

# **MAKING OURSELVES READY FOR THE LORD'S COMING**

**Sister conference**  
9 december 2023

## **SCHEDULE**

Saturday 9 december 2023

09h00 - 10h30 Message 1

11h00 - 12h30 Message 2

15h00 - 16h30 Message 3

## Message One

### **Making Ourselves Ready for the Lord's Coming by Loving His Appearing and Not Loving the Present Age**

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 4:8, 10, 18; Rom. 12:2; 1 John 2:15; 5:19b; Rev. 17:14; 22:20

#### **I. If the Lord's second coming is precious to us, we will love His appearing— 2 Tim. 4:8:**

- A. Loving the Lord's appearing and loving the Lord Himself are inseparable—  
1 Cor. 2:9; 2 Tim. 4:8.
- B. If we are waiting for the Lord to come, we should be those who love His appearing—  
1 Thes. 1:10; 2 Tim. 4:8.
- C. The Lord's appearing, His coming back, is a warning, an encouragement, and  
an incentive to us—vv. 1, 18:
  1. We should love the Lord's appearing and look forward to it with earnest  
expectation and joy—Rev. 22:20.
  2. We should have a living that loves the Lord's appearing; this causes us not  
to be discouraged but to remain faithful to the end—2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 17:14.

#### **II. "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him"—1 John 2:15:**

- A. The world is an evil system arranged systematically by Satan—vv. 15-17; James  
4:4:
  1. God created man to live on the earth for the fulfillment of His purpose,  
but His enemy, Satan, in order to usurp the God-created man, formed an  
anti-God world system on this earth by systematizing people with culture,  
education, industry, commerce, entertainment, and religion—Eph. 3:11; Gen.  
1:26-28; 2:8-9; 4:16-24.
  2. All the things on the earth, especially those related to mankind, and all the  
things in the air have been systematized by Satan into his kingdom of dark-  
ness to occupy people and frustrate them from accomplishing the purpose  
of God and to distract them from the enjoyment of God—1 John 2:15-17.
  3. The world is against God the Father, the things in the world are against the  
will of God, and those who love the world are enemies of God—vv. 15-17;  
James 4:4.
- B. "The whole world," the satanic system, "lies in the evil one"—1 John 5:19b:
  1. "The whole world" comprises the satanic world system and the people of the  
world, the fallen human race.
  2. *Lies* means remaining passively in the sphere of the evil one's usurpation  
and manipulation; the whole world and the people of the world are lying  
passively under the usurping and manipulating hand of Satan, the evil one.

3. The Greek word rendered “evil” in 1 John 5:19 refers to one who is pernicious, harmfully evil, one who affects others, influencing them to be evil and vicious; such an evil one is Satan, the devil, in whom the whole world lies.
- C. Satan is utilizing the material world and the things that are in the world to eventually head everything up in the kingdom of Antichrist; at that hour the world system will have reached its zenith, and every unit of it will be revealed to be anti-Christian—2 Thes. 2:3-12.
- III. Loving the Lord’s appearing is in contrast to loving the present age—2 Tim. 4:8, 10:**
- A. An age is a part, a section, or an aspect of the world system of Satan, which is used by him to usurp and occupy people and keep them away from God and His purpose—1 John 5:19; 2:15.
  - B. In 2 Timothy 4:10 *the present age* refers to the world that surrounds, attracts, and tempts us; we cannot contact the world unless we contact the present age of the world.
  - C. Demas loved the present age; due to the attraction of the present age, he forsook the apostle Paul—v. 10.
  - D. In Romans 12:2 Paul exhorts us to not be fashioned according to this age but to be transformed by the renewing of the mind:
    1. *This age* in verse 2 denotes the present, practical part of the world, which stands in opposition to the Body life and replaces the Body life—vv. 4-5.
    2. To be fashioned according to this age means to adopt the modern fashions of the present age; to be transformed is to allow an organic element to be wrought into our being, thus producing an inward metabolic change—v. 2; 2 Cor. 3:18.
    3. Because the present age opposes the church, which is God’s will, we must not be fashioned according to it—Rom. 12:2.
    4. If we are to live in the Body of Christ, we should not follow the present age or be fashioned according to this age or conformed to it—vv. 4-5.
  - E. If we love the present age, we will take sides with the world; if we love the Lord’s appearing, we will take sides with Him and fight with Him for His interests—2 Tim. 4:1-2, 4-8, 10.
- IV. Those who love the Lord, wait for His coming, and love His appearing will overcome—1 Cor. 2:9; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 22:20; 17:14:**
- A. Loving the Lord’s appearing is a proof that we love the Lord and live for Him today; hence, it also becomes a condition for us to receive His reward—2 Tim. 4:8, 18.
  - B. To love the Lord’s appearing does not mean that we should not live a normal life; rather, the more we love His appearing, the more we need to live a normal life today—Matt. 24:40-42; 2 Thes. 1:10; 3:6-12; 1 Tim. 5:8.
  - C. As those who love the Lord Jesus, take Him as our life, live Him, and magnify Him, we should await His coming and love His appearing; this should be our heart’s desire and our living as those who hope to enter into His joy, be saved into the Lord’s heavenly kingdom, and receive the crown of righteousness—2 Tim. 4:8, 18.

## Message Two

### Making Ourselves Ready for the Lord's Coming by Growing in Life unto Maturity

Scripture Reading: Heb. 6:1; Eph. 4:13; Col. 1:27-29; 4:12; Rev. 14:1-5

#### I. In his Epistle, James uses the illustration of a farmer awaiting with long-suffering the precious fruit of the earth—5:7:

- A. The Lord Jesus is actually the real Farmer, the unique Farmer—Matt. 13:3.
- B. While we are awaiting with long-suffering the Lord's coming, He, as the real Farmer, is awaiting with patience our maturity in life as the firstfruits and the harvest of the field—Rev. 14:4, 14-15.
- C. If we pray, "Lord, come back quickly," the Lord may say, "While you are awaiting My coming back, I am awaiting your maturity; only your maturity can hasten My coming back."
- D. It is a great help for us to realize that if we are serious about awaiting the Lord's coming back, we need to grow in life unto maturity.

#### II. To be mature is to have Christ formed in us—Gal. 4:19:

- A. Christ was born in us when we believed into Him (John 3:6, 15-16), He lives in us in our Christian life (Gal. 2:20b), and He will be formed in us at our maturity (4:19):
  1. The last stage of transformation is maturity, the fullness of life:
    - a. God's eternal purpose can be accomplished only through our transformation and maturity—Gen. 1:26; Col. 1:28; 2:19; 4:12.
    - b. Maturity is a matter of having the divine life imparted into us again and again until we have the fullness of life—John 10:10b.
  2. Maturity is a matter of the enlargement of capacity—Psa. 4:1:
    - a. Maturity in life is the sum total of receiving the discipline of the Holy Spirit—Heb. 12:5-11.
    - b. Others may see a person who has matured in life, but they cannot see the accumulated discipline of the Holy Spirit which that person has received secretly day by day throughout the years—2 Cor. 1:8-10; Gen. 47:7, 10.
  3. God will sovereignly use persons, things, and events to empty us of everything that has filled us and to take away every preoccupation so that we may have an increased capacity to be filled with God—Luke 1:53; Matt. 5:6.
- B. Christ being formed in us is needed that we may mature in the divine sonship and be sons of full age—Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 8:15; Eph. 1:5:
  1. Since the time of our regeneration, the Lord has been working in us so that we may have His image—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29.
  2. When the Lord has fully worked His image into us and is fully expressed through us, we will be mature in life—Eph. 3:16-17.
- C. As used in the New Testament, the word *mature* refers to the believers' being full-grown, mature, and perfected in the life of God, which they received at the time of regeneration:



1. We should never be content with ourselves but should pursue growth and maturity in the life of Christ; we need to go on, to be brought on, to maturity by forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, pursuing toward the fullest enjoyment and gaining of Christ for the uttermost enjoyment of Christ in the millennial kingdom—Phil. 3:12-15.
2. The prerequisite for maturity in the spiritual life is to grow continually in the divine life—Eph. 4:15.
3. The ultimate issue of the believers' growth and maturity in the life of Christ is the full-grown man—the church as the Body of Christ growing into a mature man—v. 13.

**III. The goal of Paul's ministry was to present every man mature, full-grown, in Christ for the one new man—Col. 1:28-29; 3:10-11:**

- A. The Greek word rendered "full-grown" in 1:28 may also be translated "perfect," "complete," or "mature."
- B. Paul's ministry was to dispense Christ into others so that they would be perfect and complete by maturing in Christ unto full growth—Eph. 4:13.
- C. The more we get into Christ, the more He comes into us; and the more He comes into us, the more we get into Him; it is by this cycle that we grow in life—Col. 1:27-28.
- D. Our goal in preaching the gospel to sinners and in fellowshiping with the saints is to minister Christ into them so that they may mature in life and be presented full-grown in Him—3:10-11; Eph. 4:13-14.

**IV. To be ready for rapture we need the maturity in life—Matt. 24:40-41:**

- A. The rapture is the consummating step of God's full salvation in life—the transfiguration, the redemption, of our body—Rom. 5:10; 8:23; Phil. 3:21:
  1. Because of the demand of the divine life that we have received and because of the intensity of our love toward the Lord, we desire to pursue a life that awaits the Lord's coming—1 Thes. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23.
  2. As we love the Lord and await His coming, we hope to be raptured to the presence of the Lord—Matt. 24:40-41; Luke 17:31-36; 21:36.
- B. To become matured is not an overnight matter; for the Lord's coming, we need to prepare ourselves, love Him, and grow in Him so that at His appearing we may be mature to be raptured—Rev. 14:1-5.
- C. Marks of maturity include the following—Heb. 6:1:
  1. Being filled with the divine life that changes us—Eph. 3:19.
  2. Reigning in life—Rom. 5:17.
  3. Being able to eat solid food—Heb. 5:12-14.
  4. Being full-grown in understanding—1 Cor. 14:20.
  5. Being perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect—Matt. 5:48.
  6. Seeing the Body, knowing the Body, living in the Body and for the Body, caring for the Body, and honoring the Body—Eph. 4:13-16.

Message Three

**Making Ourselves Ready for the Lord's Coming  
by Giving Heed to the Prophetic Word  
as to a Lamp Shining in a Dark Place  
Until the Day Dawns and the Morning Star Rises in Our Hearts**

Scripture Reading: 2 Pet. 1:19; Psa. 119:105, 130; Rev. 2:28; Mal. 4:2; 1 Thes. 5:4-6

- I. It is crucial for believers to give heed to the prophetic word—2 Pet. 1:19a:**
  - A. Prophecies are matters that God requires us to know, and believers should give heed to them—1 Pet. 1:10; 2 Pet. 3:2; Luke 1:70.
  - B. The Lord Jesus charged us to understand the prophecies; this clearly shows that the believers must pay attention to the prophecies in the Bible—Matt. 24:15; cf. Dan. 9:24-27.
  - C. If the church does not pay adequate attention to these prophecies, many believers will inevitably lose faith, be deceived by lies, be destroyed because of a lack of that knowledge, and forget the Lord's coming by not being watchful—Hosea 4:6; 1 Thes. 5:4-6; Matt. 24:42; 1 Pet. 5:8.
  - D. If the believers do not have the prophecies in the Bible, they will fall into darkness—Acts 26:18; John 12:35-36; Eph. 5:8-9:
    1. The present age is the nighttime—Rom. 13:12; 1 Thes. 5:4-8.
    2. When the Lord Jesus comes, the day will dawn (2 Pet. 1:19c), and the next age, the kingdom age, will be the daytime.
- II. Peter likens the word of prophecy in the Scripture to a lamp shining in a dark place—v. 19b:**
  - A. This indicates that this age is a dark place in the dark night (Rom. 13:12), and all the people of this world are moving and acting in darkness (cf. Acts 26:18).
  - B. The prophetic word of the Scriptures, as the shining lamp to the believers, conveys spiritual light that shines in their darkness (not merely knowledge in letters for their mental apprehension), guiding them into a bright day, even to pass through the dark night until the day of the Lord's appearing dawns—2 Pet. 1:19b; 2 Tim. 4:8; 1:12.
  - C. Before the Lord as the sunlight appears, we need this word as light to shine over our footsteps—Mal. 4:2; Psa. 119:105, 130.
  - D. If we give heed to the prophetic word in the Bible, which shines as a lamp in a dark place, we will have Christ rising in our hearts to shine in the darkness—2 Pet. 1:19b.
- III. We need to give heed to the lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in our hearts—v. 19c:**
  - A. The Greek words rendered "dark place" may also be translated "murky place," a place that is squalid, dry, and neglected.
  - B. *The day* is a metaphor illustrating a time coming that will be full of light, as a bright day dawning, with the morning star rising, before its dawning, in the hearts of the believers, who are illuminated and enlightened by giving heed to the shining word of prophecy in the Scripture:

1. This will cause and encourage the believers to earnestly seek the Lord's presence and be watchful so that they will not miss the Lord in the secret part of His coming (parousia), when He will come as a thief—Matt. 24:27 and footnote 1, vv. 42-43; 2 Thes. 2:8 and footnote 3.
  2. This metaphor must allude to the coming age, the day of the kingdom, as a day that will dawn at the appearing (the coming) of the Lord as the Sun of righteousness, whose light will shine to break through the gloom of the dark night of this age—Mal. 4:2.
- C. The morning star appears in the darkest hour, prior to dawn—Rev. 22:16b; cf. Num. 24:17; Matt. 2:2, 9-10:
1. This indicates that Christ will appear as the bright morning star in the darkest time, prior to the end of this age—Rev. 22:16b.
  2. The Lord's appearing as the morning star and His appearing as the Sun of righteousness will not be at the same time—2:28; Mal. 4:2:
    - a. The morning star appears before dawn, and the appearing of the sun occurs after the dawning of the day.
    - b. As the Sun of righteousness after the dawning of the day, Christ will appear publicly to all the people on the earth—v. 2.
    - c. As the bright morning star before the dawning of the day, He will appear privately to the overcomers who are watching, preparing, and waiting for Him—Rev. 22:16b.
    - d. He will secretly give Himself as the morning star to those who love Him and who watch and wait for Him that they may have the priority to taste the freshness of His presence at His coming back after a long absence—2:28.
- D. When we give heed to the word of the Scriptures as to a lamp shining in a dark place, the condition within us will be like the day dawning and the morning star rising in our hearts—2 Pet. 1:19c:
1. Figuratively, *the day dawns* refers to the coming age of the kingdom as a bright day dawning—cf. Matt. 13:43.
  2. Concerning the types of Christ, the entire Bible begins with Him as light and ends with Him as the morning star—Gen. 1:3; Rev. 2:28; 22:16b.
  3. *The morning star* refers to Christ who, in the darkest hour of the night, prior to the dawning of the kingdom age, will secretly rise in the hearts of those who love His appearing—v. 16b.
  4. If we continually give heed to the shining word of the Scriptures, we will have the kingdom as the day dawning in us and Christ as the morning star rising in our hearts before His actual appearing as the bright morning star—2 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 2:28.
  5. Christ as the morning star will be given to the overcomers as their first reward; we need to make ourselves ready for the secret appearing of the Lord as the morning star—vv. 28-29.