

“This Child is our Coming King”

Matthew 16: 24 – 28

In verses 24 – 25 of the scripture reading, we find conditions of discipleship. A disciple is a follower and if we are earnest in following Jesus, then we will be a servant to him. The question is, “what kind of servant are we to the coming King?” We find in these verses some thoughts to encourage us in self-denial and suffering as we follow Christ. Also, we consider his coming which could happen at any time. If through faith we see things as they will appear, then we shall see them as they should appear now. Remember the words of the Lord’s Prayer; “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” The great encouragement to steadfastness in the Christian life is taken from the great hope of Christ’s second coming, considering it:

1. As his honor according to (vs. 27a), “For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory.” Humanly speaking, to look on Christ in his humiliation, abased, abused, despised and rejected many would have no interest in following him. However, with the eye of faith we see the Captain of our salvation coming in his glory, all the pomp and power of heaven will encourage us and cause us to think that nothing is too much or too hard to do for him.

Here Jesus refers to himself as “The Son of Man” indicating his humble estate and the fact that he is not ashamed to own it. His first coming was in the likeness of his children of flesh, but his second coming will be in the glory of his Father. At his first coming he attended to the poor and needy, at his second coming he will be attended with glorious angels. So, we can identify with him now by taking up our cross and following him, losing our life for him that we might find it forever.

2. As our concern as we see in (vs. 27b), Jesus Christ will come as Judge and reward each person according to what he has done. This judgment will be far greater than any earthly judge could set forth. All will be rewarded, not according to the gains or losses of this world, but according to their works as to what they did or did not do for the cause of Christ. Those who

had no time for the things of Christ will be sent to eternal destruction and those who were faithful in their service will receive a crown of life.

The best preparation for that day is simply stated in (vs. 24) as we deny ourself and take up our cross and follow him for in that way the judge becomes our friend as we go about losing our life to find it in him. The rewarding of men according to their works is deferred until that day for here and now we can't see as God sees concerning each person's works. However, in that day all will be made known and the Righteous Judge will judge all things rightly.

If we are prepared for that day without any doubt, we will be able to say with the Apostle Paul in (2 Timothy 4: 6 – 8), "For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, will award me on that day – and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing."

The Child of Bethlehem is coming again, but this time he will come in power and great glory to redeem every person according to their deeds in the flesh. "This Child is our Coming King."

Pastor Garry Culler