

Prepare oh Bride: Christ is coming Again

A cartoon tellingly sums up one aspect of our modern mind. A bearded and unhappy prophet of doom is pictured walking the sidewalk with a picket sign bearing this grim message: "We're doomed! The world will NOT end!" The humour of this cartoon lies in the fact that the end of the world is no longer a frightening fact, whereas the continuation of the present world-order is. A rather uncomfortable thought? Of course! No era lacks its fears and its problems. There has never been a time without frustration and trouble. Every generation has produced its prophets warning about the dread of their age. But when the fear of the age outweighs its hopes, then we are in trouble. In 1954, Bernard Baruch found modern mentality increasingly showing a deep concern for the future." Everywhere we look we find further evidences of this dread breakdown."

We see lack of stability everywhere. Nervous problems are the order of the day. Authority is being questioned. So many want to do their own thing, without knowing what actually their own thing is. People are on the run. They are on the move. They don't want to stay where they are. Every little inkling pointing to hope is eagerly grasped. President Nixon's trip to China and his chopstick policy are supposed to be the latest signposts of hope.

What are the expectations for the future? Humanly speaking, there is no hope. Our age has lost its ability to tackle its problems; and it has developed an appetite for the most tasteless types of amusements. Mankind has now the ability to make the greatest fireworks in history. It has the power to destroy itself. But thank God that the Christian can express his faith in the coming of the new heaven and earth.

At the end of history stands Jesus Christ. And my Christian readers say. "Yes! It is true. This is our hope". But I dare say that the hope of Christ's return is all but dead among evangelical Christians. Truth touching the second coming is either dead issue of a nice debate over a cup of coffee after church, even threatening church unity as evangelicals have the habit of Biblical hair splitting. The joyful personal element of Christ's return is missing. The bride (the church) is not very eagerly awaiting the bridegroom (Jesus Christ). If the yearning for the advent hope is gone, there must be reasons for it. Let me suggest a few. Many Christians are so comfortable in this world that they have little desire to leave it. Their faith in the hope offered in Christ is more of an insurance for a pleasant future. But why exchange a familiar good for something we know so very little about? And in our society the challenge of Christianity has been replaced by softness. In these times religion has become a comfortable pew.

Why look for a new world to come? Christ has carried the cross and shed His tears; we have but to enjoy the benefits of His suffering in the form of religious pleasure.

History tells us that times of suffering for the church have been the times of looking upward. Hard times have encouraged God's people to look with longing for the return of the Lord. Someone said: "God will wean us from the earth some way – the easy way if possible, the hard way if necessary. It is up to us."

Christ is coming again! Let the church stay awake and long for His coming!

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