

**Recap of 4/21/24 message by Pastor Chris (Mark 13:24-37):**

- The return of Christ brings hope for believers. It is referenced over 300 times in the New Testament and provides “advanced knowledge” as discussed by Pastor Steve on 4/14/24. When we consider the effects of the brokenness of this world, it is only natural for us to weep, mourn, and cry out for something to be done, for things to be fixed, for unrighteousness to be corrected. Praise be to God for we know that will happen, that Jesus will return to save His saints from the coming wrath (1 Thessalonians 1:10) and He will make things anew where righteousness will dwell (2 Peter 3:7-13).
- The return of Christ is imminent. To understand this, we need to understand that the phrase “return of Christ” or “Second Coming,” often are used in a broader manner than only the moment when Jesus will physically and visibly return to do battle against Israel’s enemies and set up his earthly kingdom (Zechariah 14:1-7). It is often used in reference of both His coming “for His saints” in the rapture of the church (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17), as well as the coming “with His saints” in His return to do battle, bind Satan, and begin His millennial reign (Revelation 19-20, Jude 1:14-15).
- Since Jesus may return for His church at any moment, we must be ready. We must be ready by examining our lives and move toward holy conduct and godliness (2 Pet 3:11). We must be ready by also having compassion on those around us and sharing the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, that He has already paid in full the debt we all owe due to our sin. All who come to Him by grace through faith will be saved. Charles Spurgeon makes reference to holy living in light of Christ’s return when he says, “Oh, beloved, let us try every morning to get up as if that were the morning in which Christ would come; and when we go up to bed at night, may we lie down with this thought, “Perhaps I shall be awakened by the ringing out of the silver trumpets heralding his Coming. Before the sun arises, I may be startled from my dreams by the greatest of all cries, ‘The Lord is come! The Lord is come!’” ...Act as if Jesus would come during the act in which you are engaged; and if you would not wish to be caught in that act by the Coming of the Lord, let it not be your act.” He also knew the importance of compassion and the gospel as part of our mission: “If sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies. And if they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay. If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for.” - Charles Sturgeon