

Overview:

What thoughts would come to your mind if you knew Jesus was going to return right now? What emotion would overflow you? In Matthew 24:30-31, 36 we get a small description of what the return of Jesus will look like. It states: ³⁰Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. ³⁶“But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.”¹ One of the strangest points in this passage is Jesus not knowing the day or time of His return. The one indisputable fact we can get from this passage is that Jesus will return.

This passage describes Jesus riding on the clouds. Many people see Jesus coming through the clouds, but that is not what is written. The Jewish people viewed the clouds as being part of heaven. A person of a Jewish upbringing would read Jesus riding on the clouds as Him bringing heaven with Him. I have been asking several people this week what they think about Jesus’ return. One of the responses is hope. Knowing that heaven is our eternal destination should bring all believers a sense of hope. Sometimes when we think about this hope, we focus more on what we are being delivered from rather than who we are being delivered to. We know there will be no more crying, pain, broken relationships, disease, or suffering, but should this be the foundation of our hope? Is our hope based on what is not in heaven? Would you be content if you never experienced any pain, but never experienced the presence of God? We do not worship God just because of what He can do for us. We worship and find our current hope in Him because He is our creator and God. We were created to be in His presence. Seeing our Creator face to face one day brings us hope today and for all our tomorrows.

The second response I received about Jesus’ returning was fear. This fear is based on the feeling of not being good enough. When Jesus returns Matthew 24:29 states the stars will fall from heaven and the very powers of heaven will be shaken. Such a demonstration of power should bring a sense of fear into everyone of us. This fear comes when we stand in front of overwhelming power. The fear of not being good enough shifts the focus of our attention from Jesus to ourselves. Jesus

¹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Mt 24:36). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

came the first time not to judge or condemn the world, but to be judged and condemned by the world. His second coming changes everything. The one who surrendered His power to hang on the cross will now be demonstrating His power. Upon His return the key to not having a fear based in guilt is to accept what Jesus did the first time He came. In His first coming He took our judgment and condemnation upon Himself so when He returns, we would not have to. It is by grace through faith we have been saved not by our works. Accepting the grace of His first coming means we should not be afraid at His second coming.

A third response, when people thought the second coming, was regret. This can be for things we should have done but did not. This includes sharing our faith. Sometimes the hardest people to share our faith with is those we know the best. We always think there will be another chance, or we wait for the perfect moment. The perfect moment will never occur. The second coming of Jesus should place an urgency in every believer to share their faith. We are told we cannot take anything with us to heaven, but this is not true. The one thing we can take with us to heaven is our family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc.... We have the hope of eternity within us. We don't want to spend a billion years in heaven knowing that just the first day of eternity has passed without having shared our faith with those we knew on earth. If we truly believed that faith in Jesus was the eternal difference between heaven and hell, then what possible excuse can we come up with for not sharing it? Jesus' second coming should press upon each of us an immediate need to share our faith.

Bible Study:

1. Read Revelation 19:11-16. How can this description of Jesus inspire both awe and comfort?
2. Does this description of Jesus change your perception of Him from what you read about in the Gospels?
3. How can you reconcile the mild, loving, traveling preaching Jesus of the Gospels, with the all-powerful Jesus in Revelation? They are one and the same.
4. Would you be content if you never experienced any pain in life, but never experienced the presence of God? Why or why not?
5. What thoughts do you have about the return of Jesus and the defeat of Satan?
6. How does seeing the power and glory of Jesus change the way you view sin in your life?
7. In what ways would knowing the day and time of Jesus' return change the way you live today?