

5/12-16/10 I AM COMING SOON Revelation 22:1-6; 12-20

What are you waiting for? What in your life right now are you getting ready for?
What are you living for?

- If you are in Jr. High you are getting ready for high school
- If you are in high school your are thinking about college, finding a job and perhaps going out on dates
- If you are 20 something you may be dating, working on a career and planning to get married
- If you are 30 something you may be raising a family and trying to make ends meet
- If you are 40 something you are watching your children grow up and arranging your schedule around their activities
- If you are 50 something you are watching your children leave home and raising families of their own while still arranging your schedule around your children's activities
- If you are 60 something you may be thinking of retirement and spending time with your grandchildren while taking care of your parents and their needs
- If you are 70 something you may be enjoying retirement and perhaps starting to see some of your friends pass away
- If you are 80 something you may be counting your great grandchildren and pondering a move to an assisted living center
- If you are 90 something you are living each day to the fullest as you count the blessings that the Lord as given you your whole life

What are you looking forward to?

- No matter what age you are
- No matter what stage of life you may be at
- No matter what you are facing here and now
- As a believer you are looking forward to Jesus' return to earth.

Jesus tells us in the Bible to: **OCCUPY UNTIL HE COMES BACK** Luke 19:13

Jesus means to “Be practical about doing life’s business with school, relationships, marriage, children, work, career, retirement, etc. until He comes back. And while we are absorbed with daily life he says: “I am coming back soon.” Revelation 22:7, 12, 14, 20

During WW II General Douglas MacArthur was the leader of our military in the South Pacific as our nation fought Japan. In 1942 General MacArthur was forced to leave the Philippines before Japan took over the island. Before he left he told the people of the Philippines: **“I shall return.”** MacArthur did return to the Philippines as he led our troops to victory over Japan.

Jesus promises to return to earth in victory over sin, death and the devil.

- How do I prepare myself?
- How am I to live each day?

The Apostle Peter says: “You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.” II Peter 3:11-13

Jesus’ 2nd Coming will be sudden and terrible for those who do not believe in him.

- Isaiah 66:15-16 “See, the Lord is coming with fire, and his chariots are like a whirlwind; he will bring down his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For with fire and with his sword the Lord will execute judgment...”
- Joel 3:16 **“But the Lord will be a refuge for his people,** a stronghold for the people of Israel.”

Realizing that the earth is going to be burned up, may we put our confidence in what is lasting and eternal. Do we spend most of our time thinking of heaven or earth? Are we so absorbed by this life that we neglect to prepare for eternal life?

The Apostle Paul says: **“...Set your hearts on things above,** where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”
Colossians 3:1-2

Are we eager for the 2nd Coming? Are we ready for the 2nd Coming? May we...

- Allow heaven to fill our thoughts and ways
- Look at life from God’s viewpoint and perspective
- See life as God sees it
- Not become too attached to what is only temporary
- Live not in order to be prepared for Christ’s Return
- May we daily confess our sins and worship him

In Colossians the Apostle Paul says to prepare for Jesus’ Return by...

- Putting to death whatever belongs to our sinful nature
- Practicing compassion, kindness, gentleness and patience with others
- Forgiving each other
- Allowing the peace of Christ to rule in our hearts
- Being thankful and praising God
- Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ
- Devoting ourselves to prayer
- Being ready to answer people with the good news of Jesus Christ

In Revelation 22 the Apostle John gives us a glimpse of what our life will be like in heaven. We will see in heaven the...

- The River of the water of life v1
- The Tree of life v2
- The face of God vv3-4

The Tree of Life in heaven is compared to the Tree of Life found in the Garden of Eden. In heaven this tree bears 12 kinds of fruit available to us each month of the year. This means that life in heaven is abundant and never ending. The Water of

Life produces us with health and strength wherever it goes. Wherever we turn in heaven there will be health and strength.

The Apostle John is describing in terms for us to understand on earth the bliss and joys of heaven. The pure water is a picture of the joys of everlasting life. The joy in heaven are as continuous as the water from the stream...it will never stop. In heaven is healing for all wounds, sorrows, disease and distress.

In heaven we will be busy in joyful service to the Lord...

- Singing songs of praise
- Surrounding the throne of the Lamb
- Bearing the Name of God which marks us as His possession
- Living a full and satisfying life v2 “leaves are for healing” = therapeutic and enriching

Is there ANYTHING on earth that is really full and satisfying? You tell me if you find something. King Solomon of Israel had everything this life had to offer and he said that without God life was: “Meaningless! Meaningless!...Utterly meaningless! **Everything is meaningless.**” Ecclesiastes 1:2

How may I be ready for the Lord’s return? He says in Revelation He is coming SOON!

Jesus says in the Gospel of Mark 13:33 and 37 that we are to...

- Be on guard!
- Be alert!
- **Give strict attention to spiritual matters!**
 - Prayer - worship – Bible study –service – witnessing – spiritual living

Jesus says in Revelation 22:12 “Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.” What does Jesus mean?

- He is mindful of the time, energy and service we commit to Him

- The works we do are evidence of the faith that is in our hearts
 - We are NOT saved by good works, but we are saved to do good works
 - A faith that is real and alive will produce for the Lord in service to Him with our time, talents, treasure and testimony
 - What we do for the Lord is not in vain I Corinthians 15:58
- How do we view each day? My son, Casey, has a new “wake up call” that he chose for his alarm. Every morning we now awake to a little song that says: “Good Morning, it’s going to be a beautiful day.”

The church father Cyprian who lived 400 years after Jesus wrote: “Let us greet the day which assigns each of us to his own home, which snatches us from this place and sets us free from the snares of the world, and restores us to paradise and the kingdom.”

The Apostle Paul wrote: “I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.” Philippians 1:21ff

As humans we all have a terminal disease...it’s called mortality.

- The current death rate is 100%
- Unless Jesus returns in our earthly lifetime, and me might, we all face physical death
- Worldwide – 3 people die every second...180 people every minute...11,000 every hour
- More than 250,000 people every day either go to heaven or hell

King David wrote: “Show me, O Lord, my life’s end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life...Each man’s life is but a breath.” Psalm 39:4ff

We were created to live forever. God has set eternity in our hearts. We have a desire to live forever and we will in Christ in the new heaven and the new earth.

If we truly understand what Scripture says about heaven we will live each day with anticipation and joy and our first glimpse of heaven will cause us to gasp in

amazement and delight. Like Peter says: “We are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth.” II Peter 2:13

For the believer in Jesus life never ends. It simply continues in heaven. D.L. Moody said: “Soon you will read in the newspaper that I am dead. Don’t believe it for a moment. I will be more alive than ever before.” On his death bed Moody spoke out these words: **“Earth recedes...Heaven opens before me!”**

Sometimes our view of heaven is obstructed by the things of this world: a large-screen TV, a new car, a cabin in the woods, etc. and we think “Life is good.” It’s better in heaven. C.S. Lewis said: “We believers were made for another world.” Nothing on this earth will truly satisfy us. We will always want more. Only heaven will fulfill us.

In Revelation 22 Jesus says at least three times that He is Coming Soon! The Church (You and me) with the Holy Spirit in us says: **“Come, Lord Jesus, Come!”**
v17

“Soon” means at any moment...Soon there will be no more problems, immorality, heartaches or evil that we will have to contend with. God says in Isaiah “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat...Listen to Me and eat what is good.” 55:1ff