HERALD INTERNATIONAL

Christ Is Coming Again!

Christians are people with an eternal hope. Christ is the substance of their hope. Christ living in every one of them is the hope of glory. Because Christ lives in a believer his hope is kept alive to the very end.

The Risen Christ Was the Message of the Early Church. The Returning Christ Was Their Blessed Hope.

The reappearing of Christ was to them as much a reality as His resurrection. While they talked and lived every day in the power of a risen Christ, they looked forward to His reappearing.

There was an earnest expectation of Christ's imminent return in the early church. This made a profound impact upon their lives. Though their feet were moving about on this earth, their hearts' desires were geared to that blessed hope of the reappearing of Christ. And what a difference it made in their lives! They talked like people whose home was not this world. They lived like people who had an eternal inheritance in heaven.

Somewhere in the course of history, Christians lost the warmth and excitement of the Second Coming of Christ. Though the Second Coming of Christ forms one of the pillars of Christian faith, our conduct as Christians has been a poor demonstration of the reality of this fact.

Living as we do in a "worldly" world, it is imperative on our part as true Christians, to recapture the spirit of "that blessed hope" which permeated the whole atmosphere of the early church. This becomes all the more compelling in an age of crucial happenings that point to the imminent return of Christ…. The blessed hope of His coming binds you to some inescapable responsibilities.

You Have a Task to Do! You Have a Holiness to Strive After! You Have a Vigil to Keep!

When the Lord returns, He wants to see you in this disposition. In the twelfth chapter of Luke's Gospel, the Lord says: *"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning"* (v. 35). He also says, *"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching"* (v. 37). Again He says, *"Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing"* (v. 43).

Just as it pleased God to reveal His Son Jesus in us, it has pleased Him to entrust the Gospel of Christ into our hands. The stewardship of the Gospel is the greatest trust we are holding as His people. When the Master returns He wants to find His servant faithfully carrying on his stewardship. If he is found so doing he is a blessed servant worthy of commendation from his Lord.

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The world is reliving the days of Noah just before the flood and those of Lot just before the destruction of Sodom. Wickedness, immorality and defiance are the order of the day. In an enlightened age of science, a spiritual darkness is enveloping the world. There is utter confusion everywhere. Humanity is out of gear.

Oh, Christians, if there is a time to gird up your loins and keep your lights burning, it is *now or never!* When our Lord said, *"Ye are the light of the world,"* He meant it. His exhortation to us is to shine before a generation groping in darkness so that through us it might see Jesus, the Light of the world, and be saved.

We have the responsibility to keep the light of the Gospel burning. We have to keep the fires of holiness burning. We have to keep the light of the blessed hope of His return burning to the very end. The end is undoubtedly much nearer than we think.

The Lord, our Bridegroom, is coming to gather the church, His Bride, who keeps herself without spot and wrinkle – holy. Our desire to keep ourselves undefiled from the stains of the world is a mark of our readiness to meet the Lord any time.

While with one eye we look for the appearance of the Lord in the clouds, with the other we have to watch our steps lest we should fail in our stewardship. While the craving of our hearts should be to be caught up with the Lord at His glorious appearing at any time, we should be faithfully fulfilling the task committed to us until He comes.

Let the blessed hope of His imminent appearing give you the delight and determination to gird up your loins and keep your lights burning at all costs. Through the smoke and fog of a polluted world, train your eyes upon the horizon to see your King descending in the clouds any moment. Through the din and bustle of a turbulent age, train your ears to hear the trumpet sounds heralding the advent of your King!

There is need of much patient waiting as well as persevering watchfulness. Let us not be found wanting in these at a time when they are most needed. *"For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry"* (Heb. 10:37). *"Surely I come quickly"* (Rev. 22:20). *"We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure"* (1 John 3:2-3).

Do You Have This Blessed Hope? Have You Made Yourself Ready for the Day of Its Realization?

"And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Rom. 13:11-12).

Behold, Your King Cometh!

– Abridged from *All India Prayer Fellowship Bulletin*.

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