

JESUS CHRIST IS COMING AGAIN: BE READY AND MAKE OTHERS READY

TEXT: Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness (2 Peter 3:11)

READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15; Mark 1:1-8

HYMN: Come thou long-expected Jesus – StF 169

Peter wrote to the church at a time when people were giving up on their expectation of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Most of the Apostles and other eyewitnesses of Jesus' ministry were dying, the church was under heavy persecution and false teachers were discouraging them that their faith was useless because Jesus had delayed in coming. To such a despairing people, Peter's letter emphasised that God's concept of time is different from ours and that his patience gives us time to change and attain his nature before he comes. Peter then vividly describes what will happen when the Lord Jesus Christ returns: First, he will come as a thief comes in the night – unannounced, unexpected. Secondly, the earth and its elements will all be destroyed.

We may be living in an age where we have more reasons to be discouraged or even doubt the second coming of Christ. Yet, we are encouraged to keep expecting and being ready by living lives without spot and without blame. The unexpectedness of Christ and the destruction of the earth should not make us despair. Rather, it should raise hope in us that Jesus will meet us ready and will inaugurate the new heaven and the new earth.

The Gospel of Mark introduces us to the beginning of the Good News of Jesus Christ and straightaway, launches us into the life and ministry of John the Baptist. Our focus here is that John came to prepare the way for Christ's first coming. He did so by preaching the message of repentance and baptising those who believed, making them ready for the ministry of Jesus.

As we await the second coming of Jesus, we are called upon to be ready, because he could come at any time. Yet we are also invited, just as John the Baptist, to prepare others, our neighbours and those living in our communities, by preaching the message of God's salvation to them. We are called to be ready and to make others ready for Jesus is coming soon. We have the divine calling to introduce our family, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances to Christ Jesus.