

WHY JESUS CHRIST MUST COME

■ *by Dr. John D. DeBrine* ■

The return of Jesus Christ is one of the most important doctrines in the Bible to motivate believers for soul winning and holy living. I Thess. 2:19,20 - *"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy."*

"...the doctrine of the Return of Christ is a motivator for soul-winning..."

I John 3:2,3 - *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."*

In view of this, it is not surprising that the last days will evidence a downgrading of the doctrine of the Return of Christ. This will be in the form of neglect to teach the doctrine or a total denial of the doctrine.

II Peter 3:3,4 *"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.'"*

In spite of this warning, there is almost an "across the board" neglect

of this doctrine today. But the truth remains that the Lord is coming; in fact, HE MUST COME! Why? Jesus Christ must come in order to allow the temporary rule of the Anti-Christ. II Thess. 2:7-12: *"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be*

revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and

shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Back in 1953, the English historian Arnold Toynbee said, "By forcing on mankind more and more

lethal weapons, and at the same time making the world more and more

interdependent economically, technology has brought mankind to such a degree of distress that we are ripe for deifying any new caesar who might succeed in bringing the world unity and peace." Today, 45 years later, this statement could not be more true.

There is no question that the world will be in chaos just before the anti-christ appears. The anti-christ, who will be under direct Satanic directions, will be able to solve this unsolvable crisis. Why hasn't he come? The answer is - the Holy Spirit. II Thess. 2:7 *"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way."*

Now the only way for the Holy Spirit to be removed is by the coming of Jesus Christ. Keep in mind that we are in the church age and all believers have the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13). When Christ comes to take the church to heaven, the Holy Spirit will not indwell new believers. He will be present in the world as He was with the Old Testament saints.

Continued on Next Page

OUR SINCERE THANKS

to all of our listeners who sent in socks of all sizes and colors for our Bosnia refugee mission. It has been exciting to open your packages and prepare the socks (also some sweat shirts, hats & gloves!) for their overseas trip. Our listeners never fail us!! THANK YOU.

SUMMARY

There are several other reasons why I believe Jesus Christ must come. I'm dealing with these reasons as I travel to various churches on weekends. Along with this neglected theme, I'm teaching the necessity of the new birth and also what it means to be lost. I'd like to know that I have your prayer

support for these meetings. If the Holy Spirit applies this truth, people will not only return to a holy lifestyle but also have a renewed desire to win people to Christ. Whereas the doctrine of hell is a motivator for unbelievers to come to Christ (II Cor. 5:11) the doctrine of the Return of Christ is a motivator for soul-win-

ning as we noted in I Thess. 2:19,20. I need your prayer backing in view of II Thess. 3:1.

In conclusion, note John 14:3 and the fact that the future tense is not used. We could therefore translate John 14:3 as follows: "I —come again". Meaning nothing (no signs) stands between the present moment and the return of Christ. I believe therefore in the imminent return of Jesus Christ. In Rev. 2 and 3 we see the church on earth. In Rev. 4 we see the church in heaven and there is no further mention of the church until Rev. 22:16. Why? The answer is because during the terrible events on this great planet Earth, the church is in Heaven. Don't try to spiritualize this and teach that the passage refers to the coming of Christ at death. If you do this then you have to spiritualize his departure. In other words, when you say the coming of Christ is not literal then the departure wasn't literal. We are really in trouble if that is true!

A familiar hymn expresses the joyous occasion of the return of Christ with only four short lines:

*"When the trumpet of the Lord shall
sound and time shall be no more,
And the morning breaks eternal,
bright and fair.
When the saved of Earth shall gather
over on the other shore,
And the roll is called up yonder, I'll
be there."*

Will you be there? If there is any doubt call 1-888-SONG USA and ask for the cassette Bible study, "Explaining Christianity" or write to us at Songtime and request it. When you write, let us know if your church is interested in the weekend series of meetings suggested in the study.

A "HYMNSTORY"

■ *Bill Dagle* ■

For over five years I've been engaged with the sharing of Hymn Histories over the radio, in church services, and by way of the printed page. During this time Hymn Histories has expanded to the telling of the life stories of Christian saints that have gone on before us. These include Billy Sunday, Dwight L. Moody, and now a third champion of the faith. With all of this in mind, I've decided to change Hymn Histories to Hymn Stories with the prayer of adding many stories of God's faithfulness thereby challenging all of us to work harder for Christ. The third person I just made reference to is the focus of my story this month, for with his passing a most interesting story needs to be told.

Little did Mr. and Mrs. Slye realize that their son, Leonard, was destined to be a king when he was born in 1912 in Cincinnati, Ohio. As the son of a shoe factory worker, no one else would have thought so either. But God had different plans for Leonard Slye.

By the spring of 1930, the Slye family was on the move and ended up with California as their new home. With the new home came a new name for Leonard, Dick Weston, as he became a part of a musical group: The Sons of the Pioneers. It was in October of 1937 when the most famous name was attached to this coming king, Roy Rogers, as he signed a contract with Republic Studios. After over eighty western movies and 101 episodes of his television series, Roy Rogers will always be remembered as "The King of the Cowboys".

However, through all those stories Roy didn't ride alone. In 1947, he took Dale Evans as his wife and through her witness he was introduced to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. As a way of honoring the Lord, they included hymns and spiritual songs in all of their live shows. It was in preparation for one of those shows that Dale wrote, in less than 20 minutes, a song that became their theme song as it typified their lives so well:

*"Some trails are happy ones, others are blue
It's the way you ride the trail that counts;
Here's a happy one for you.
Happy Trails to you until we meet again.
Happy Trails to you, keep smilin' until then.
Who cares about the clouds when we're together?
Just sing a song and bring the sunny weather.
Happy Trails to you 'till we meet again."*

Even though Roy and Dale had to face the three tragic deaths of their children, they continued on with hope in their hearts as a result of their faith in Christ. In Romans 8:28 we find this truth for the Christian, for in Christ "all" things work together for good - even death. Roy will be missed, as all loved ones are, but he left behind a testimony of God's enduring love that needs to be told. If you would like the rest of this story presented at your church through message, slides, and song - contact us here at Songtime. Until then, Happy Trails 'till we meet again - either here or in heaven!

PLEASE HELP!!

When moving into your winter residence, please inform the office so that we can continue sending the newsletter to you. And then don't forget to notify us upon returning to your summer home. Please notify the office **10 days in advance of your move.** Thanks!

Are All Religions the Same?

■ *Pastor Steve Butts - MILLERSVILLE BIBLE CHURCH* ■

Do all roads from Chicago lead to Atlanta? Do all religions lead to God? The answer to both questions should be obvious. Yet when the subject of religion comes up for discussion (which happens often for ministers), I am both surprised and alarmed by the number of people who think all religions are basically the same. Many people actually believe that the religions of the world are simply different paths to God. I have also heard people say that the various names for deity are different titles for the same God.

Are Krishna, Mohammed, and Jesus really the same? Can we equate the Buddha, Confucius, Allah, and Jehovah? No! Nothing could be further from the truth! To think that all religions and titles for deity are the same is extremely naive. Different religions will have certain overlapping ideas, but to suggest, for example, that Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Christians share the same major beliefs is to be misinformed.

Others credit each religion with equal truth status in spite of vast differences. For example, religions which deny that Jesus is God and those affirming he is God, are both considered right. I could accept such a conclusion but my brain keeps getting in the way. Even a child (one who has not been brainwashed with politically correct bias) can see the foolishness of such a position. Is it possible to tolerate (as we should) two opposing religious opinions without viewing both as correct?

A remarkable trend has developed in our nation over the past several decades.

We have moved from recognition and respect for the diverse, multicultural makeup of society, (which is important) to an insistence (spoken and unspoken) that all religions representing this diversity be treated as equally true.

To prove the reality of this new way of thinking (or non-thinking), consider how quickly people will condemn a person who claims absolute and final truth in Christ as the only way to eternal life. The one who announces such a belief is considered an arrogant religious bigot. It does not matter if this individual is basing their conclusions on defensible facts—they have violated the absolute social creed declaring that there are no absolute creeds. Even Jesus, who said, “no one comes to the Father but through me” (John 14:6), would be forthrightly rejected today.

Perhaps people fear that allowing any group to claim the truth and try to convert others could lead to the religious imperialism which our Founding Fathers refused. But is the alternative to be found in a type of tolerance which does not allow rational debate? Is this what the Fathers had in mind? Why is it not possible to maintain each other’s freedom to follow and express our beliefs without considering each belief system equally true?

“In the popular mind open-mindedness is no longer connected with a willingness to consider alternative views but with a dogmatic relativizing of all views. It no longer focuses on the virtues of rational discourse among persons of disparate

beliefs, as a means to pursuing the truth, but on the conclusions of the discourse. It reflects massive built-in assumptions about the inadmissibility of any religion claiming a truth status above another religion. It forecloses on open-mindedness in the same breath by which it extols the virtues of open-mindedness. Both the irony and the tragedy of this fierce intolerance stem from the fact that it is done in the name of tolerance. It is fundamentalistic dogmatism in the worst sense.” (D. A. Carson, *God and Culture*)

We may like to believe we are showing respect for our fellow humans by telling them that their religion is as true as anyone else’s, but this is really quite cruel if we are wrong. It could be

"Does toleration of all religions demand that each be considered equally true?"

compared to telling a blind man standing on the edge of a cliff that any way he walks will be equally safe. Why did Jesus speak of a narrow way that leads to life and a broad way leading to destruction?

Are all religions the same? Does toleration of all religions demand that each be considered equally true? Is it arrogant for one religion to proclaim itself true and others false? The words of Bishop Leslie Newbigin summarize well the Christian concern. “If, in fact, it is true that Almighty God, creator and sustainer of all that exists in heaven and on earth, has — at a known time and place in human history — so humbled himself as to become part of our sinful humanity, and to suffer and die a shameful death to take away our sin, and to rise from the dead as the first-fruit of a new creation, if this is a fact, then to affirm it is not arrogance. To remain quiet about it is treason to our fellow human beings. If it is really true, as it is, that ‘the Son of God loved me and gave himself up for me’, how can I agree that this amazing act of matchless grace should merely become part of a syllabus for the ‘comparative study of religions’?”

Songtime on the Road

NOVEMBER 1-15: Pray for some of our Songtime listeners as they travel with Lou Felo to Gorazde, Bosnia to take part in the refugee relief program.

NOVEMBER 5-8: **Songtime trip to PA Dutch country.** Our bus is full and we have a waiting list. We’ll have dinner in an Amish farm, attend the Christmas program at the American Music Theatre. We’ll have time for some early “Christmas shopping” and the main attraction will be our visit to see Noah at Sight & Sound.

■ Questions & Answers ■

Dr. Bob Burrelli - GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

Q: How do I know if I am called to the ministry?

A: I read this question and was excited that it came up. It is one that I had to ask and answer shortly after my conversion 18 years ago. It is not asked enough by potential ministers, nor is it answered properly the majority of the times it is asked. In hopes of preventing individuals from going into full-time ministry who should not be there and giving practical guidance to those who should, I give these two considerations:

Consideration #1: Make sure you desire full time ministry only. That may sound too simple or too subjective, but I assure you, it is the correct answer to this question. The desire to work in full-time ministry is God-given. Let me prove this to you.

In Psalm 37:4 we read, "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart." In this wonderful verse, we are told that God not only fulfills our desires, but actually gives us the specific desires that we are to have as well. That is because it is only what God desires that God will fulfill. Essentially, we need to have His desires first, and then ask Him to fulfill them.

Now, how can we be sure that we desire what He desires? The answer is found in the first part of that verse; it is by delighting yourself in the Lord. To delight in the Lord is to make Him the object of your thoughts, affections, and actions. More specifically, it means to know His word well. His word is His will in print. If you make it your goal in life to search out and know His word as best you can and obey it, you will know what it means to delight in God.

Anyone will have God-given desires revealed to them, especially those who

are to be in full-time ministry. In 1 Timothy 3:1, "Here is a trustworthy saying, 'If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task.'" Notice the first of many qualifications that is to characterize the position of elder - a desire for the office. If you have no desire for full time ministry, stay out. The late Dr. Barnhouse once told a young man, much to his mother's dismay, "Son, if you can do anything else in life - be a lawyer, a shoe salesman, or a pitcher for the New York Yankees then don't go into the ministry, God has not called you". Your desire for ministry must not only be present, it must only be for ministry.

Consideration #2: Seek to confirm your desire by the local church in which you are actively involved. In Acts 13:1-7, we see that the apostle Paul was a leader in the Antioch Church. He was actively involved in ministry as much as he possible could at the time. Once he was able to demonstrate to God that he was faithful with the responsibility entrusted to him, the Holy Spirit gave him more; namely, full-time missionary and church planter. The leadership and the church were able to confirm his desire to go into missions. We must involve ourselves in the ministry of the local church, so that God can give us a desire and allow us the opportunity to have it confirmed.

A word of caution is if you have a conflict of interest, do not go into full-time ministry; God is not calling you. If your desire is to do nothing but full-time ministry, God is calling you and you had better answer the call. "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16).

We Love to Get Letters!

"Keep up the good work. I'm glad to be an investor....both in prayer and in giving. Your program has helped me through so many tough times! May God continue to bless the ministry and all of you there at Songtime!"

(Rhode Island listener)

"The Lord worked through you John, quite a few years ago when in a small church in NH when my beloved husband answered your altar call — was saved and has been growing in the faith each day. Songtime is a blessing to the entire family. My daughter listens to Songtime also which makes us a three generation of Songtime listeners."

(Tyngsboro, MA listener)

"I recall sitting under the ministry of Sidlow Baxter and Donald Grey Barnhouse in Philadelphia. It was wonderful to hear their teaching again. I do like to be kept up to date on Israel from Israel with Jimmy DeYoung. Your program is lively! I like it!"

(Pennsylvania listener)



The **Songtime Newsletter** © Oct 1998.
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