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When is Christ Coming?

“It is our duty to let the world see that we are expecting Jesus. Our lives should be the sign that He is coming. Our uplifted eyes, our longing hearts, should everywhere preach the gospel of His coming.”—*Page 7.*

By DR. HEYMAN WREFORD.

When is Christ Coming?

*Read 1st Thessalonians iv., 13 to 18.
1 Corinthians xv., 51 to end.*

WHEN is Christ coming? No one on earth knows, but many are expecting him. Christ has Himself given an answer to the question, and it is, "Surely, I come quickly." The sceptic says, "That may mean any time." That is just what it does mean. Any year, any month, any day, any hour, any minute, any second. "In a moment in the twinkling of an eye." Yes, more quickly than the lightning flash; swifter than thought can travel;

changed in a moment! Here one second, in heaven the next. What a wondrous thought! Can you receive it?

Christian! nineteen centuries ago your absent Lord said, "Surely I come quickly," and the glory of His coming flings its brightness over many believing hearts to-day. Do you realise that **Christ may be here at any moment?**

There is no prophecy unfulfilled to delay His coming. No purpose but the long-suffering grace of the Saviour over a world of sinners, to be carried out. He is not slack concerning His promise, but is unwilling that any should perish. When I was a boy I never felt safe a single moment until I was saved. "Christ is coming"

seemed to ring in my ears all day long. When I looked up to the sky, I thought at any moment the Lord might descend, and Christians ascend to meet Him, and I should be left behind. I expected hourly to lose sight of my father and mother and of every Christian. It was terrible; an awful suspense seemed to hang upon my life. Waking, it was ever with me, and night after night I trembled in my fear.

Christ will come when the world does not expect Him. There will be no sign for the world in heaven above, or on the earth beneath, before Christ comes. The life of the world will be going on just the same. The morn will break, and the skies will be flooded with sunlight or dark

with storm. There will be no suspension of the laws of creation; the universe will still move on in the march of God. People like the Pharisees of old, are expecting signs but the only sign that will be given has been given—the sign of the prophet Jonas and that was the sign of death and resurrection. Christ has died, and by His death has accomplished the work He came into the world to do. He has been raised from the dead, and the fact of His resurrection is one of the most fully authenticated events in all history. He has been on the throne of God in heaven for more than 1900 years, and before leaving the earth He said to His disciples “I will come again, and receive you unto myself.” And with-

out sign—with no change in sun, or moon, or stars—and no alterations in seasons, He will keep His promise, He will come again, **and it may be to-day.** The world will not expect Him—the world has cast Him out, and cried “Away with him.” Men in the busy centres of civilisation will pursue their accustomed avocations. Men of pleasure will throng their haunts of sin and darkness ; the student will burn the midnight oil ; the business man will buy and sell and study the markets. From the highest downwards, through every stratum of society, all will be the same—the fierce pulse of a self-willed world will throb as wildly, and its giant heart will beat as proudly as ever. Go where you will in this busy

world, and you will find that by very few the Lord is expected. It is time for Christians to-day to shout in the ears of a deaf world, **Christ is coming.** It is our duty to let the world see that we are expecting Jesus. **Our lives should be the sign that He is coming.** Our uplifted eyes, our longing hearts, should everywhere preach the gospel of His coming. Listen:

“Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.”

We have to watch. The Lord might have come in the even when the early church was persecuted; when the Thessalonian saints were

saved, and looked to heaven expecting Jesus then. It was evening time, **but Jesus did not come at even.** He might have come in the **midnight** of the dark ages, when the hope of His coming was lost in awful gloom. He might have called His own home then, **but Jesus did not come at midnight.** He might have come at the **cock-crowing**, when the cry rang through the world well-nigh a century ago, "Behold the Bridegroom! go ye out to meet him." It was cock-crow then. Thousands were startled by that earnest cry. It awoke men and women from the sleep of forgetfulness. **But Jesus did not come at the cock-crowing.**

There is only the morning left,

and that is very near now. We have entered the last period. His coming is close at hand; we are sure of that. "The morning cometh." We must be sentinels; the word to us is "watch." Look for Him, Christian; expect Him believer! Watch on the hills of faith. Sleep not at such a time as this, "lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping."

In closing this article, let us see how Christ will come. He will come **silently and unseen by the world.** The world of unconverted men and women will hear nothing and see nothing of Christ's coming. The redeemed will hear a shout—"the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout." Every Christian will hear and obey that call.

No matter to what sect or denomination they belong, no matter in what place they are, there will not be a saved one upon earth but who will hear that call of Christ.

The lonely missionary will hear it and will lift his weary hands to heaven in joy, crying, "Come, Lord Jesus." Those on sick beds will hear it and rise from weariness and pain to meet their Lord. They will leave behind them the aching pains and lonely hours; the nights of weeping and the hours of sorrow—Christ has called them home. And the voice of the archangel will be heard and the trump of God. All heaven will be astir, the might of heaven's love and power will be put forth for the saint of Christ. The grandest event of

ternity will be transpiring—the Cross excepted.

And we shall see Christ. Yes when He comes we shall see Him. You ask ‘Shall we know him when we rise to meet Him?’ Ah! Yes. In a moment our fond eyes will be resting on our Lord, and He will absorb every faculty of sight, hearing and feeling.

And what a sight those rising millions; what a triumph, this triumph He has won! Heaven’s angels and archangels will flock out to welcome. The splendour of the beauty of the glorified Church rising to heaven will transcend all the glories the world has ever known. The grandest song will be sung then; the noblest company will be gathered then; the buds of the promises will burst into flower

then, and the seeds of hope, sown through centuries of waiting, will bring forth a mighty harvest of praise to God. And then, as with Christ we rise and soar, before us will shine the gates of pearl, and all the marvellous magnificence of heaven. The Light will come to us, burning brighter and brighter as we rise to meet it ; and there in front of us will be the City's splendour. The wide sweep of the golden pathways, the untold beauty of the "many mansions" and the radiance of jasper walls. And in supernal glory will rise the throne of God and of the Lamb with the adoring angels around it; and through their shining ranks we shall pass along, while vista after vista of beauty opens out before us. Every

step will be a rapture, and every look delight, for we shall wear the robes of white, and before us, and behind us, and on either side will be the fulness of the presence of the Lamb of God. And the greatest delight of heaven will be to feel Him near; to know He will never leave us and we shall never leave Him; to feel the balm of home and rest upon the happy soul.

Oh! what will it be to be there? Haste on, ye hours, till Christ shall come. Speed on, ye lagging moments till we see His face! We would turn from all of earth to Heaven! We would close our ears to earthly sounds, and wait the shout that bids us rise. What brightness shines before us! What welcoming voices wait!

The Watchword of the Night.

*“ Watchman! What of the night?
The morning cometh! ”*

CHRI**S**T is coming! Ringing heavenward
Voices through the night—
Waiting with uplifted foreheads,
Stand the sons of light.
Heaven-lit eyes and hearts all burning,
Eager feet earth's wild flowers spurning;
Lip to lip the cry repeating,
Heart to heart the answer beating,
Christ is coming!—Come, Lord, come!

Christ is coming! In a moment,
Shall the shout resound;
And the voice of heaven's archangel,
And God's trumpet sound.
Then the sleeping saints arisen,
Bursting from their earthly prison,
With the living upward soaring,
See their Lord with eyes adoring,
Christ is coming!—Come, Lord, come!

Christ is coming! Speed the message
Writ on heart and brain,
"Till, from all the courts of heaven,
Sounds the last Amen.
"Till, the watchman of the dawning
Shall call out the blessed morning;—
And 'the glad cry shall be given,
As the earth-born rise to heaven,
Christ is coming!—Come, Lord, come!

Christ is coming! We are waiting
'Mid the shadows dim:
Longing 'till the night's dark pinions
Fold their plumes to Him.
Waiting by each gate of sorrow,
Thinking of the glad to-morrow;
Standing 'neath His banner, keeping
Watch, while all the world is sleeping.
Christ is coming!—Come, Lord, Come!

Christ is coming! He will take us
To His Father's home;
"I will come," the promise golden:
"I will quickly come."

See, the pearly gates are open;
Hosts await the word unspoken;
And on earth, with eyes on glory,
We repeat the heavenly story.

Christ is coming!—Come, Lord, come!

Christ is coming! Christ is coming!

We have waited long;

Eager for the first glad rapture

Of the endless song.

Eager to bow down before Thee,

Longing, Saviour, to adore Thee;

Waiting, 'till our lips forgiven,

Shall repeat Thy praise in heaven.

THOU ART COMING!—

Come, Lord, COME!

Heyman Wreford.

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