

**Today's Topic:** The Second Coming of Christ

**I. Scripture:** Matthew 24, 1 Thessalonians 4-5; 2 Thessalonians 2; 2 Peter 3; Revelation

Matthew 24: 3-44. (The disciples asked Jesus,) "What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" 4Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. For . . . Many false prophets will come in my name (and) deceive many, and there will be wars, famines and earthquakes in various places. But don't be alarmed by these things, they are just the beginning of birth pains, the end is still to come. 9(Until the end, and especially as the end approaches) you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by many because of me. 10At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, there will be an increase of wickedness and a decrease of love in most people 13but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. 14And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. . . . 30"At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky (with power and great glory), and all the nations of the earth will mourn. . . . 31And a loud angelic trumpet call will gather his elect from throughout the heavens. . . . 42"Therefore keep watch and be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 - 5:1-10. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. . . . 5:1. . . the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. 4But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. 5You are all sons of the light and sons of the day . . . (so) 8 . . . let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. 9For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 10He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.

2 Thessalonians 2: 1-10. Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, 2not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter . . . saying that the day of the Lord has already come. 3Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for (that day will not come) until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. 4He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, . . . proclaiming himself to be God. . . . 9The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, 10and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. . . . 8(But) the Lord Jesus will overthrow (him) with the breath of his mouth and destroy (him) by the splendor of his coming.

2 Peter 3: 3-13. Understand that in the last days scoffers will come and say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? . . . everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." . . . 8But do not forget . . . With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. 10But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. 11Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives 12as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. . . . 13 . . . (so) in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

Revelation. 1-3, Christ's warnings to Church urging her to "overcome" before His return; 4-5, vision of heaven and the Lamb; 6, six seals opened by the Lamb; 7, vision of the sealed 144,000 Jews and the "great multitude" in heaven; 8-11, seventh seal opened, within it the seven trumpets; 12, vision of the woman and the dragon; 13, the beast and false prophet; 14, 144,000 in heaven with the Lamb, angels proclaiming the gospel and judgment upon earth's inhabitants; 15-16, seven bowls of God's final wrath and plagues; 17-19, vision and destruction of the harlot on the beast; 19-20, Christ's glorious return to defeat and judge his enemies, his rule and reign on earth; 21-22, new heaven and new earth.

**II. Discussion Questions**

- a. We've read Jesus' words in Matthew, and from his apostles Paul, Peter and John. What are key messages that each of these persons seem to have in common and want to communicate to their hearers?
- b. Jesus commanded his hearers to "keep watch and be ready." What does watching and being ready look like for you?
- c. How would you put fear and worry in context as you think about these passages? How would you put joy in context?

**III. Next Week's Topic & Scripture:** Old and New Covenants — Why the Blood?, Hebrews 7-10