

=BIBLE DOCTRINES=

Lesson 11

The Doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ

AIM: to teach my pupils the truth of the doctrine of our Lord's return and to teach them to prepare for His return.

POINT OF CONTACT: There is a little outline we should learn concerning the return of Jesus:

1. He came TO His own (in Bethlehem).
2. He is coming FOR His own (at the rapture).
3. He is coming WITH His own (after the 7-year tribulation).

The teacher should have the pupil repeat this outline over and over again, explaining to them that in Bethlehem Jesus came TO His own; at any time He is going to come FOR His own, calling us out of the world into the air (for the Marriage of the Lamb and the Judgment Seat of Christ) where we will be for seven years. Then at the end of that seven years, we will come back to earth with Him when He comes WITH His own.

INTRODUCTION: The teacher could go to the chalkboard and chart the course of both the believer and unbeliever concerning their future as follows:

The believer lives on earth until his death. At death, his body goes to the grave and his spirit goes to be with Jesus. (Read Philippians 1:23) This means he goes to Heaven. Though he does not have his final glorified body, nevertheless, he does have a body and will stay in Heaven until the resurrection of the just. There in Heaven, he can see and witness what transpires on earth. See Luke 15:7, 10; Hebrews 12:1. He knows people in Heaven, and is known in Heaven as he was known on earth. (Read I Corinthians 13:12) He stays in Heaven until the first resurrection (the rapture) when his body rises from the grave and his spirit descends from Heaven. The spirit reenters the body, and the spirit and body will be with Jesus in the air. (I Thessalonians 4:13-17) That body will be like Jesus' body, as we read in I John 3:2. It will be flesh and bone and will be recognizable. While in the air for seven years, the Christian appears before the Judgment Seat of Christ to receive rewards, and he participates in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. (II Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 19:7-9) The Christian is in the air for seven years. During that seven-year period, a time of terrible tribulation is in progress on the earth, at the end of which the Christian comes back to earth with Jesus, as described in Revelation 19:11-16. He then rules and reigns with Christ on the earth for 1,000 years. (Revelation 20:1-6) At the end of this 1,000-year period, he enters into the New Jerusalem, where he will live forever with Christ. This is found in Revelation 21, 22.

The unsaved man lives on earth until he dies, when his body goes to the grave. At death, his soul goes to Hades, a place of fire and torment. The soul of the unsaved man continues at this place while the Christian is being resurrected at the rapture, throughout the Marriage of the Lamb, the Judgment Seat of Christ, the tribulation period and the millennium. At the end of the millennium, the body of the unsaved man rises, and both body and soul will stand before God at the Great White Throne Judgment. There he receives his degrees of punishment, and then both body and soul are cast into Hell forever.

Now for the lesson, let us single out that part which we call the "rapture." It is the first step of two steps concerning our Lord's return. It is a time when He comes FOR His own.

I. THE TRUTH OF HIS COMING.

1. He IS coming again. (John 14:1-3)
2. He will return just as He went away. (Acts 1:10, 11) This means that He will return both bodily and physically.
3. His coming will be visible. (Revelation 1:7)
4. His coming is imminent. (I Thessalonians 4:15) Notice the word "we" in verse 15. Paul was expecting Him to come in his lifetime. In Revelation 1:3, we find "the time is at hand." In other words, Jesus could have come at any time from His going until now, and could come at any time in the future. This means it is imminent.

II. THE ORDER OF EVENTS AT HIS COMING. (I Thessalonians 4:16, 17)

1. The Lord will descend from Heaven.
2. He will come with a shout. This, of course, is the shout of victory!
3. He will come with the voice of the archangel.
4. He will come with the sound of a trumpet. The trumpet in Bible times was used for several things.
 - 1) For a special gathering to a feast.
 - 2) As a battle cry.
 - 3) At a time of reunion.

So shall the coming of our Lord be a wonderful time of feasting, a time to defeat Satan, and a time to be reunited with Christ and all of our loved ones who died in Him.

5. The dead in Christ shall rise. All of those who have died in Christ will be raised from the dead, and their spirits shall reinhabit their bodies.
6. The living saved shall be changed and caught up to meet the Lord in the air with those who are being resurrected.

III. OUR BEHAVIOR IN VIEW OF HIS COMING.

1. We should be comforted by His coming. (I Thessalonians 4:18) When the Christian goes to the graveside, he may be comforted by this great truth. When the Christian is ill, he can be comforted by this great truth. When the Christian faces death, he may be comforted by this great truth.
2. We should look for His coming. (Hebrews 9:28) The word “look” here means “gaze.” We should constantly be gazing toward the sky awaiting His return.
3. We should live clean lives awaiting His coming. (I John 3:2, 3) The Christian should not do anything that he would not be pleased to be doing at the return of his Lord. (Teacher, go through some things here that the pupils would be ashamed to be doing at our Lord’s return.)
4. We should be blessed by His coming. (Titus 2:13) You will notice it is called the “blessed hope.” We should anticipate His coming and be blessed at the thought of it.
5. We should speak about His coming. (Titus 2:13-15)
6. We should love His coming. (II Timothy 4:8)
7. We should be faithful to church attendance because of His coming. (Hebrews 10:25)

CONCLUSION: There will be tragedy at His coming. The pupils should be reminded concerning what will transpire on earth at His coming. Draw on their imagination for a few minutes as they consider what will happen at the rapture to automobiles driven by Christians, trains conducted by Christians, and airplanes flown by Christians. We should not forget the tragedy of people looking for their loved ones, babies missing, and husbands gone or wives gone. Lead them to realize and imagine what it would be like on earth when all the Christians are gone. Think of the plane crashes, the train wrecks, the automobile accidents, etc.

QUESTIONS:

1. Where does the spirit go at death in the case of a saved man?
2. Where does his body go?
3. Can people in Heaven see earth?
4. Do they know what goes on on earth?
5. Do people in Heaven know each other?
6. What happens to the saved man during the seven-year period while the tribulation is going on on earth?
7. How long is the millennium?
8. Where does the body of the unsaved man go at death?
9. Where does his soul go?
10. Give a little outline concerning the three comings of Christ.
11. Give three things that we should do in view of His coming.
12. What do we mean by His coming being imminent?

SOMETHING TO DO:

1. The teacher could bring a magnet to class along with some wood shavings and metal shavings. He could mix the metal and wood shavings together and hold the magnet over them. Of course, the metal shavings will rise to meet the magnet. This is a picture of our Lord’s return. Jesus is the magnet; the metal shavings are His people; the wood shavings are those who are not His people.
2. The teacher could bring several objects to class, or if the objects are unavailable, he could bring pictures of these objects to class: a trumpet, a crown, an angel, a tombstone, an empty car, etc. Point to the objects and ask the pupils to tell what these objects have to do with the coming of Christ.
3. The lesson could actually be acted out. Lying on the floor could represent death; standing on a chair could represent being in the air. The pupils could actually act out the future of the Christian and the future of the unsaved.

MEMORY VERSE: John 14:3, “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”