

Three Comings of Christ

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[0:00] Hebrews 13 verse 8. The Word of God.

I want to talk about the three comings of Christ.! Let us pray.

Lord, we thank you for this time of fellowship and for your precious Word that we can hold in our hands. Lord, for that encouragement we can have to think of your coming again, Lord, and how we can be mindful of that and live in the light of that.

Pray for everyone present, Lord, that they might be ready and waiting. For that day. Prepare our hearts, Lord, we pray, that we might trust you and walk with you, that we might be right with you. We pray by your Holy Spirit's strength. In Jesus' name. Amen. The first coming of Christ became a servant.

[1:20] 1 Timothy 3.16. It talks about great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh. Justified in the Spirit.

Seen of angels. Preached unto the Gentiles. Believed on in the world. Received up into glory. He came in the flesh. Jesus Christ came first as servant.

Philippians 2.16. There's a familiar one where it says, verse 5, Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and was made, sorry, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess, sorry, every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

First he came as servant. He took upon him the form of a servant. He came as a servant. Physically he came. He came as flesh. He came as sacrifice.

[2:57] He came as servant. In Matthew 20 verse 28, he says that he has come to minister. He's come to serve. He came as servant.

In humility we know his very birthplace. A humble place, wasn't it? His parents were humble. They just had two turtle doves, which signifies that they were poor.

In the status of the time, they weren't well to do, it would seem, from that. His occupation was lowly, you could say, in a sense.

He wasn't in some great office of the day. He was an everyday worker. He was born in a feeding trough. Lived in poverty.

Had no permanent dwelling. No earthly possessions to speak of. He hungered. He was thirsty. He grew tired. He wept. He was tested.

[3:57] He was a man. Yet, much more than a man. Much, much more. He wrote no book. He built no physical church as such. He had no financial backing.

Who was this man? He was the God man. God manifest in the flesh. Galatians 4 verse 4 says of him, But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.

He was made of a woman. 2 Corinthians 5 verse 21 it says, For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

He was made of a woman. He was made sin for us. But he existed before then. That was just when he physically was visiting our planet.

Colossians 1 verse 15. I was talking with a brother this week. He said that Jehovah's Witnesses came and tested him. And they tried to twist and use this very kind of context of these verses here in Colossians 1.

[5:09] From verse 15 it says, Now I don't know how anybody reading that could think that this was just a man.

This was just an average, well, maybe an extra special good prophet, an extra wonderful kind of person, a nice kind of guy. He was much, much more than just a nice kind of person. More than just the best kind of person that ever lived. He was the image of the invisible God. This word image is icon in the Greek.

It means the exact likeness. There was no difference. He was an exact copy, an exact likeness of the invisible God. And when it goes on in verse 17, that by him all things consist.

This word consist, it means to cohere, to stick together, to hold together. It's like the law of gravity. It's the sense of that which holds our universe together, that holds our solar system together, that holds the very atoms and molecules of our body into a working method.

[7:00] And in Hebrews 1 verse 3, it says that the Lord Jesus, he upholds all things by the word of his power. He keeps the world operating. He keeps the universe operating.

When he decides for the end of time to come, he will bring it all to a close. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning. Now this word here, Colossians 1.18, this expression, the beginning, it means that Christ was in the beginning and started the whole process.

The word firstborn is something that the Jehovah's Witnesses latch onto. I think that means he was created. Firstborn.

But really the word firstborn, it means, the sense of the word, it means he's the heir, or the chief, the principal one, the owner. That's the sense of the word firstborn.

The firstborn of all creation means that the Lord Jesus stands in relation to creation just as the heir stands in relation to his father's property. He is not part of it, but rather he is the owner of it, the heir.

[8:09] And as we talked about before, that by him all things consist. It's like one of the puzzles of science. How does this world work? How does the very atoms, the tiny atoms that work with the electrons buzzing around, a nucleus, anything that rotates or revolves around has a force that projects outward, centrifugal force.

Now when you go around on a roundabout, on a playground, you've got to hold on, otherwise bang! You know, you're going round and around, you let go, you're gone.

We, the electrons and the parts of our, you know, the parts of the atoms in our body are going round and around, yet they're held together. And that's the amazing thing, that's what is holding it all together.

Science cannot answer what this force is. They describe it as an unnamed force that holds things together when they should be flying apart. But we know what's holding it all together.

Who's holding it all together? By the power of his person, the Lord Jesus is the one. And yet, scientists today, like the people in Athens, worshipping an unknown God, science is calling an unknown force that holds things together, but it is the Lord Jesus, that is the one, who's holding all things together.

[9:37] And then in this verse 2, it says, verse 19 of Colossians 1, it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.

And this word fullness, it means total. It means totality. It means that in Christ, the total nature of who God is dwells within him.

It means the totality of the divine attributes. everything that God is, is Christ. Everything that the Father is, the Son is.

To see the Son is to see the Father. To know him is to know the Father. To reject him is to reject the Father. And yet, this one, in his first coming, God, in physical form, visited our planet.

He compacted himself into a cluster of cells in a mother's womb. It's amazing, isn't it? And he was born a man. That everything that God was became just a little combination of cells in a mother's womb.

[10:48] As we know, he was made of a woman. And he was born a man. A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

He sweated blood. He was real. He wasn't make-believe. He wasn't some kind of phantom, some kind of spiritual figure.

He was a flesh and blood man with pain, with feelings, with emotions. And yet, of this one, Revelation 1, verse 8, says of him, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty.

And some would say, oh, that's talking about God. Yes, it is. And the same one who says, I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, which was, which is, and which is to come, the Almighty.

We see of him, Revelation 22, he says, verse 12, Behold, I come quickly and my reward is with me to give every man according as his work shall be.

[12:08] I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. This is the one, the same one of Revelation 1 is the same one of Revelation 22.

Of course, the Almighty, who else is that but God? He is God. There's no question. The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

This word, beginning, is the word in the Greek, archi. It means primacy, it means power, dominion, office. He's the ruler, archon, of the universe.

This is what it means, the beginning. means he is the ultimate, the absolute, the one in absolute power and dominion and office. and yet, sadly, these well-meaning Jehovah's Witnesses read these verses, they cannot get it that this one spoken of in Revelation is the same one spoken of in Isaiah 44, verse 6 and Isaiah 48, verse 12.

The one sitting on the throne, the Lamb, is the first and the last, the beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega, so the A and the Z.

[13:28] He's the beginning, He's everything. He's the one who claims the name of the Almighty, the Almighty God. He's nothing less than the Almighty God. Revelation 3.14 gives another title for the Lord Jesus.

He is the Amen. Revelation 3.14 and you could see that this also is a name of God. It relates to Isaiah 65, verse 16 where it talks about the God of truth.

Look at that word truth in your strongs and it's the word Amen. He's the God of Amen. Isaiah 65, verse 16, the God of truth, the God of the Amen and that's the name of our Lord Jesus in Revelation 3.14.

And then you go to verses like John 8.58. Jesus saith unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am.

I am. Abraham lived and died some 2,000 years before this moment. How could the people hear this man and believe what he was saying was true? Because he was there before he was made of a woman.

[14:44] He was there before. Anything was made that was made because he made everything that was made. And Micah 5, verse 2, tells us of him that he is the one whose going forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Micah 5, verse 2, says that this one who was born, made of a woman, born in Beverlyham, in Micah 5, verse 2, he was from everlasting. He's the everlasting.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever. And so he's seen the first coming. He came made of a woman in physical form.

Now, for the second coming of Christ, the second coming of Christ, now this is where you stone me for heresy, the second out of his three comings, and I hope you don't excommunicate me for heresy this morning for saying this, but the second coming of Christ, it's already happened.

It's already happened, the second coming of Christ, in fact, it is happening right now. First, he came a servant, in physical form, a sacrifice, physically.

[15:56] Second, he comes spiritually. John 14, 16, and I will pray the Father and he shall give you another comforter that he may abide with you forever, even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you.

I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you. He is with us now. We're experiencing the second coming of Christ. Of course, you know that I'm slightly tongue-in-cheek with that kind of description because we know the second coming means really his coming again in the person.

But in a very real sense, he is with you now. I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you, he's with us. And in a sense, we can miss the second coming. Many Christians miss it any time we miss fellowship.

You know, I wasn't here Wednesday night, I had a work commitment, I couldn't make it. I missed that, the second coming. In a sense, I missed the fellowship. For he says, Matthew 18, for where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Now, I don't mean to intend to put people under bondage here this morning, under a yoke of bondage. You know, some churches do that. A yoke of bondage. If you miss church, you know, you're backslidden.

[17:17] I'm not saying that today, all right? It's like giving. We're under grace. We're under grace. We're to give regularly, faithfully, as we have purposed in our heart, systematically, and faithfully, not just throwing in the loose change, giving the leftovers, by giving what's right, not what's left.

Giving of our first fruits, not miserly, but sacrificially, but not out of compulsion, cheerfully. Not putting you under a yoke of bondage in giving, in dress.

I'm not saying you need to dress a certain way or look a certain way, or if you're not dressed a certain way, you can't come and fellowship. I like that with attendance too. You're not under a yoke of bondage where you have to be at everything, otherwise you'd run yourself ragged.

Sometimes we can do that. You need time for family, you need time for home life, you need time for recreation and for study, work life.

But there's a sense where attending church is a blessing that we don't want to miss that. And there's a sense that where I can say that I know for sure in fact when the next second coming of Christ is scheduled to happen, six o'clock tonight.

[18:30] I can hardly wait. I can hardly wait. It's six o'clock tonight, brother, sister. Don't miss it. When his church next assembles, that's the second coming in a sense.

I'm pulling your legs somewhat here, but you get my point. Be encouraged to be in the assembly. You will miss the second coming of Christ by not being in the assembly tonight for no good reason. He's the head of the church. He counts it important. And in another sense, of course, we could say, according to Hebrews 13, 5, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. It's not about being in church as such, in a building as such.

That's not the point. But certainly in fellowship, in fellowship, you can have fellowship at home with your wife, with your children tonight if you can't make it to the assembly here tonight. But he has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

He is with us wherever we go. And he's come to reside in the heart of every believer. Ephesians 3, it says, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that you're being rooted and grounded in love.

[19:36] Christ lives in your heart. That's when he comes and lives. And Jesus Christ is Lord, the Lord, my Lord. So first, he's come to planet Earth. He's come as servant, physically, made of a woman.

Second, he's come as spirit, spiritually, in our fellowshiping, in our faith. He dwells in your heart. And thirdly, the third coming, of course we know, really it's the second coming, is that he's coming as sovereign, as the King of kings and the Lord of lords, as the Master of the universe.

He's coming gloriously in that time when he will come as the sovereign, for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout! Hallelujah! Oh!

Can you hear that? Just keep your ear tuned for that shout. Amen? I want to hear that shout, don't you? And with the doop, doop, doop, the trump of the archangel, you know, listen with the other ear for that one.

Amen? Because then, the dead in Christ shall rise up first, and then we, which are alive and remain, we should call it up together, with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.

[20:46] It's going to be exciting. The open air meeting in the sky, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words. I know this one brother here that loves hearing about the second coming, you know, the third coming, you know, the Lord Jesus, he's coming back.

You know, it says that one out of every 13 New Testament verses refers to this glorious event, the coming of Christ, as the, we know, the second coming. And this coming, is in two stages, two phases.

We believe, as much as others might believe differently, that he's coming for the saints in the rapture. He's coming for the saints, and then he's coming with the saints at the close of the tribulation to take all his people to glory.

And he's coming gloriously as king, as the master, as the rightful owner in power and glory. And it's going to be an awesome time, and yet it's going to be a dread time too. For those that are not ready, as you've heard of some, not ready, not prepared.

2 Thessalonians 1, it says, And to you who are troubled, rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe.

[22:22] Because our testimony among you was believed in that day. Are you ready? Are you ready, people, today? We've been challenged earlier with what was said. He's coming. It talks of some who didn't have their garment, didn't they, in the word.

They didn't have their garment. They didn't have Christ. It talks of some of the foolish virgins not prepared spiritually. They, you know, they missed the boat.

People today don't miss the boat. Christ, the same, yesterday, today and forever. He came first as the physical suffering saviour, made flesh, dwelt amongst us, made of a woman.

Yet, he was from everlasting before Bethlehem. Micah 5 verse 2. He is the Alpha, the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the Almighty. And he came first physically.

Second, he comes spiritually in our gathering together, in our fellowshiping. Be encouraged to fellowship. Be encouraged to be when you can make it. Be encouraged.

[23:26] Of course, faith in Christ. Do you even have him? It's not about coming to a building. It's about faith. Does he dwell in your hearts by faith? Do you know him personally? That's critical.

That's fundamental. All of this is vain if you're not saved this morning. It's not about being good or praying or going to church or saying Hail Mary's or trying to be nice to people.

It's about whether Christ is dwelling in your hearts by faith. That's what matters to people today.

You can know him and you can have that wonderful experience of Christ dwelling in your heart by faith.

And thirdly, that Christ is coming back. Coming back for a prepared people. coming back. And people, are you prepared? I pray you will be. I've got a little message study form here you can take with you for more reading.

I know this is really just an exaltation. We're just scratching the surface. There's so much more we could say and hopefully we can touch again on the subject. Let us pray. Lord, we thank you today for everybody here for the wonderful joy we have to know that wherever we are, wherever we gather with another believer that you are there with us.

[24:34] Lord, we thank you for that promise and Lord, for the encouragement we can have to live and walk with you, to be prepared for your coming again to this planet. Lord, let us be prepared.

Let us be saved. Let us be ready. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[28:33] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen.