

The Second Coming of Christ - Billy Graham

by From the Pulpit & Classic Sermons

The Second Coming of Christ is a central doctrine in Christianity, representing the return of Jesus Christ to earth to establish his kingdom and bring about a new era of peace and justice.

Duration: 31:05

Scripture: Matthew 24:1

Topics: "Radio"

Description

In this sermon, Billy Graham discusses the topic of the Second Coming of Christ. He begins by referencing Matthew 24:1-14, where Jesus predicts the signs that will precede his return. Graham highlights the importance of recognizing these signs and understanding that the end is near. He also mentions the prophecy of Daniel, who foresaw the increase in knowledge and travel as we approach the end times. Graham urges the audience to come forward and accept Christ, emphasizing the need for faith in these uncertain times.

Transcript

Welcome to from the pulpit and classic sermons. Each week we bring you a different message from some of history's greatest speakers in the Christian faith and powerful sermons for modern preachers too. This week we have Billy Graham with his message the second coming of Christ.

Now tonight I want you to turn with me to the 24th chapter of Matthew's gospel. The 24th chapter of Matthew's gospel beginning at verse 1. How many have your Bibles? Lift them up. Thousands of Bibles.

The 24th chapter of Matthew's gospel. These words. And Jesus went out and departed from the temple and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple.

And Jesus said unto them, see ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately saying. Now notice Jesus is sitting down.

His disciples are coming to him privately and asking him this question. When shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming and the end of the age? Now these disciples had been led to believe that the world was coming to an end. They had been led to believe by the teachings of Jesus and by the Old Testament prophets that there was going to be an end to the age and that Christ was coming back to

set up his kingdom.

And so they're asking him about it. Here's his answer. Just a part of his answer.

And Jesus answered and said unto them, take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name saying I'm Christ and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars.

See that ye be not troubled. For all these must come to pass but the end is not yet. For nations shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes and diverse places.

All these are just the beginning of sorrow. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted and shall kill you. And ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

And then shall many be offended and shall betray one another and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise and deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold.

But he that shall endure unto the end the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations. And then shall the end come.

Every Bible expositor and every commentary that I've ever read in expounding this passage says that Jesus taught, that Jesus believed and he led the disciples to believe that someday at a point in history there would be an end of an age, an end of an era in which he would return to earth again. And this has been the hope of the church down through the century. When you say the Apostles' Creed in your church on Sunday as many churches did say it, we repeat that he's coming to judge the quick and the dead.

Every time you take communion you're remembering the Lord's death till he comes. That's what communion is all about in the church. We remember the day he died and shed his blood but we're also remembering the day that he's to come again.

That's what he said. And if the Bible teaches anything it teaches that Jesus Christ is coming back. Now all the way through the Old Testament I could stand here for at least two or three hours and just quote nothing but scripture or read scriptures referring to the coming again of Christ.

When he's going to come in mighty power and he's going to set up his kingdom. In the New Testament it's taught in every book. Matthew for example likens Christ to a bridegroom coming to receive his bride.

Mark as a householder going on a long journey and committing certain tasks to his servants until he returned. Luke he is a nobleman going into a far country to transact certain business and leaving his possessions with his servants in order that they might trade with them until he comes. John quotes Christ is saying I go to prepare a place for you and if I go to prepare a place for you I will come again.

In Romans we see him coming putting all things beneath his feet. In 1st Corinthians Paul tells of the Lord's coming to awaken and raise the dead. In 2nd Corinthians he tells about our new house when we will have a new tabernacle, a new body.

Philippians says that our conversation is in heaven from whence we look for the coming of the Savior. Colossians says when Christ who is our life shall appear then shall we also appear with him in glory. 1st Thessalonians tells us to wait for the Son from heaven.

2nd Thessalonians gives us the glorious picture of Christ coming for his saints. Titus talks about the blessed hope. James tells his readers to be patient unto the coming of the Lord and all the way through the scriptures the whole book of Revelation.

One book after another it's almost given entirely to the discussion of the events surrounding the coming again of Jesus Christ. Now we're living at a very pessimistic period of history. I've had the privilege of talking to many of our world leaders and I find them in private are very pessimistic about the world situation at this moment.

The world situation in my opinion from what I know in my travels is getting darker and blacker and worse. Whether you look at home or whether you look abroad. Now the hope of the church down through the centuries has always been that Christ's prayer in which he prayed, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven is someday going to be answered.

And we believe that it is far nearer being answered at this moment in spite of the pessimism than at any time in history. Because we are much nearer that climactic and glorious event when Jesus Christ is going to come back and set up his kingdom. Now the great question comes that the disciples asked, when is he going to come? They were wanting a specific date.

What is going to be the sign of your coming? And Jesus told them in no uncertain terms that there were no dates. That he did not know the day nor the hour. And he made it quite clear when he said, but of the day and the hour knoweth no man.

No, not the angels of heaven, but my father only. But he said I'll give you some signs to look for. And when you see all of these signs taking place at the same time, you can know that my redemption is drawing nigh.

One of those signs was given in the passage I just read. Many shall come in my name in those last days saying I'm the Christ and shall deceive many. Now we have that today.

This indicates a resurgence of religion. Here we have the greatest divorce statistics and crime statistics in history. Problems sweeping the country.

Almost anarchy in some places because of crime. And yet we have the greatest resurgence of religious interest in American history. What a paradox! What is happening? Our religious revival hasn't gone deep enough.

And we have many people that profess Christ. Outwardly they say they believe in Christ, but they're not living for it. Many shall come in my name and many people will be deceived.

And then secondly, he said ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. Kingdoms rising against kingdoms. Now this carries with it the idea that allies joined together by treaty will fight other allies joined together by treaty.

Kingdoms fighting against kingdoms. Now this prophecy was fulfilled in the First World War. It was even more than fulfilled in the Second World War because for the first time we had war on an international scale that engulfed the whole world.

Now Jesus said as we move toward the end of history, wars will increase. That's the reason the United Nations with all of its good intentions will not bring permanent peace. I'm for the United Nations.

I believe we should work for peace. The Bible tells us we should pray for peace. We should work for it.

But the Bible says as long as the heart of man is sinful, as long as there's wickedness in hate and lust and greed in the human heart, there's going to be war. You are not going to eliminate war by scheme and planning as much as we would like to think it'll be eliminated. As long as man has hate and greed in his heart, there will be war in the world.

And as long as there's one man in the world that has hate in his heart, there's the terrifying possibility that hydrogen bombs may fall. Now Jesus said when war becomes that intense and that worldwide scale, this is a sign that his coming is relatively near. And then another one, the third one, and then shall many be offended and shall betray one another and shall hate one another.

And this indicates psychiatric problems. This indicates mental problems. This indicates instability.

Psychiatry today is having a field day. Almost everyone to be fashionable today has to have his own psychiatry. And did you know, I did not know this until we had a dog.

And our dog, this particular dog, he was a Great Dane, had a nervous breakdown. Now I never knew dogs had a nervous breakdown. Stuart Hamlin is an authority on dogs.

And they suggested that we send that dog to New York where they had a dog psychiatrist. Now that's a fact. I didn't know that before.

Even the dogs are feeling the tenseness of the times in which we live. We have millions of Americans today that are mentally ill. And Jesus said when this tension begins to break you down and you betray one another, many shall be offended.

He said this is also a sign that my coming is drawing nigh. The fourth thing that he said, he said, is in the days of Noah so shall it be also in the day of the coming of the Son of Man. In this passage, Jesus said they were eating and drinking and making merry and marrying and giving in marriage.

Now in other words, he said they were exchanging wives. This indicates divorce on a massive scale. There has never been a breakdown of a home such as we have today, nor has there been a greater emphasis on sex than we have today.

And Jesus said when it is on a worldwide scale and it's intensifying and increasing, an unnatural obsession with sex, Jesus said that brings pressure upon the home, the moral problem. And it's not only in the United States, it's in Europe. It's all over the world.

Jesus said this would be an indication that the end is not far away. And then fifthly, Jesus said and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the world for a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come. Think of that for a moment.

Jesus said just before the end the gospel will be preached for the first time in the whole world up until 1500 AD. Now that was only 400 years ago, 450 years ago. The Bible had been printed in only 14 languages of the world.

Today, a portion of the Bible is in over 1,300 languages and there's nowhere in the world that you can't get the gospel by radio. Radio and modern communications have now made it possible to preach the gospel to the whole world. Right tonight, I'm giving this message to more people than all the Apostles and all the Christians of the first century put together.

Think of it, in one night, by television, by radio, I am able to preach to more people than all the Christians in the first century put together. Fantastic! Jesus said there would come a time in history and if you had said that 500 years ago, they would have laughed. And yet it's happening today, for the first time.

Now there's another sign that is given us in the New Testament because Paul talked a great deal and the other Apostles about the end and about the coming again of Christ. It says, now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. In other words, there's going to be a falling away from the faith.

Christians who had professed Christ falling away, either intellectually, theologically, or morally. And every day we hear stories of people who are falling by the wayside under the impact of satanic power. Moral failures! Falling away from the faith they once held.

And even men who preach the gospel who deny the Bible. I read about a preacher the other day in England who said that the Bible is the greatest stumbling block to world brotherhood. Let's do away with the Bible, he said.

It was in the New York Times this past week. I could hardly believe it when I read it. Falling away! Jesus said when that takes place it's a sign that the end is near.

And then the scripture talks about a worldwide lawlessness. Listen to this, this know also that in the last days perilous times shall come for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truth-breakers, false accusers, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof from such turn away. He said in the last days all of that would be characteristic of that generation.

And it sounds like you're reading a newspaper or a sociologist of the 20th century describing the problems we face today. And then the scripture says in 2nd Peter that in the last days there would be scoffers. There shall come in the last days scoffers saying where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.

And we have those scoffers today coming along. They say why Christ is not coming. That's a fantastic thing to be telling the people.

Why 2,000 years have passed, Christ hasn't come. That's what Peter said they'd be saying. He said as you approach the end and all the signs are evident that Christ's coming is near, there would be scoffers who would say why everything's continued since he left here.

He hasn't come so we assume that he's not coming. We've misinterpreted the scriptures. We've misinterpreted the Bible.

Now he's coming. The scripture says he's coming. Every time we take communion we say he's coming.

Every time we repeat the Apostles Creed we say he's coming. He's coming! And the signs point to the fact that it may be near, though we do not know the day nor the hour. And the Bible says that when he comes we Christians will not be expecting him.

Therefore be ye also ready for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man coming. Do you think he's coming tonight? All right he said in such an hour as you think not he's coming. And then the scripture says that in the latter days travel and knowledge would increase.

I could go on and on and on. I have listed about 32 things but I can only get to a few of them tonight. But thou O Daniel shut up the words and see the book even in the time of the end many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased.

As we approach the end the prophet Daniel said hundreds of years before Christ that knowledge would increase and travel would increase. A hundred years ago my grandfather was living. He fought.

Both of my grandfathers fought in the Civil War. If I had told my, if I could rise and tell my grandfather at that time, grandfather someday men will be flying through the air at 2,000 miles an hour they would have put me in a mental institution. That's right.

Because men in those days were still traveling almost with very little acceleration the same as they've traveled for hundreds of years. Travel increasing. How did Daniel know about that? How did he know that someday there would be an acceleration of travel? Why if you had told me when I was a boy that I could sit at home and look at a screen in my home and that somewhere in the airways they'd pull pictures out that talked I would have thought you were crazy.

Just the change in my lifetime. I played golf today with Freeman Gosden who played Amos and Andy. You remember? I remember when my father got us the first crystal set at home way back in the early 1920s and I remember that we fixed it and then we got earphones and listened to KDKA in Pittsburgh and there was Amos and Andy.

Why it was the greatest thing in the world to be able to listen all the way to Pittsburgh from North Carolina. When I tell my children that they they want me to drop dead. They think I'm ancient.

Why my children have never known a day when they didn't have television and they can't imagine the ancient world where there was no TV. There are so many things. I could spend all evening just talking about Israel and the Jews.

God's timepiece. This wonderful magnificent people chosen of God. Their country destroyed in 586 BC by Nebuchadnezzar and the Bible all the way through from one end to the other in scores of scriptures predicted there would come a day when they would be gathered from all over the world back to their own land and in 1948 when President Truman recognized Israel as a state and the United Nations declared it as a state for the first time in 2,500 years and the Bible had predicted that these people only 13 million in the whole world scattered in the whole world would be drawn back to their own land.

How amazing, how wonderful and everything we study in the scriptures the same way. Then Jesus said they'll come a day toward the end. In Luke he said this.

Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear and looking after those things coming on the earth. He said there will come a day when men's hearts are literally going to fail them

because of fear. Now what could make a man that afraid? Hydrogen bomb? On a world scale? Or we could take 2 Peter the third chapter where it talks about the elements being melted with a fervent heat and everybody laughed at that passage until the first atomic bomb fell.

And then the Bible says that as we approach the end there will be the development of the spirit of Antichrist and toward the end and at the end this satanic power will be centered in a person. Let no man deceive you by any means for that day shall not come except their coming or falling away first and that man of sin revealed the son of perdition. The Bible says there's coming a day when the Holy Spirit who is now in the world will be withdrawn and the forces of evil will take over the entire world and Antichrist will appear and there will be persecution and suffering such as the world has never known.

But then the Bible says that will set the stage in a short time for Christ's coming. But before that day happens we believe that every person in Jesus Christ is going to be caught in the air to meet him. What a glorious day that's going to be.

I'm looking for him anytime. You see he says that the dead in Christ are going to rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together in the clouds.

What a glorious hope that is. This is the hope of the church and this is what we ought to be preaching. That God has a plan for the future.

That history is not wandering around purposelessly. There's a plan, there's a program. And that plan and program is that Christ shall reign as king of kings and Lord of lords.

And of his kingdom there shall be no end. And that you and I, if we are believers in Christ, if we've received him, we're going to be a part of that kingdom. Yes the world is going to know peace.

The dream that Martin Luther King talked about in the March on Washington is going to come true someday, but not by the efforts of man alone, but by the coming of Christ. When Christ shall set up his kingdom, then we will have world brotherhood. Then there will be no more war or suffering.

What a world it's going to be. And you and I in Christ are going to be in that world. And the Christian is silent on the very point that he ought to be preaching on.

And it's the fact that Jesus Christ is going to set up a kingdom. And that kingdom will be the time when there will be permanent peace. And Christ will be the king of kings and Lord of lords.

Now for those people who reject Christ and turn away from Christ, it's going to be a terrible time of judgment. But to those that have received him, those that have been born again, those that have Christ in their hearts, it's going to be a glorious time. Now Christ, the Scriptures indicate that when you receive Christ you may have suffering for the rest of your time down here.

Now let's say you have another five years to live, or ten years to live, or twenty years to live. Now the Bible says you may have suffering, there may be persecution, misunderstanding, troubles and difficulties, but his peace and his joy and his power will be yours. But he says, I have not seen nor heard, neither has it entered into the heart what God has prepared for them that know him.

Are you ready to meet him? The Scripture says there are three things. First we should watch. He said watch therefore for ye know not what hour your Lord cometh.

Are you watching for his coming? Secondly, we are to purify ourselves. This means that we have to live clean lives. And if there's sin in your life, come to Christ tonight, let him cleanse it and wash it away and be purified by his blood.

And thirdly, the Scripture says prepare, therefore be ye ready. Are you ready? Prepare to meet thy God. If you are not prepared to meet God, prepare tonight.

You say, what do I have to do to prepare? First, repent of your sin. Secondly, by faith receive him. You say, how long does that take? You can do it that quick by making a decision in your heart right now to receive him.

It means that you are willing to turn from your sins and receive him as your own Lord, Master and Savior. And you can do it right tonight, right here and be ready. And you say, Lord I want you to lead and direct in my life.

I want you to have all of me. And if you say that, and if you make that commitment and you want to be prepared and you're not sure that you're ready, you're not certain that you know Christ for yourself. Now you may be a member of the church, but you're not sure that you know Christ for yourself.

You haven't had a real encounter with him. I'm going to ask you to come and receive him tonight and say, Lord I'm stepping out on Jesus side. I want to be in his kingdom and I'm willing, if necessary, to suffer here in order to share the glory there.

I'm willing to be his witness and his servant here in order to share the glory there. Now you have to come by faith. You can't reason all this out.

Some of it sounds rather fantastic to the modern mind, but not so fantastic as it used to see. Because modern science has shown us that all of these things can take place now. I'm going to ask you to come by faith, a step of faith.

You may be a professor, you may be a student. I don't know who you are, what you are, but I want you to get up out of your seat right now and come out on this field and say yes to Christ. If you're with friends or relatives, they'll wait.

Now why do I ask you to come? Because Jesus Christ hung on the cross for your sins openly. He said, if you're not willing to confess me openly before men, I'll not confess you before my Father, which is in heaven. If you're with friends or relatives, they'll wait.

Or you can bring your friend with you. And after you've come here, we're going to say a word to you, give you a verse of Scripture, and then you can go back and join your friend. But there's something about coming forward that settles it in your life.

It's saying I will to Christ to have all the sin forgiven and to know that if you died you'd go to heaven or that you're ready to meet Christ should he come back today. We're going to wait on you, hundreds of you right now, men, women, young people. Some of you have been here on other nights.

You've made a decision in your heart, but you haven't said it openly yet. You come. We're going to wait right now.

Just come and stand here quietly with bowed head and say tonight, I want Christ to be my Lord and my Savior and my Master. We're going to wait. You've been listening to From the Pulpit and Classic Sermons Series.

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