

5 WAYS TO PREPARE FOR CHRIST'S RETURN

by Abri Brancken, 30 Sept 2018

INTRODUCTION

The Bible has a lot to say about the last days and the return of Christ. The question is, how should we live? As followers of the LORD we are to be aware of the many references to the return of our Lord. As you read through the Bible, you may be surprised to notice how often this theme is found. There are hundreds of direct statements or allusions to the Second Coming of Christ. Here are some important areas to focus on, ways in which we can prepare ourselves for Christ's return.

1. GET YOUR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT

Know for what and for who you are living for! It's so easy to get caught up in the cares of this world. We have responsibilities, worries, and to-do lists. While it's good to stay busy and productive, it's not good to allow the cares of the world and the many things on our to-do lists to distance us from God and from maintaining a close relationship with Him. Invest in the Kingdom.

In the "parable of the sower" (Matt 13) we see that the cares of this world can easily choke your faith.

Mark 8:35-38

Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

No person, by merely acknowledging Christ's authority, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of the Father - he who produces fruit.

2. LIVE A REPENTANT LIFESTYLE

Repentance is not only feeling sorry for your sin, but turning from sin to God. Repentance takes humility, and it is one of the first steps in establishing a relationship with Jesus. But although repentance must take place at the beginning of a relationship with Christ, it is also something that Christians must continually practice. We will still give into temptation and sin, so we need to humble ourselves before the Lord and confess how we have failed so that we can be restored to a right relationship with Him through His abundant grace and forgiveness.

Revelation 3:3 (Letter to Sardis)

"Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you."

3. KEEP AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

Scripture tells us that our true citizenship is in heaven. We are sojourners here on earth, awaiting our true home with our Saviour. Remember that decisions in this life affect your eternal future.

Philippians 3:20-21

“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body”.

2 Cor 4:17-18

For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient (temporal), but the things that are unseen are eternal.

Keep your eyes on the prize, on Christ. Consider every decision you make whether it is the right “eternal decision”.

4. WATCH AND PRAY

Cultivating a vibrant prayer life is a foundational goal of the Christian life, but even more necessary in being ready to meet Jesus face to face. Prayer is a foundational activity of the believer. Like prayer, reading God's Word is integral to a vibrant Christian life and essential if you are to be prepared for Christ's return. Not only does reading and studying Scripture familiarize us with what Jesus said about the end times and His impending return, but it deepens our knowledge of Him and allows the Holy Spirit to work abundantly in our lives to make us more like Christ as we face the trials of this life.

We must watch and familiarise ourselves with the signs of His coming. There are many prophecies in the Bible that reveal to us the season of Christ's return. Study these passages. When I (Abri) return from Israel in October I will preach on important signs mentioned in the Bible that we are living in the last days.

1 Thessalonians 5:6

“Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”

Luke 12:40

“You must be ready also. The Son of Man is coming at a time when you do not think He will come”.

5. MAKE A STAND FOR THE TRUTH

Matthew 10:32-33

So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

Jesus says that His approval or denial of all people depends on whether they will deny Him or are willing to confess Him before others.

Mark 8:35-38

For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.

The Lord says that we must be willing to lose our life and not be ashamed of Him and His words here on earth. What we do now is directly related to our future destiny!

CONCLUSION

1 Cor 15:58

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.