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The Second Coming of Christ:

“Reasons to Rejoice”

1 Thessalonians 2:19–20

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Jesus is coming again, and Paul gives us three reasons to rejoice at His second coming: hope, joy, and a crown! In this study, we unpack these three reasons to rejoice and keep our gaze heavenward as we wait for the glorious return of our Lord.

1. **1 Thessalonians 2:17–20** – “[17] *But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. [18] Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us. [19] For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? [20] For you are our glory and joy.*”
2. The second coming
 - a. The second coming in 1 Thessalonians
 - i. Chapter one
 1. We are delivered from God's wrath.
 - ii. Chapter two
 1. We have reasons to rejoice.
 - iii. Chapter three
 1. We must love others while waiting for His return.
 - iv. Chapter four
 1. We must be ready for His return.
 - v. Chapter five
 1. We experience spirit, soul, and body transformation in Christ.
 - b. Belief in the second coming
 - i. Jesus and the apostles Paul, Peter, and John preached the second coming.
 - ii. The early church fathers believed in the second coming.
 - iii. 55 percent of Americans believe Jesus is coming again.
 - c. Spiritual vigilance
 - i. Always be ready for the coming of the Lord.
 1. Jesus will come as a thief in the night.
 2. **Hebrews 9:28** – “*Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.*”
 3. **DISCUSS:** What does it mean to be ready for the return of Christ?

d. **1 Thessalonians 1:10** – *“Wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”*

i. God delivered us from personal wrath.

1. Jesus’ death on the cross delivers individuals who trust in Him from personal wrath.

ii. God delivered us from global wrath.

1. **Revelation 6–18** describes the global wrath of God.

2. Jesus will deliver His people from the wrath to come on the whole world.

3. In **Luke 17**, Lot and Noah were righteous men living in unrighteous times.

iii. **DISCUSS**: What is the difference between personal and global wrath? How does knowing you are rescued from both give you peace and change your perspective?

3. **1 Thessalonians 2:19–20** – *“[19] For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? [20] For you are our glory and joy.”*

a. These verses emphasize three reasons to rejoice:

i. Hope

ii. Joy

iii. Crown

4. Our hope

a. The second coming gives us hope.

i. Heaven is the promised hope of every Believer.

1. Heaven is a place of no more’s: no more death, pain, sorrow, or crying (**Revelation 21:4**).

ii. **Titus 2:13** – Christians are *“looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”*

b. Hope is a necessary element in life.

i. In the 1950s, biologist Curt Richter conducted an experiment on the effects of hope on rats.

1. He put rats in cylinders of water, but the water was not high enough for the rats to escape.

2. On average, the rats tread water for 16 minutes before drowning.

3. To test his hypothesis that the rats could tread water longer and were only giving up because they did not see a way out of their situation, he introduced new rats to his experiment.

4. He placed the new rats in the same conditions, but this time, he rescued them at the 16-minute mark.
5. The rescued rats, when reintroduced to the water, tread water for three full days before drowning.
6. Hope is what allows us to endure trials.
7. **DISCUSS:** What is your hope amid trials? How has your ability to endure changed as you drew closer to Christ?
- ii. A famous musician named Brad Delp committed suicide with a French note pinned to his clothes, which said, "I am a lonely soul."
- c. **Romans 15:13** – *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."*
 - i. God is not promising we will have no more hopeless days in this life.
 - ii. God is promising to be our anchor.
 1. We are hopeful because we know God loves us and has forgiven us.
 2. Knowing that Jesus came is where hope begins; knowing that He is coming again sustains us.
- iii. **Luke 21** says this world is a dark place but promises Jesus is coming again!
 1. **Luke 21:25, 28** – *"There will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring. . . . [28] Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."*

5. Our joy

- a. Joy in the Bible
 - i. The word "joy" or "rejoicing" appears 123 times in the Bible.
- b. Happiness versus joy
 - i. Happiness is based on superficial and circumstantial happenings.
 1. When circumstances change, there goes our happiness.
 - ii. Joy is based on the constancy found in a relationship with Jesus.
 1. The Greek word for "joy" is **chara**, meaning "calm delight."
 2. **DISCUSS:** How does God's joy differ from happiness? How have you seen this distinction in your life?
- c. **John 15:11** – *"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full."*
 - i. The world does not offer this kind of joy. Pressing into Jesus does.
 - ii. The second coming brings us joy.

1. **DISCUSS:** Do you meditate on the second coming of Christ? How has that brought you joy regardless of your circumstances?
- iii. The word “joy” is last used in Jude.
 1. **Jude 1:24** – *“To Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.”*
 2. **DISCUSS:** What does **Jude 1:24** promise Believers? How does this promise bring you joy and encouragement?

6. A crown of rejoicing

- a. Paul was fond of the Thessalonians.
 - i. Paul was speaking to the Thessalonians, who were his hope, joy, and crown of rejoicing.
 - ii. However, we can all enjoy these benefits when we see Jesus.
- b. The Bible speaks of many crowns:
 - i. A crown of life
 - ii. A crown of rejoicing
 - iii. A crown of righteousness
 1. Paul mentions this crown in his last letter before his death.
 2. **2 Timothy 4:8** – *“There is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”*
- c. We will cast our crowns before Jesus’ feet (**Revelation 4**).
- d. Our crown of rejoicing may refer to the joy we will have in reuniting with our loved ones.
- e. We will recognize our loved ones in heaven.
 - i. Our knowledge is greater in heaven than on earth.
 1. **1 Corinthians 13:12** – *“Now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.”*
 - ii. Jesus was recognizable to His disciples after rising from the dead.
 1. Our glorified bodies will bear a resemblance to our current ones.
 2. **1 John 3:2** – *“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”*
 - iii. Peter recognized Moses and Elijah in the Mount of Transfiguration despite having never seen them (**Matthew 17**).

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James (NKJV)