

The Wednesday Word, April 29, 2020: Til He Comes

My friend Keith Lamb in his delightful book 'Failed yet Forgiven' says "There are three phases of anticipation of the coming of the Lord in the New Testament scriptures.

1. Them that **Wait** for Him (2 Thessalonians 3:5; 1 Corinthians 1:7).
2. Them that **Look** for Him (Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 9:28).
3. Them that **Love** His appearing (2 Timothy 4:8).

May we learn to not only wait and look for His return but also to love the very thought of it.

Jesus is coming back soon.

How soon?

We don't know ...but we are expecting Him.

For how long should we expect Him?

Till He comes (1 Corinthians 11:12; 1 Corinthians 16:22).

'**Till He comes**' could well be the motto and watchword for the church. In fact, the early Christians loved the truth of the Lord's return so much that they greeted each other with the Aramaic word *maranatha*.

What did that word 'maranatha' mean?

Simply translated, maranatha means "the Lord is coming back." 'Maranatha' was a deeply held promise and vital hope. When they met for fellowship, they would greet each other with the word "Maranatha." When they would part, they'd say Maranatha, God bless you till He comes. They had an expectancy that the Lord would return at any time.

We really should encourage the hope of His second coming. Jesus promoted it, for example, when He said to Peter, "If I will that he tarries **till I come**, what is that to you? Follow me" (John 21:23; John 14:1-3).

Again, to the folks in Thyatira, He says, "That which you have already hold fast **till I come**" (Revelation 2:25)."

The apostolic instructions for the Breaking of Bread also point us to the same truth saying that, as we take the Communion, we "do show the Lord's death **till he comes**" (1 Corinthians 11:26). Thus the Communion teaches us to not only remember Him but to expect Him.

For how long?

Till He comes!

At His first coming, Christ came here and was given "a crown of thorns"—the emblem of the curse—a reed was put in His right hand in bitter mockery. That same hand was then pierced with nails and fastened to the cross. However, at His second coming, He will be crowned with

"many crowns," out of His mouth will go a "sharp sword," (Revelation 19:15) and that once pierced hand will hold a rod of iron. That will be a sad day for the Christ rejecter.

But for the believer, these are wonderful words, **'Till He Comes.'**

By the way, it has been observed that in Jewish thought the presence of God is regularly connected with the cloud.

For example, Moses met God in the cloud.

It was in the cloud that God came to the Tabernacle.

It was the cloud which filled the Temple when it was dedicated. (see Exodus 16:10, Exodus 19:9, Exodus 33:9, 1 Kings 8:10).

Is it any wonder then that we discover that Jesus is coming back in the clouds? He is the true God of all the earth. We read, "Behold, he cometh with **clouds**; and every eye shall see him, ... (Revelation 1:7).

May we all come to look for and love His return and appearing.

For how long?

Till He Comes.

"Lo! He comes with clouds descending,
Once for favoured sinners slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending,
Swell the triumph of His train:
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
God appears on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold Him
Robed in dreadful majesty;
Those who set at naught and sold Him,
Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
Deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
Shall the true Messiah see."
John Cennick

And that's the Gospel Truth!