

Ready (Luke 17:20-37)

I. Introduction

A. *This Week in Clear Living*

1. Jesus established the kingdom at His first coming.
2. Jesus' return will be prominent and unmistakable.
3. The kingdom of God is provided by grace through God's love.
4. Jesus' return will be unexpected, so we must be ready.
5. Christ's return will usher believers into the eternal presence of the Lord.

Question: Is forgiving others a condition of salvation?

B. In Luke 17:1-19, Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem for the final time.

1. In verses 1-2, He pronounced doom on the individual that causes offences.
2. In verses 3-6, He told His disciples that they should be quick to forgive those that ask it.
 - a. He did not say that they should be quick to forgive those that did not ask it.
 - b. In Acts 7:60, Stephen forgave those that were killing him.
 - c. In Luke 23:34, Jesus forgave those that were killing him.
 - d. Matthew 6:15 says, "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."
 - e. ***Is forgiving others a condition of salvation?***
3. In verses 11-19, Jesus was passing through Samaria and Galilee. He saw and healed ten lepers.
 - a. Only one of the ten showed gratitude and praised the Lord.
 - b. Were the ten saved or only the one?
 - c. Did salvation always come with physical healing.
 - d. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
 - e. Whole (sozo) - to save a suffering one, to make well, heal, restore to health. This word is also used in Romans 10:9, Romans 10:13, and Ephesians 2:8.

Question: Jesus' millennial reign involves a literal, actual kingdom. How do we reconcile a literal kingdom with verse 21?

II. The Pharisees constantly challenged Jesus.

- #### A. In Luke 17:20-21, they questioned Him about His coming kingdom.

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1. The Pharisees did not acknowledge the deity of Jesus, so they were probably being cynical.
 - a. Demanded (*eperotao*) - to accost one with an enquiry, put a question to, enquiry of, ask, interrogate
 - b. Kingdom (*basileia*) - royal power, kingship, dominion, rule, not to be confused with an actual kingdom but rather the right or authority to rule over a kingdom
2. In verse 21, Jesus told them that the kingdom of God is inside an individual.
- B. How can we know that His Second Coming will involve a literal reign?
 1. Not everyone believes in a literal kingdom, but our church does.
 2. The promised kingdom involves land (Canaan) and a seed (Isaac), and both of those Bible promises are real.
 3. Jesus was answering their cynical question with cynicism.
 - a. According to Dr. J. Vernon McGee, Jesus was not telling them that the kingdom was inside of them. He was telling them that He is the kingdom and that He was right there in their presence.
 - b. According to Dr. Craig A. Evans, Jesus was saying that the kingdom of God is not a "political, geographical entity." It is a power within (in the midst of) the disciples and them.
 - c. Within (*entos*) - in the midst of you.
 4. Good exegesis clearly shows that Jesus was declaring Himself to be the kingdom of God.

Question: How do we know that Jesus is literally coming again? Was He speaking literally or figuratively?

- III. Jesus directed His next comments directly to His disciples.
 - A. In verses 22-25 He told them that He would be soon leaving them.
 1. In verse 22, He said that they would wish to see Him again but not be able.
 - a. He was referring to peoples' desire for His Second Coming.
 - b. His first coming concluded with His being rejected by many.
 - c. "Ye shall not see it" - many people have waited their entire lives waiting to no avail for Jesus to come back. The people listening to Him make that statement did not live to see His return.
 2. In verses 23-24, He told them that His critics would try to destroy their faith.
 - a. Jesus was telling His disciples that His many critics had been wrong about His first coming, so do not pay any attention to their criticisms or speculations about His Second Coming.
 - b. How do we know that Jesus is truly coming again?
 - 1) He came once to an unprepared world.

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- 2) He ascended into heaven in Acts 1. He can easily descend back to earth.
- 3) He said that He would come again (John 14:3). John 14:3 says, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."
- 4) The Holy Spirit bears witness to what He said (John 15:26).
- c. In verse 24, according to Dr. McGee, His return will be very public, just like lightening.
3. In verse 25, He told them of His coming rejection and sufferings.
 - a. Jesus told His disciples that His Second Coming would be glorious and welcomed by His followers (the Church).
 - b. But first He must suffer.
 - c. **Jesus dying on the cross was not an accident or an unanticipated event.**
 - d. John 3:14-15 says, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Question: Was Jesus talking about the Second Coming, or was He talking about the Rapture? Why is that an important point to know?

- B. In verses 26-30, Jesus told them about His return to set up His kingdom (His Second Coming).
 1. In verses 26-27, the times shall be like the times of Noah.
 - a. He gave them some clues as to what the times would be like prior to His return.
 - b. In some respects, the circumstances will be like everyday life.
 - 1) They were eating.
 - 2) They were drinking.
 - 3) They were marrying wives.
 - 4) They were given in marriages.
 - c. **BUT Jesus was talking about more than simply everyday activities.**
 - 1) Genesis 6:5 says, "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually."
 - 2) Genesis 6:7 says, "And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."
 - d. From II Timothy 3:1-5, the Apostle Paul gave a clue about the times.
 - 1) Perilous times shall come.
 - 2) Lovers of self more than lovers of God or others.

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- 3) Disobedient, without natural affection, false accusers, despisers of those that are good.
- 4) Traitors, lovers of pleasure.
- 5) Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof.
- e. **Jesus was talking to His disciples about His Second Coming.**
 - 1) Matthew 24:3 says, "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"
 - 2) The Second Coming will come at the end of the Tribulation, so the bad conditions should not be surprising.
 - 3) *Because Jesus was talking about the Second Coming and not the Rapture, the Church is not guaranteed an advance warning of extreme evil.*
 - a) We are only told about a falling away. Many scholars believe that some Christians will fall away. Do you agree or disagree?
 - b) The Day of the Lord is the Tribulation and the Millennial Kingdom: II Thessalonians 2:3 says, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, **except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed**, the son of perdition;"
 - c) The Rapture: II Thessalonians 2:7-8 says, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, **until he be taken out of the way**. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:"
 2. In verses 28-29, the times shall also be like the times of Lot.
 - a. They lived normal lives, but they left out the Lord.
 - b. The Lord destroyed them without warning.
 3. Both periods were extremely wicked.
 4. **In verse 30, Jesus shall be revealed.**
 - a. That is why the Book of Revelation is called the Book of Revelation.
 - b. Revelation 19:11 says, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him [was] called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."
- C. In verses 31-36, Jesus described the urgency associated with the Second Coming.
 1. The Bible always discourages waiting until tomorrow to do something positive for the Lord.
 2. Jesus warned about being too attached to the things of this life.
 - a. In verse 31, he warned about trying to go back after unimportant stuff.
 - b. In verse 32, Lot's wife did not look back to see what was happening. She looked back because that was where her heart was.

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- c. She turned to salt as a reminder that her life lacked salt. Christians are called to be salt.
 - d. Matthew 5:13 says, “Ye are the **salt** of the earth: but if the **salt** have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.”
 - e. Verses 33-36 also emphasize the importance of not being encumbered by worldly things.
3. In verse 37, the disciples had asked when these events would occur (Matthew 24:3), but Jesus would not satisfy their curiosity. Instead, He gave them a riddle. In Mark 13:32, He told them that He did not know.

VI. The lesson on 9/7/08: The Ascension of Christ (Acts 1:1-26)