdom, nothing can stop it, He will die, He will rise and finally, He will come again. And that comes to them in verse 27 and that's where we pick up our text together. "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels and then He shall render to every man according to His works."

This is the first clear revelation in the life of our Lord of His Second Coming. This is a great truth for them to hear. He is Messiah. He is God in human flesh. He will build His Kingdom, nothing can stop it. He will die, He will rise again to prove that even death can't stop it. And then He will return in full blazing glory. Now this then constitutes the great gospel message which becomes His theme as He instructs the disciples in the days and weeks and months until His death. And even though they heard the lessons and even though He gave them again and again, the fullness of all of it never really dawned on them until after it had happened. And they began to look back and it had meaning that it never had when first they heard it.

Now it wasn't a new message that Jesus would come in glory. The prophets were filled with that message. Isaiah talked about it. The Psalmist in Psalm 22 talked about it. Even David talked about it that the Messiah would never be left to corrupt, but there was coming a great time of glory. Even the great Davidic covenant promised that there would come a King with an everlasting glorious Kingdom. And so, Jesus is merely affirming to them the glory that the prophets said would come to pass through the Messiah.

There's a sense in which, however, they may have lost that sense of glory because of the things that had occurred in the coming of Christ. He was not taking the glory they thought He would take. It wasn't going the way they thought it ought to go. It wasn't according to their Messianic expectation. And so, our Lord here adds this most significant dimension that the last view the world has of Jesus Christ will not be as a crucified criminal, He will come again in full glory. The first time He came in rejection, hostility and death, executed as an outcast criminal. The second time He comes in glory, majesty, dominion, power and might and is worshiped as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

And the disciples really need to know this fact. As the poet said, "He who wept above the grave, He who stilled the raging wave, meek to suffer, strong to save, He shall come in glory. He whose sorrows pathway trod, He that ever good bestowed, Son of Man and Son of God, He shall come in glory. He who bled with scourging sore, thorns and scarlet meekly wore, He who ever sorrow bore, He shall come in glory. Monarch of the smitten cheek, scorn of Jew and scorn of Greek, priest and king divinely meek, He shall come in glory. He who died to set us free, He who lives and loves even me, He who comes whom I shall see, Jesus only, only He, He shall come in glory."

So, verse 27 is so important to them. It's perspective they need, you see. Because as it appears it just doesn't seem to be unfolding the way they planned. Verse 27 needs to be seen from two

vantage points. First it has a promise character. It is a promise to those that believe. For those of us who know and love the Lord Jesus Christ, the thought of His coming is a promise that fills us with great hope and anticipation, doesn't it? And we like John say, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." We're like those who gather under the altar in the book of Revelation and cry out, "How long, O Lord, how long? How long will You allow the world to go the way it goes before You intervene in glory?" We're like David who in the imprecatory Psalms cries out to God and says, "God, how long will the unrighteous prosper?" When are You going to come and take Your glory and bring equity and justice to the world? And there is a great anticipated promise in the coming of Jesus Christ that fills our hearts with hope.

And, you know, on this particular day, it was especially needful. It really was. Because if you go back to verse 24 you'll remember last time that we said Jesus had said to those disciples, "These are the conditions of discipleship." If you would be a Christian, if you would follow Jesus Christ, if you would belong to Him, if you would identify with Him, if you would be one of His own, if you would enter His Kingdom, here's how you come, verse 24 says, "Denying yourself, bearing your cross and following in obedience." Sacrifice, selfdenial, you say no to self, you say yes to the will of God, you say no to ease and comfort and you say yes to a cross, the cross of rejection, the cross of persecution, the cross of alienation from the people of the world and maybe the cross of martyrdom. But you carry it willingly. And then you say yes to loyal obedience at any price. Those are the conditions. It's all sacrificial. It's all saying no to the things that allure in the world. It's all saying no to ease and comfort and money and pleasure and saying yes to pain and struggle and persecution and warfare. And He's just told them that.

And so, it's getting a little heavy about now, you know. I mean, when they realized that He was the Messiah and then He said I'll build My church and the gates of Hades won't prevail against it and I'll give you the keys of the Kingdom, boy, you can just feel their blood pressure begin to rise and they're starting to sense it's going to happen, guys, it's going to happen. He's going to take His Kingdom. And then He says, "By the way, I have to go to Jerusalem to suffer and be killed," and that's all they heard. And then He says to them, "Not only do I have to be killed but I want you all to take a cross and I want you all to deny yourself and I want you all to follow Me no matter what the price and as over against gaining the whole world, I want you to say no to all that stuff, follow Me."

And it really is getting a little heavy and they see a lot of the pain but not much of the gain and a lot of the suffering and not much glory and a lot of cross and not a little crown. And the Lord knows that. And the Lord never gives us more than we can bear, does He? And so there's all of a sudden this light that clicks on in the wonder of what He says, "Look, that isn't all there is, men, the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels." That hasn't changed. The plan is on schedule. It's coming. And later on the Apostle Paul adds the footnote to this when he says the suffering of this world isn't even worthy to be what? Compared to the glory that shall be ours with Him...Romans 8:18. So, it's a hopeful verse. It's filled with promise for them and for us because we

like them long for the coming of Jesus Christ, do we not?

But then it also has a warning character...a warning character. You see, He has just said in verse 25, "Whosoever saves his life will lose it." You try to hang on to this world and you're going to forfeit eternity. He's just said in verse 26, "What does it matter if you gain the whole world, what good is it when you lose your soul?" Then what are you going to have to buy your soul back? So, He is saying also in verse 27 something that is of severe warning in character. What about you people who do not belong to Jesus Christ and you've never followed Him, abandoning yourself, taking up the cross, you've never come after Him, you've never been obedient to Him, you've never named His holy name? What about you? Well, He's coming also in glory and He's going to come and act on your behalf just as much as on the behalf of His own. For it says at the end of verse 27, "He will render to every man according to his works," every one. You see, for the Christian, we love His appearing, says Paul. The nonChristian eagerly denies His appearing says Peter because its always associated with judgment.

And so, there's a sense in which we understand the beloved Apostle John who in the vision in Revelation 10 took the title deed to the earth, representative of the coming of Jesus Christ, and he sees himself eating it and swallowing it and says, "It is bitter, it is sweet in my mouth and bitter in my stomach." In other words, the sweetness is the promise character for the believers and the bitterness is the warning character for the unbelievers. And Paul looked at the coming of Christ in the same way. On the one hand it was great joy and he longed for Jesus to come. On the other hand he said knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. And so, because Jesus is coming, it's joy to our hearts but at the same time it's sadness to the same heart, we rejoice in what shall be ours and His and we are pained over what shall not be the lot of those who know Him not.

But He will come. For some, that means that a life of self denial and a life of cross bearing and a life of loyal obedience and a life of sacrifice is over and it will be repaid with eternal rest and eternal riches and eternal prosperity and infinite blessedness. And for some, a life of selfcenteredness, selfcircumference and selfindulgence will end and be replaced by an eternity of torment, unrest, poverty and loneliness. And so this is a very, very general word here. He's not talking about any one given element of the Second Coming, not one given event in the multiple events that occur in that great Second Coming concept, He's just talking in a general sense and saying when He comes in the fullness of His coming, in the progress of all those events, everybody's going to be dealt with. The believers raptured, immediately taken to the judgment seat of Christ to receive their reward for the things done that were worthwhile, God produced. The unbelievers gathered finally at the great white throne from out of the sea and out of the land and brought before God as the final judge and then sent into the second death, the everlasting hell forever. And all of those elements of judgment that encompass that are sort of carried on the back of this verse. It's a general perspective, Jesus is coming.

Let's look at it. Verse 27 says, "For the Son of Man shall come." Why does Jesus call Himself the Son of Man? Well, it is an identification point that He uses more commonly than any other by far. He most often refers to Himself as this. And it first of all marks His humanness. It speaks of Him as the incarnate God. He is identified with men, one of them. But in this context it gets a richer, fuller more marvelous meaning. And if you'd like to note that, turn in your Bible to the seventh chapter of Daniel...Daniel chapter 7. And beginning at 9, the ninth verse, Daniel is looking across the history of the world and he's seeing the final wrapup on human history. In fact, he sees all the way to the final judgment in verse 9. And he says in the vision, "I beheld till the thrones were placed and the ancient of days did sit whose garment was white as snow and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was like the fiery flame and His wheels as burning fire."

Now what is this? Well, this is judgment taking place. The thrones are set. And the ancient of days, that's God Himself, sits in judgment. His garment white as snow speaks of His purity, His utter and absolute holiness. His hair like pure wool of His wisdom. His throne like a fiery flame, His majesty. And His authority are like wheels and burning fire. It's a throne on fire is what it is with whirling flames at the foot of that throne and consuming judgment, purging judgment. In verse 10, a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. And it's the judgment that comes off the throne and consumes everything in front of it, a thousand thousands ministered to Him, ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him and those are the angelic hosts. And this scene has a purpose. Judgment was set. And the books were opened. God keeps books, do you know that? The final accounting will be based on objective data. God has kept the records. God can look at the books in judgment.

And then we find in verses 11 and 12 the destruction of the Satanic world leader, the beast, the Antichrist. The Roman system that's grown up in the end time is utterly destroyed and devastated. And then verse 13 says, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the ancient of days and they brought Him near before Him and there was given Him dominion and glory and a Kingdom that all people, nations and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

And there you have the Son of Man coming in glory to receive the Kingdom from the Father and to act, as it were, in harmony with the Father in judgment. And I believe, as you look now again at Matthew 16 and verse 27, when you see the Son of Man coming in the glory of His Father with His angels to render to every man according to His works, you have another prophecy like that of Daniel which sees Jesus as the Son of Man coming as man to judge men on behalf of the eternal God. And so this is Jesus in judgment, Jesus in glory, Jesus coming to take His Kingdom and those who belong to Him go into the Kingdom, as Matthew 25 says, and those who don't are thrown out of the Kingdom forever.

Now notice, also, in verse 27 it says He will come in the glory of His Father. Now "glory" basically must be understood in Scripture or you can't really understand so much of what the Bible teaches. But "glory" is another way to express the attributes, the nature, the character of God. He will come in the full blazing reality and manifestation of the eternal God. You see, when Jesus came into the world, His deity was veiled, wasn't it? He was among men but they didn't know who He was. They didn't receive Him. They saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. He was not comely. They didn't really see the glory, it was so veiled in His humanness. But there will come a time when He returns and the veil will be pulled back and He will come, it says, in the glory of His unveiled Father.

Now that means a full display of divine attributes. You know, you go back to Exodus 33 and Moses says, "Show me Thy glory," and what does God say? "I will let all My goodness and grace and mercy pass before you." Moses says let me see Your glory. God says I'll show My attributes, therefore glory equals attributes. And the glory is the blazing effulgent manifestation of all that God in His infinite holiness is. It's the full Shekinah.

Later on our Lord says more about this. Look at verse 29 of Matthew 24...verse 29 of Matthew 24. "Immediately after the Tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened and the moon shall not give its light and the stars shall fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." John sees them shaking like ripe figs on a tree and as you shake the tree they just fall. Elsewhere in the revelation, John sees the heavens rolling up like a scroll, like when you pull down the blind and it slips and it just goes up and rattles around like this... The whole heaven goes black and just rolls up and all you have is that infinite black space. All the lights are out and God is getting ready for a show like the world has never seen.

"Then," verse 30, "shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn as the Son of Man comes in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." And verse 31 adds that He comes with His angels.

Now that's what verse 27 of Matthew 16 is talking about. He comes in the full glory of the Father with His angels, thousands upon thousands, as Daniel 7 said, upon thousands upon thousands of angels. And so He comes in the blazing unveiled glory of God into a black sky lighting the whole universe with His blazing glory so that men scream and cry to hide from that light. The Bible says that when He touches the earth His glory will fill the earth. He'll establish His Kingdom and then shall we dwell with Him in glory. But those who refuse the lovely Savior are cast out of His presence forever.

Now it says in verse 27 that when He comes...it is at the end of the verse...to render to every man according to his works. To render to every man according to his works...it's final accounting, folks. It's judgment day. And on what basis will the judgment be made? It will be made, listen carefully, on

the basis of works. That's right, works.

You say, "Wait a minute..." People have a lot of trouble with this statement. You say, "We're saved not by works but by grace, don't you know Ephesians 2:8 and 9, for by grace are you saved through faith, that not of yourselves, not of works, a gift of God? But it says here works. You mean God's going to judge me on the basis of my works?" That's right, that's what it says.

You say, "Well, boy, that's different." No it's not. That's all over the New Testament. First Corinthians 3 says He's going to judge them on their works. It says it three or four times in that chapter. Second Corinthians 5, He's going to judge men on their works. That's not anything new. That's all over the Bible, it talks about in Galatians 6, Revelation 2, Revelation 20, Revelation 22. And there's a very important verse, I think, in Romans 14:12, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

But let me take you to a key text, Romans 2:6...Romans 2:6. When Jesus comes in judgment, judgment at the end of verse 5, He will render to every man according to His deeds, that's Romans 2:6. He'll render to everybody according to his deeds. Now it's not so hard to understand what it's saying. It is saying this, listen and then I'll explain it, whether you know Jesus Christ or not must be evidenced by your works. That's all. They are not how you are saved, they are the objective verification that you are saved. It's just what James said, "Faith without works is...what?...it's dead." Don't tell me about your faith without works, don't tell me you're a Christian because you say you are, let's see your life. Many will say, "Lord, Lord," and He says it's not those who say Lord, Lord, that come in, it's those that do the will of the Father. You see, works are not how you're saved but they are the evidence that you are. And so God in that final judgment day uses the objective criteria to verify this is indeed a redeemed person, here's the evidence. This is indeed an unredeemed person, here's the evidence. And among those who do not know Jesus Christ who have never taken Him as Savior, there can be no fruit born, no good works, no righteous deeds because God isn't there to produce them. And among those who are saved, God is there, the Holy Spirit dwelling in the soul of the individual Christian and there will be the product that proves the transaction really occurred. It's objective criteria. They are the absolute objective evidential indicator of salvation.

And that message is all over the Scripture. Verse 7 of Romans 2, "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, honor and immortality, I will give eternal life." In other words, for those people who pursue righteous things and who seek the heavenly glory and the heavenly honor and the heavenly immortality, I will give them eternal life. Now you and I both know that nobody's going to seek that kind of thing unless God's regenerated his heart, right? Because in Romans 3 Paul says, "No man seeks after God, none righteous, no not one." So if a person is pursuing righteousness and pursuing well doing and seeking glory and honor and immortality in God's Kingdom, it is evident that Christ has changed his heart. And that person receives eternal life. To those who are contentious, who do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, God give indignation

and wrath.

And then He says it another way, reversing the order, "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first and also the Greek. Glory, honor and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek, for there's no respect of persons with God." God isn't putting you in heaven and you in hell just whimsically. He's not saying, "I like you better than I like those folks." He's simply saying that if...if there's proof in your life that you've come to Jesus Christ, you belong in My Kingdom. And works are the objective criteria. So you show me a person who says they're a Christian but there's nothing to show that it's true and without objective criteria, they have no assurance that they'll ever enter into God's Kingdom...no matter what they may think.

So, this is then a promise...back to Matthew 16...a promise for those who love Christ. In what sense is it a promise, John? This sense, listen. I look at my life as a Christian and I say I fail a lot, right? And so do you, isn't that true? And sometimes all we can ever see is that and you sort of scratch around trying to find the stuff that's good. And then if you find something you think you did good, you've just corrupted it because you thought it was good and now you've messed up your motives and now you've injected pride into what originally was a humble act. It's really hard, isn't it? And so we all struggle with that same kind of thing. But basically it's hopeful for me to know that because I've given my heart to Jesus Christ, He is producing through me works worthy of God's reward. And someday when I stand there, the record is going to show that there is in behalf of the life of John MacArthur evidence that God changed his heart.

On the other hand, it's a warning that no matter how good you may think you are, your goodness is only on a human level and you're not having goodness produced by God unless God lives in you. And you're going to stand there that day and maybe you're going to say, "Well, I did this and I did that and I did this and I did that.." and He's just going to say, "I don't know you." That's just human goodness, not the goodness produced by God. And for the unbeliever, it will be a day of such fear it's hard to describe. I think the best description given is given by the Apostle Paul in these words in 2 Thessalonians chapter 1, "This is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God that ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God for which you also suffer, seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you."

In other words, he says God's going to get those that persecute. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us." You see, for us who are troubled and suffer in this life, rest, it's all going to be all right. The glory is going to come. "But to the rest, the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints." You see, they're both intertwined in the passage, aren't they? Rest, you saints, your glory's coming; beware, you

unbelievers, vengeance is coming.

And so, when we read the Son of Man is coming in the glory of His Father with His angels and He will render to every man according to His works, it is sweet and bitter, isn't it? For all men there will be an accounting day, there will be a day of reckoning and the suffering, selfdenying, crossbearing, loyally obedient Christians, even though they fail, will have on the record the evidence that the life of God was in their soul by faith in Jesus Christ. And their struggling life will be balanced with eternal bliss. And the selfish, sinful, Christ rejecting, indulgent folks will face the fact that the accounting shows and the books indicate no thing ever produced by the power of God occurred in their life. And on that basis they will be given everlasting punishment.

Now, just to say this to the disciples seems inadequate in our Lord's mind. And I understand that. I mean, here they are and they're walking along the road and going down from where they were in Caesarea, Philippi, down into Galilee and nothing really spectacular is going on, frankly, you know what I'm saying? I mean it's just another day and the whole plan doesn't seem to be working out and they didn't think it was working out very well and now He said He's going to die and now He said to Peter, "Get thee behind Me, Satan," and then He said you better be willing to die for Me and bear a cross and all they could see was all those hundreds of people that they had seen before walking with a crossbeam to a cross going to their own execution, the whole thing is really a little difficult. And so they're in a very real situation where they don't have any resources. The Kingdom doesn't seem to be coming. The people don't accept Him as Messiah. The Jews hate Him and want Him dead. And now He's talking about dying and them dying. And this is not...when they signed up, this wasn't the deal. I mean, this was, "Hey, can I sit on Your right and left hand in the Kingdom" stuff. It never came to this. And now He says to them, "Ah, but the glory will come, the glory will come."

And you can just imagine what you'd say...you say, "Oh yeah, sure...oh yeah, sure." That's so far away, isn't it? I mean, it's so remote. I mean, that's a nice thought but you're overwhelmed by the reality of what is. Have you noticed that? You know, we're that way. We get literally drowned in what is and we have this little tiny...oh yeah, the Second Coming, yeah, it's going to come and we're going to go, and oh yeah, I know that. But we, we lose the purifying hope that that reality is supposed to create because we don't really live in the vividness of that. So the Lord doesn't just say to them, that's the way it's going to be, He illustrates it to them in a absolutely dramatic and unforgettable lifechanging way. He goes one step further because He knows they're a tough case. Their faith is weak. I mean, the subtitle of that group was the "O ye of little faith" association.

So in verse 28, look what He says. "Verily I say unto you," now whenever He says "truly I say unto you, or verily," it's something very important, "there are some standing here who shall not taste of death..." That's a Jewish phrase simply meaning not to drink the cup of death, not to die. "Some of you won't die until you see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom."

Now that is amazing. And you say, "Somewhere in this world there are some very old fellas. Has anybody found them?" How...how, what is this? Some standing here will not taste death. Well, first it was only some, most did taste death before they saw Him, just some wouldn't. Most would die before they saw Him, but some wouldn't. And commentators come to this verse and it's amazing what happens to their thinking. First of all, may I note for you that what He is saying, I think, in verse 28 best could be translated this way, "Some of you standing here shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His royal majesty." You have the right with the term basileia used 150plus times in the New Testament, to render it not only as the Kingdom itself but the kingliness of the King, in regal splendor, royal majesty. In fact, you might put that there in your text because that's the best way to see this. There are some of you standing here who will not die until you see the Son of Man coming in His royal majesty...His regal splendor.

Now what does that mean? Well, some commentators suggest it means the resurrection, that He came out of the grave in royal splendor. Some suggest it means the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, that the Spirit of God came in the majesty and so forth and all that happened in the birth of the church. Others say it was the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. when He came down in judgment against the apostate Israel and using the Roman army wiped them out. And some have even suggested that it refers to a spiritual coming when Christ comes and enters into your heart.

Well, all those are wrong. All those things happened but they don't have anything to do with this verse. It can't be the resurrection because the resurrection is never expressed by the verb "coming", it's the first step in Him going back to heaven. And it can't be Pentecost because He didn't come. Who did? The Holy Spirit. And it can't be the destruction of Jerusalem because it says "some of you will see the Son of Man" and nobody saw Him there. And it's just mystical to make it some spiritual coming. If you want to know what it means you just have to keep reading, folks. And unfortunately they stuck a chapter deal in here and then a bunch of other headings and a few other verses you could look up when you ought to have these things flow together.

And may I suggest to you an interesting thought? This same promise, some of you are not standing, and so forth, some of you standing shall not see death, appears in Matthew, Mark and Luke. And in all three cases where it appears, it is immediately followed every single time by the same incident. So that what the Lord is simply doing is interpreting what He just said by what happens. "Some of you standing here shall not die till you see the Son of Man in regal splendor."

You know what they were about to get? A personal private preview of SecondComing glory. It's exactly what they were going to get. You want to get on it? Verse 1, "After six days, Jesus takes Peter, James and John his brother..." that's it, just those three, that's the sum who didn't die till they saw Him in regal splendor. The rest died, folks, before they saw Him in regal splendor because they haven't...He hasn't come in regal splendor yet. But these three weren't going to die until they saw this

and it only came six days later, brought them into a high mountain privately, and He was transfigured before them. "And His face did shine like the sun. And His garment, or raiment, was as white as the light."

You know what happened? God flipped the switch and turned on deity on the inside. And the blazing light came from the inside out. And then to add to this there appeared Moses and Elijah talking with Him. Now this was an overwhelming scene. And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." Man, this is what we've been waiting for. I mean, this is it. And then he makes a really dumb suggestion, "Let us build three booths, one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah." His idea was just to live there permanently, never go back down.

"While he yet spoke a bright cloud overshadowed them." God had another plan. "Behold, a voice out of the cloud which said, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him." Now the disciples, according to Luke, were already terrorized. And this didn't help. "And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face and were very much terrified. And Jesus came and touched them and said, Arise, be not afraid. And when He had lifted up their eyes...they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man except Jesus only," and you can stop there.

What an experience, huh? They went on this little retreat into the mountain privately with the Lord and Luke says they were sleeping. They often did that. Jesus was praying and they were sleeping, same thing. And in the middle of the prayer of Jesus and just as they were coming out of their sleep, He pulls the veil back and says, "I just want you fellas to know that when I said I was coming in glory, I meant it." And He pulls the veil of His flesh back and He shines like the sun at midday. And they're terrified. And then comes the voice of God and Moses and Elijah and it's overwhelming. It is a preview of the Second Coming. Every single minute thing that happened depicts an element of the Second Coming. An incredible event.

It changed Peter's life. It changed his life. It became the theme of his message. You read 1 Peter, 2 Peter, basically the theme is the Second Coming. Don't worry about your pain. Don't worry about your suffering, folks. He's coming...He's coming. And if you want to have somebody interpret that passage properly for you, all you have to do is listen to what Peter said. Second Peter chapter 1, the one thing Peter knew Jesus would do is...was return and the resurrection just verified it. He sort of waned a little bit when Jesus died, but he was strengthened by the resurrection. And this became his great anticipation. And I believe he was literally consumed with the coming of Jesus Christ. And when he wrote 2 Peter 1 and verse 16, he says, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." He says when we go around preaching that Jesus is coming in power and glory, this isn't some human fable, we didn't make this up. "We were eyewitnesses of His royal majesty." We were eyewitnesses of His regal splendor.

When was that? You were? "For He received from God the Father honor and glory, it was when there came a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And you know Peter never forgot that. I mean, he was a basket case when that voice came out of that cloud. That's when it was and this voice, verse 18, which came from heaven we heard when we were with Him in the holy mount. That was just an ordinary mount but after that night it was a holy mount. Peter says when I preach the Second Coming, folks, I'm not...I mean, I'm not just talking about something I hope happens, I got a glimpse of glory, I got a preview of the Second Coming, first hand private preview.

And dear beloved John who was there also said, "For the Word became flesh," John 1:14, "and dwelt among us." And then he says this, "We beheld His...what?...glory." Not veiled, "But glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." They saw the partially unveiled glory of God in the transfiguration, did Peter and John, and they wrote about it.

James didn't write about it cause James didn't write anything. But I bet he talked a lot about it.

Well, the Lord is so gracious. He didn't just say I'm going to come. He said I'm going to come now I want to show you. It's just like Moses. Moses says, "Lord, You say You're going to direct me and You say You're going to do this, show Me Your glory." And He says, "All right, Moses, I'll show you My glory." And He takes Moses in Exodus 33, tucks him in a rock, lets a little of His back parts' glory go by and he gets it all over his face. And then Moses knows, yep...yep, God's going to give...go with me. I've seen His glory.

And here are the same kind of situation existing again, the disciples are waiting to hear and He says, yeah, I'm going to come in glory and they're wondering...Oh, is that right? How do we know? And He says, all right, come on, I'll show you. And He takes them in the mountain and shows them His glory and it isn't just for your be...for their behalf, it's for your behalf as well and mine so that this isn't pie in the sky. This is confirmed by Peter. This is confirmed by John. And Peter writes at the end of 2 Peter and says, "I know in the last days mockers are going to come and scoffers are going to come and they're going to say, Where is the promise of His coming? All things continue as they were from the beginning, nothing ever changed, we're just in this continuum of evolutionary".....you know. And what do you mean Jesus is coming again? Why He hasn't ever come, nothing ever changed. And Peter says, "Have you forgotten the flood?" And just as God destroyed the world by water one time, He's going to destroy it in the fiery furious judgment when Jesus comes. And then Peter says this, "Seeing these things shall come to pass, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness?"

That's the message, folks. Jesus is coming. He previewed it for us. We're going to see every detail of that preview next Sunday, but He's coming. What kind of person ought you to be if He's coming?

You're going to be judged by your works. I mean, the record is going to show it. You can't hide it. There's no escape. For those of us who love the Lord Jesus Christ, there's a sweetness about His coming. It is a promise filled with hope. For those who do not know Jesus Christ, it is a warning filled with terror. Let's bow in prayer.

Father, we thank You for the great truth that Jesus is coming. Thank You for telling us, knowing that he that hath this hope in him purifies himself even as He is pure. Oh, may we in anticipating the coming of Jesus Christ learn what manner of persons we ought to be for when He comes He comes to judge the world. And may we know that the only way we can have a record of works that shall stand and gain us entrance into the Kingdom is to have come to Christ in saving faith and to have our hearts changed by the transforming work of the Spirit of God to produce righteousness.

Father, I pray that You'll convict every heart in this place, every person listening to this message who has not embraced Jesus Christ. May right now be the moment when they say I believe that Jesus is the Son of God who died and rose for me and comes again, and I want to be ready when He comes. I give Him my life in selfdenial, cross bearing and loyal obedience to gain eternity.

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