

Our Lord's Reentry. No Seventeen

The church of our Lord is future oriented. When the church no longer eagerly expects her Lord's return, she denies her character. Why leave it up to the sects and cults to speak about the return of Christ? We complain readily about the decline of morality, the secularization of our society, but don't we feel too much at home in this world? The cottage by the lake and the trip to Florida seem more appealing than the promised second coming. We have succumbed to a comfortable style of Christianity with shelves of self-help books to provide us with whatever we need to cope with life. But as citizens of the Kingdom should we not eagerly look forward to the return of our King and Saviour, Jesus Christ? When a Dutch citizen during the second World War didn't long for the return of the Queen, he was called a poor citizen. When we no longer earnestly expect our King's return, we can't be called solid Kingdom citizens.

When our Lord ascended to heaven, His disciples were looking intently up into the sky as He was going. Suddenly, two angels stood beside them and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10f.). Some day heaven will be opened and Christ shall come again. His coming will be unexpected, like a thief in the night. Dr. John Stott comments that we should not press the words of the angels into meaning that our Lord's second coming will be like a film of the ascension played backwards, or that he will return to exactly the same spot on the Mount of Olives and will be wearing the same clothes. The "same Jesus" means that His coming will be personal, the Eternal Son still possessing His glorified human nature and body. "In the same way" means that His coming will be visible and glorious. His second coming will be so unlike His first coming. He won't arrive in obscurity and poverty. He will come as the King of glory, as Saviour and Judge. The apostle John, suffering in exile for his faith, was given the solemn assurance of the certainty of Christ's return. The forces of darkness and oppression would not have the last word! When those who crucified our Lord and persecuted His Church will see Him, they will fear and tremble. The enemies of the Church will perish and the children of God will be welcomed home. "Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the people of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen"(Rev.1: 7).