

Eager Expectation Of His Return

Text : **John 14: 1-3 , Act 1: 1-3, 9-11**

INTRODUCTION :

A. Illustration :

S-1.

In 1721 a young couple in England that was deeply in love became formally engaged. South Carolina had just become a crown colony so they decided that they would begin their new life together in America. He would go to America, secure land, clear it, build a cabin on it, plant a crop and return for her. On the day he returned, they would marry and soon thereafter depart for their new home in the colony. He departed for **S2** America and she stayed in England where she industriously established herself in the community. Staying busy and beginning to prosper, over time she thought less and less about her fiancée until she finally even began to entertain other suitors. Since her wedding dress was just hanging gathering dust, when an offer was made she sold it.

B. Application :

1. Is this really what one would expect from a woman who was truly in love ?
 - a. One would expect the bride to be eagerly desirous of her groom's return.
 - b. One would also expect her to be faithfully living in expectancy of his return.
2. What's the mindset one would expect for one who truly loved Christ to have toward the prospect of His return to take them with Him to the place He has prepared ?
 - a. Would it not be the same as one would expect from the bride in our story ?
 - b. Yet, this unfaithful bride's attitude has come to characterize the attitude of many toward the return of our Savior.

C. From the day the Apostles saw Jesus ascend back into the heavens, they lived in desire and in expectation of His return. It became fundamental to their message.

1. Imagine the gospel with no promise of His return; it would NOT be good news.
2. **John 14** ... Before Jesus left he promised to come for us.
3. **Acts 1** ... During His ascension the angels promised he would return. **S-3.**
4. The promise is that His return will be in the same way he departed :
 - a. In the sky
 - b. In person
 - c. In His glorified body
 - d. Visible (**every eye shall see ... Rev. 1: 7**)

D. We believe just as the Apostles believed and taught, Christ's return forms the basis of all our longing and our expectation and our hope.

1. This is the attitude that should be present in every true Christian :
 - a. Expectantly looking for His return
 - b. Eagerly listening for the sound of that trumpet
 - c. Earnestly longing for His return and their life in His presence S-4.
2. *This should be part of the regular, healthy, spiritual experience of all believers.*

This lesson will support that assertion from five key passages in the Epistles.

S-5.

I. Expectancy and longing for the coming of Christ is the fruit of genuine conversion.

S-6.

- A. **I Thes. 1: 9-10** For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

B. Notice, the evidence of their conversion which has been a light to others. S-7.

1. They turned to God from worshipping idols.
 - a. They repented.
 - b. Their life change was obvious for others to see.
2. They became servants of the true and living God.
 - a. Their conversion was not just academic acceptance.
 - b. They did more than just abstain from evil / idols.
 - c. The Thessalonians actively served God. (*They lived their faith.*)
3. It was apparent to all that they were waiting for Christ's return.
 - a. This word "**wait**" (*anemeno*) is used nowhere else in the N.T.
 - b. It means : "to wait for .. patiently with expectancy" (*active, not passive, w/ anticipation*)
4. The kind of waiting that should have characterized the bride in the illustration.

C. The Apostle had confidence in their conversion because of these three things.

1. Their conversion produced fruit in their lives that made their faith evident to all.
- *2. The Apostle made their anticipation of the return of Christ equal to repenting.

D. Such eager expectancy of the return of Christ should be part of the regular, healthy, spiritual experience of every believer. S-8.

II. Expectancy is the product of training by saving grace.

S-

9.

S-10.

- A. **Titus 2: 11-14** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹² instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, ¹³ **looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,** ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

B. They were actively looking for Christ's return.

1. The word translated "**looking for**" (*prosdechomai*) is defined by Strong's as :
"to receive one (coming from some place). to accept (not to reject) a thing offered.
2 to expect: the fulfillment of promises."
2. Luke used this word twice in chapter two (vs. 25 & 38) in reference to those Jews who were waiting for the promised Messiah to deliverer of Israel / Jerusalem.
3. The father of the prodigal son is the best example of this kind of waiting.
 - a. Awaiting something that is longed for ... *eager expectancy*
 - b. Something to be joyously received

C. Looking at the verse we see : (*motive to obey verses 1-10*)

1. The subject of the sentence is "**the grace of God.**" vs. 11
2. The predicate is "**has appeared.**"
3. There are two participles modifying the subject, i.e., modifying "**grace.**"
 - a. "**bringing salvation**"
 - b. "**instructing us**" (*grace becomes a teacher*)
4. When one receives the grace that saves, it teaches him to do certain things :
 - a. **Negative** : "**to deny ungodliness and worldly desires**"
 - b. **Positive** : "**to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age**"
 - c. **Motive** : Do these while "**looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus**"
5. Jesus died to save us, but also to change us.
 - a. His grace changes our lives to conform to His glory.
 - b. His grace teaches us to look with expectation of His glorification as we serve Him.

- D. **Such eager expectancy of the return of Christ should be part of the regular, healthy, spiritual experience of every believer.** S-11.

III. Eager expectancy is characteristic of the citizens of Heaven.

S-12.

S-13.

- A. **Phil. 3: 20-21** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.
- B. **Citizens of Heaven look forward to their repatriation. (*our spirit came from Heaven*)**
1. The word translated “**eagerly wait**” (*apekdechomai*) is a very similar word translated as “**looking for**” in the previous text. “look forward eagerly, wait for.”
 2. Compare : **Heb. 9: 28** – **so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.** S-14.
 3. This reference is to the eager anticipation of the fulfillment a long awaited desire.
- C. **The thrust of chapter three is dealing with the attitude God requires in servants.**
1. Vs. **2-6** ... Warning against trusting in physical things or personal righteousness.
 2. Vs. **7-11** ... Salvation is by faith.
 3. Vs. **12-16** ... Admonition to keep striving toward the goal of godliness.
 5. Vs. **13-19** ... Do not set your mind on earthly things.
 - a. This world is seductive. (“**whose god is their appetite**” Vs. **19**)
 - b. American life is especially seductive. *It's hard to imagine how it could be better.* S-15.
- D. **The Apostle appeals to their civil situation as an example of the principle taught.**
1. The Greek culture of Macedonia was a strong influence on the people of Philippi.
 2. They were a Roman colony (*ex-military*) and had to maintain their Roman identity.
 3. Christians are citizens of a distant land temporarily living on the earth.
 - a. As citizens of Heaven there is a standard of behavior which we must uphold.
 - b. As citizens of Heaven we must maintain our loyalty to the laws of Heaven.
 - c. As citizens of Heaven we must maintain our separate identity. (*not go native*)
 4. The deployed soldiers must maintain the proper attitude toward his circumstances.
 - a. If one is assigned in a place that is better than his home, he may want to stay.
 - b. When isolated from one's family in an inferior place, he wants to go home asap.
 - c. Christians are deployed to a vastly inferior place among hostile people.
- E. **Such eager expectancy of the return of Christ should be part of the regular, healthy, spiritual experience of every believer.** S-16.

IV. The Christian's eager expectancy is an expression of persevering faith.**S-17.**

- A. **II Tim. 4: 7-8** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; ⁸ in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing. **S-18.**

B. The believer longs with deep affection for the appearing of our Lord.

1. The word translated “**love**” (*agapao*) is the deepest form of love.
2. It means : “to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly”

C. The Apostle knows he is soon to be put to death. He is writing his last letter.

1. Looks forward to his soon meeting the Lord face to face.
 - a. He is not the least bit apprehensive, no fear, no doubt.
 - b. Fear only comes to those who anticipate punishment. **I John 4: 18**
 2. The Apostle pictures himself crossing the finish line of a race. **S-19.**
 - a. I have fought the good fight. ... *He did not claim to have been sinless.*
 - b. I have kept the faith ... I have finished the course, *I did not give up or lose my faith*
 - c. He expresses confident expectation of his eternal reward.
 3. The reward is for **all who LOVE** His appearing. ***Eagerly await Christ's return***
 - a. Not judged on the basis of merit ... “fought the good fight of faith” **I Tim. 6: 12**
 - b. Have we finished the course ... “faithful until death” **Rev. 2: 10**
 4. Demas is the contrast **Vs. 10** ... Demas has forsaken me having loved this present ...
- D. *Such eager expectancy of the return of Christ should be part of the regular, healthy, spiritual experience of every believer.* **S-20.**

V. Expectancy is a vital component of a holy and godly life.**S-21.****S-22.**

- A. **II Pet. 3: 10-12** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. ¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

B. What does it mean to “hasten” the coming day of God.

1. Some teach there are things we can do to make Jesus come faster.
 - a. Compare the muslim teaching about the coming of the 12th imam. (*jihad*)
 - b. Some teach evangelism will cause Him to come. (*seeks a certain number*)
 - c. The day is set (*Acts 17: 31*) there is nothing man can do to alter it.
2. The word “hasten” (*pseudo*) does not necessarily mean to cause the occur faster.
 - a. Strong defines it as : “1 to haste, make haste. 2 to desire earnestly.” **S-23.**
 - b. ILL. - *As Christmas draws near children hasten the day. They want it sooner.*
3. Christians anticipate the coming of the Lord like children anticipate Christmas.
 - a. Those without saving faith fear His coming.
 - b. ILL. - *When a child has done wrong, he fears the arrival of his father.* **S-24.**
- C. *Such eager expectancy of the return of Christ should be part of the regular, healthy, spiritual experience of every believer.* **S-25.**

CONCLUSION :

- A. What have we seen from these five texts ? **S-26.**
 1. Eager waiting.
 2. Expectant looking.
 3. Earnest longing.
 4. Loving , deep affection for
 5. Hastening after the coming of Christ **S-27.**
 - * *This is the attitude we should expect to find in the heart of every true believer.* **S-28.**
 - B. Being so powerfully taught in the N.T., why isn’t it more prominent in hearts?
 - C. If there’s **no** thought of the return of Christ in your daily thinking, it may mean :
 1. You may never have been truly converted to Christ. **S-29.**
 2. You may indicate the absence of true faith in Christ for your salvation.
 3. This expectant longing for the coming of our Savior should be present in your life.
 - D. Some think about it from time to time, but it’s not at the forefront of thinking.
 1. It’s been a long time and some come to think it isn’t near and won’t happen in our...
 2. Spiritual thoughts are sometimes pushed out by activities of the world around us.
- Apply bride illustration .. as if no fiancée .. Mat 24 evil servant “master not coming” S30**

Lesson Texts :

John 14: 1-3

1 “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. **2** In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. **3** If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also.

Acts 1: 1-3

1 The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach, **2** until the day when He was taken up *to heaven*, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. **3** To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a *period of forty days* and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Acts 1: 9-11

9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. **10** And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. **11** They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”