



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Philippians, Colossians, Philemon Sermon Series
Supports Session 1: Joy in Prayer
Sermon Title: The Day of the Lord
Passage: Philippians 1:6,10

Connection to Philippians 1:1-11

Characterized as the epistle of joy, Paul's Letter to the church at Philippi urged the members of the congregation to be filled with the joy of the Lord as they shared God's grace. Paul also kept before the congregation the promised return of our Savior, referring to the *day* of Christ Jesus in verses 6 and 10 of chapter one.

Introduction/Opening

Some people light up at the thought of the return of Jesus. We see a sparkle in their eyes whenever the day is mentioned. These same people will gladly plunge into discussing the rapture, millennium, tribulation, and other events related to the return of Jesus. The apostle Paul kept the promise of Jesus' return before the members of Philippi, reminding them of the "day of Christ" as he also called the Philippians to the joy of knowing Jesus.

Outline

1. The "day of Christ" stresses simplicity.
 - a. Some students of the "day of Christ" have strong opinions about the sequence of events surrounding Jesus' return. Such an inflexible template for discussion may complicate the simple joy of considering the return of Jesus. Scripture reveals that the "day of Christ" will be completed in the twinkling of an eye (1 Cor. 15:52) but also involve a thousand year reign (Rev. 20:2-3,4-5,7). Certainly, with events promised to transpire quickly and slowly we must be flexible with the sequence of events we confidently profess and anticipate.
 - b. A serious study of "eschatological events" is admirable but a strict timeline should not be used as a test of orthodoxy nor should a disagreement over interpretations of certain passages related to the return of Jesus be used as a test of fellowship.
 - c. What we can agree upon is the Scriptures promise the physical and visible return of Jesus (Matt. 24:30; Acts 1:11). Promises of the "day of Christ" pervade the New Testament. When the "day of Christ" arrives Jesus will wrap up history and believers will move into eternity with Jesus.

2. The “day of Christ” emphasizes God’s sovereignty.
 - a. Unbelievers are happy to accept a world without God. Current “science” accepts the beginning of our “multiverse” through a cosmic big bang billions of years ago. This one-time event is theorized to have been followed by millions of years of an expanding universe and evolution of life forms with humanity on earth emerging as one form of intelligent life. They theorize the multiverse may contain other forms of intelligent life we have not discovered yet. With this view, humanity is not accountable to a righteous God and must manage alone with human intelligence and advancements.
 - b. Paul the apostle presented God as Creator and Sustainer of our heavens and earth (Col. 1:18-25). As Providence, God orders the events of history and completes His plan of redemption for fallen humanity.
 - c. God’s rule over earthly events includes the “first day” of our salvation (Phil. 1:5). God’s sovereignty exhibits a love that seeks the lost sheep that belong to Him. His reign involves finding us and setting us apart to become members of His family.
 - d. God’s sovereignty includes completing the “good work” of maturity as we move toward His final act of history in this age—“the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:6).
 - e. God’s sovereignty includes the ideal of our growth in purity and blamelessness until the “day of Christ” comes (Phil. 1:10). Believers are to seek to grow as the “day of Christ” is awaited.

3. The “day of Christ” demands adequate preparations of believers.
 - a. The “day of Christ” for many believers is considered infrequently or as a trivial doctrine of the Scriptures. The “day of Christ” is only considered once or twice a year when the subject arises.
 - b. Jesus warned His disciples to be watchful of the “day of Christ.” Jesus charged His followers to be ready. If the return caught believers by surprise there would be inadequate preparation for the “day of Christ” (Matt. 24:42,44).
 - c. Jesus urged a readiness through faithful service. He compared a lack of preparation to unworthy wedding attendants failing to bring an adequate supply of oil as they awaited the wedding. Jesus also warned of failing to use our spiritual gifts or talents knowing we would be held accountable when the master returned. Such a lack of readiness indicates a lack of belief resulting in consternation on judgment day (Matt. 25:26).
 - d. Paul kept the “day of Christ” before the congregations he served. Regular contemplation of the “day of Christ” should prompt us to adequate preparations for His return.

Conclusion

Paul anticipated the return of Jesus during his lifetime. Obviously, Paul’s earthly pilgrimage ended, and Jesus did not return. Was Paul wrong since Jesus did not return during his life? No. Paul was right to display his fervent hope and constant thoughts of the imminent return of Jesus. We cannot know the date of Jesus’ return, and it is folly to predict the “day of Christ,” but we should joyfully anticipate the return of Jesus and reflect the “day of Christ” in our testimonies. I would be delighted if friends and family at my memorial service wondered, “He spoke often

about the return of Jesus. Was he delusional or wrong?” May our countenance brighten as we reflect on that day.

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