

Knocking During the Night

Sermon August 14, 2022

Scripture reading: James 1:1-12 & Luke 11:1-13

Golden Verse: “Lord, teach us to pray.” - Luke 11:1

In the very last verses of the New Testament, as the Scripture ends, a sound is heard: “*Surely I will come quickly*” And a crowd is responding: “*Come Lord Jesus!*” (Revelation 22:20)

Dear Beloved, we, as Christ followers, live in this very expectation, that our Lord will return from heaven, as He promised before He returned from earth to heaven. The churches and the faithful followers of Christ are waiting for our Lord to return as He predicted.

Jesus told us that His return first will be noticed as a great cosmic catastrophe. He said: “*The sign of the Son of God will appear in the sky. And then all the nations of the earth will weep, and they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory.*” (Matthew 24:30)

It seems that Christ’s real glory is not noticed, and, for this, it is not accordingly worshipped in our world. But at that time when Jesus will return and will show up, Jesus Christ, as the King of the world, will be revealed to everyone at once. Those who did not want to accept Jesus Christ will be surprised by His heavenly glory and people will be surprised to acknowledge that He is the Lord, who created heaven and earth, and He is the King above the cosmos.

The Bible tells us that He will return to judge the living and the dead, which also means that He will judge those who have a living faith in Him or dead faith in Him. He will judge them according to whether they believed and followed him or did not believe in Him, and for this, they did not follow Him.

We don’t know the time when we should expect Him, but He said we must be prepared every day, in every moment, because we don’t know the day or the time when He will return. Maybe He will return in 1,000 years, maybe tomorrow or even today in a few minutes.

If Jesus would return these days, when I am still alive, living my daily life, I will see Him with my wife, with my children, with my friends, with you. You will see Jesus with your family members and friends and with all those who are dear to you. We all will be part of Jesus’ revelation.

Let’s meditate a bit on how we would feel if He would return right now.

The Bible tells us how people will react.

We who love Jesus, who are thankful for being saved, and who are thankful for everything that God gives us day by day and hour by hour, will rejoice, knowing that our loving Lord is back. Now we can see Him face to face, we can be surrounded by His glory, and we will go with Him to His Paradise where we will enjoy His everlasting glory and everlasting happiness. The eyes of those who have long served Jesus as their Lord and Saviour will be filled with tears of joy, because they will see the justification of their faith in the returning great Lord. But we read that the tears of bitter self-accusation will be shed by those who thought they could shut Christ out of their lives. This is why Jesus says that all the nations of the earth are weeping.

The question is whether someone will cry in the pain of late regret, or in the grateful joy of being rewarded for loyalty.

At that moment when Jesus appears, every knee will bow before Jesus, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. However, the question is: will you kneel in front of Jesus with the compulsion of despair, with fear, or with the jubilation of having reached Heaven.

All those who know God live in anticipation of His coming glory. Now, let no one think that waiting for the returning Christ is idle contemplation! It is fact! It is precisely this hope that gives the balance of the Christian life in this great, fluctuating world!

Now, let's see what the benefits are of waiting for Christ to return.

1. First, with the eyes of our faith, we already see our great and glorious Lord. We know that He who died on the cross and rose again on the third day is the second person of the Holy Trinity, the Lord, and King of the world. He is the one, who controls the course of history. Everything happens according to His will. The entire universe serves His invisible glory. Looking to the returning Christ gives us courage in the face of all the impending dangers of the present and the future. Through our faith, we already see Christ who has all the authority of heaven and earth. So let us worship Him and let us go on our knees before He returns, so when He shows up, we would go on our knees with joy and happiness.

2. The other great benefit of waiting for Christ's return is that I am constantly aware of the obligation of accountability, that I will be responsible for everything one day. I know that I am a servant entrusted with His house until He returns. Until my Lord comes back, I have to take care of everything and everyone. I can't treat people in a wrong way, as we read in the parable, I have to do my work with responsibility because I know that I have to report back to Him about everything. A Christian knows that he is responsible for everything to God. A holy sense of

responsibility fills Christians waiting for Christ, and He will praise His faithful servants. Do you have this hope?

3. The third great blessing is that the person waiting for Christ knows that the eternal Judge will come and reward each person with a just judgment according to their deeds.

The Scriptures speak of it as something quite close. *"I am coming soon,"* He says; the end is near. *"I am standing at the door, knocking,"* He says again. Well, my Brothers, it may be thousands of years until then, but this time is close to us because the angel of death is closer to us every second. We read that there is only one step between us and our death. In the state in which death finds us, we must appear before the judgment seat of Christ. So, it is good to think about Christ's words: You do not know in which hour the Son of Man will come! That is why Jesus says to be ready at all times, not only in the last moments but always, even right now.

I once had to prepare a person to meet Christ, just a few minutes before the person died. It was such a struggle for me to see a person preparing himself just a few minutes before facing death. Don't procrastinate, says Jesus because you can run out of time. Be ready at all times to stand before His judgment seat.

What does this readiness mean? A celebrated great man once dreamed that he was standing at the last judgment. A large scale appeared in front of him, held by an angel. One pan was very low. He began to put into the other pan the great achievements of his life: his royal award; the acknowledgment he received for helping his church; receipts for his generous donations; his good actions and the recognition for all he distributed in charity. He had already put everything on the scale and the pan didn't even move. Then he started to panic saying: "But the other pan is empty."

Take a closer look, someone told him. And when he looked at it very closely, there was a tear in it. Once, someone asked him for his help, but he did not listen and left the person disappointed, and for this, a bitter tear rolled down that person's face. On that scale, that single tear was heavier than all his awards and receipts. The man felt that he was lost. But at this moment, a drop of blood from the cross of Christ fell into the pan, which was standing higher. And then the scale tipped and came into balance. It was the blood of Christ that was shed on the cross.

Christ will return. Please be ready to receive Him. Amen