

June 2003: The Last Days: Confronted by the Reality of Christ (Part 1 of 3)

by Aaron Greenway

While war wages in certain parts of the world, and also as the Christians are waging war against the Prince of Darkness with their prayers, we are reminded of the words of Jesus, who said, "There will be wars and rumors of wars" (Matthew 24:6). We can see that world events are coming together in a greater and eternal purpose: **the Coming and the Reign of Jesus Christ.** Because of this, of all we talk about for the following months, Jesus has to be the focus of our thoughts. For the next few months I hope to deal with the issue of his second coming in perspective with our daily lives and how those lives are lived.

In those first days of the church, many councils were formed to combat different heresies invading the church. One such debate was about the humanity of Jesus in which Apolinarianism said that Christ was not completely human when He came to the earth. Rather he was only unified with human flesh, a kind of ghost, a phantom. That was intolerable and contradictory for many who say Jesus as completely human (which was necessary so that each person could be saved), and completely divine at the same time. If Christ was not completely human, He couldn't have died on the cross for our sins. If Christ had not come in flesh and bone, the guiltless putting on Himself the sins of the guilty, he could not have been used as a sacrifice for sin. God could not have declared Himself "the guilty" without representing all of mankind. How could He have done this without becoming one of us. According to what the Biblical text implies, Christ will return to the earth as a human, just as He is God (Acts 1:11).

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Confronted with this idea, my heart cries out to God, "*Lord, revive me again! Renew me!*" I don't want to be the same! I don't want to live a life as if God is not there. . .

The Apostle John said, "Don't love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in Him" (1 John 2:15). If this is so, the reality is even more serious.

When Christ came the first time, he came as a baby in a manger. All of creation never ever would be the same. But there is coming a day when He will come upon the clouds in all His glory and all of humanity will be shaken. Those who have lived lives of rebellion against God will be judged; those that belong to Christ will be saved. It will seem then that the reality that we experience then will be far from what we know to be “reality” today. We cannot imagine not going to work in the morning or to the movies, or filling our cars up with gas, or rebuilding our homes. But, this is the way our distant memories will become as we come face to face with ourselves, seeing ourselves for who we really are, because God will reveal us (Hebrews 4:13).

We all know this. For some of us, we have been taught this for many years and even then, it is very easy to pretend as if Jesus is not coming back for another two thousand years, almost as if it were a fairy tale. It is very easy to turn away from God. Do you know why? Because we are selfish. Without the power of Christ in us by the work of the Holy Spirit, we would reject our wonderful God who has loved us and we would dive headfirst into a pool of wickedness and sin, or whatever we happened to think of at the time. The reason why we don't do that is because God has his hand on us. If we are flirting with sin, then we have allowed ourselves to become distracted. We have fallen in love with immediate pleasures and the images of the world. It is better to truly love God with all of our heart so that when His Son returns, we will not be ashamed.

I say all of that to say this. The Scriptures say that in the last days, that people will forget about God. But the reality of his presence and the power of the resurrected Christ came as the direct revelation to humanity and even to this day, the Holy Spirit is working and opening the hearts of people so that they can see who Christ Jesus is. All this doesn't just happen once. It has to keep happening because we have sinful natures that have that potential to wander. This concept makes me tear up because God has been very good to me.

Confronted with this idea, my heart cries out to God, “Lord, revive me again! Renew me!” I don't want to be the same! I don't want to live a life as if God is not there. I want a continuous and powerful encounter with Him daily. This is the reality of a God who wants us to search Him out. He wants our eyes fixed on His so that when He returns, we will not stand ashamed

for the time we wasted on the earth. We will not carry the agony of knowing that we were consumed with the things of the world. The Apostle John said, “Don’t love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in Him” (I John 2:15). If this is so, the reality is even more serious.

God is the only hope and in these last days we need Him more than ever. Instead of forgetting our Creator, we must love Him so that when He comes back to get us, we will recognize Him and we will stand without shame. The final hour is drawing near. Look at the signs around you. If God has saved us, let us then live for Him.