



# Potomac Hills

## Presbyterian Church, PCA



By Grace Alone ~ Through Faith Alone ~ In Christ Alone

The Reverend Dr. David V. Silvernail, Jr.  
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Matthew 24:29–35  
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### *“The Return of the King”*

The 80<sup>th</sup> Sermon in a series on the Gospel of Matthew entitled  
*“The King and His Kingdom!”*

#### **Matthew 24:29-35**

*“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>30</sup> Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup> And He will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

*<sup>32</sup> “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>33</sup> So also, when you see all these things, you know that He is near, at the very gates. <sup>34</sup> Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. <sup>35</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.”*

*Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us the Scriptures and making us Your people. You have brought us to this amazing Gospel to learn more about your Son, Jesus. We ask You this morning to give us the grace to understand Your hard teaching here. First of all, thank You that You have revealed to us these truths about the coming of our Lord. We ask that by a diligent use of the ordinary means of grace, as we study Your Word, that You would open our eyes to see wonderful things from this Gospel. We ask that You would grip our hearts with these truths, and*

*that we would long more and more for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. So by Your Spirit open this Gospel to us and help us to see Jesus, and, as always, for this we need Your grace. Give us the desire to learn from You this morning, in the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.*

### **INTRODUCTION: *This Is Hard To Understand!*<sup>1</sup>**

Not all of you will understand this chapter. Not all of you will comprehend its message or relate to its promise. You won't understand it if:

You've never **failed** and are intolerant of those who have.

Your life is as **hygienic** as a new hospital and your soul could pass the white glove test.

You are a red-hot **zealot** who thinks God is lucky to have you on His side.

You dreamed of a perfect home **and got it**; dreamed of the perfect job **and got it**; dreamed of the problem-free life **and got it**.

Your pillow has never known **tears**, your prayers have never known **anguish**, and your faith has never known **doubt**.

If you are **tearless** and **fearless** and can't understand why others aren't, then this chapter is going to sound like a foreign language.

Why? Because this is a chapter on survival. The next few pages deal with coping with pain. The following paragraphs were not written for those on top of the world, but for those trapped under one which has collapsed. If you can relate to that description, then turn to Matthew 24 and get ready for some assurance.

That may surprise you if you know anything about Matthew 24. You remember it as the neighborhood hangout for the end-times fanatics. The camping ground for eschatological mathematicians and last-days prophets.

It deserves that reputation. This section, known as the Olivet Discourse, is Christ's proclamation of the end times. Scholars have dedicated more than one book to this one chapter to answer one question ... **What Is Jesus Saying?**

Ominous phrases lurk in the chapter: "*wars and rumors of wars,*" "*the destroying terror,*" and "*how terrible it will be for women who are pregnant.*" Eerie descriptions of the sun growing dark, the moon not giving its light, the stars falling, and the powers of heaven shaking. How do we explain it?

Some feel the entire chapter is symbolic and mustn't be interpreted literally. Others feel it is a combination of comments equally applied to the destruction of Jerusalem and the return of Christ. Still others state that the chapter has one purpose and that is to prepare us for the final judgment.

So, open your Bibles and turn with me to Matthew 24, and let's see what it says. For the last couple of weeks we've been in this great passage where Jesus sets forth His teaching about the end times and the Second Coming. In the first three verses of Matthew 24, we saw two particular questions that the disciples asked. Look back at verse 3 ... **Matthew 24:3**, "*As He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?'*"

And so, in answer to these questions, Jesus set about giving this sermon to His disciples. It stretches into Matthew 25, and we've already looked through verse 28 where the Lord Jesus responds to the disciples, primarily speaking with them about things that are going to be

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<sup>1</sup> The Introduction is adapted from *And The Angels Were Silent*, by Max Lucado, pages 117–125.

happening in Jerusalem in their lifetime. Things that are going to happen with regard to the destruction of the nation of Israel and of the Temple. Things that they'll see with their own eyes. But now the Lord Jesus turns directly to the issue of His Second Coming and begins to speak. We'll pick up at verse 29 and hear ...

**v. 29–31: THE WORD OF CHRIST ABOUT HIS COMING** <sup>2</sup>

*“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>30</sup> Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup> And He will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”*

Here Jesus goes on to speak of His second coming. And we learn here that Christians must carefully heed Jesus' teaching about His coming. If we're to be watchful for His coming, then we need to know what Jesus says about His coming, and we must begin to cultivate biblical desires and affections for His coming. And Jesus makes it clear that you couldn't possibly miss the coming of the Son of Man.

However, verses 29 and 30 are very difficult, among the most difficult verses in the Bible to understand outside of the Book of Revelation. And they've provoked a lot of debate. The difficult words are found in the very first phrase of verse 29, *“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>30</sup> Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”* Look again at those first words of verse 29, *“Immediately after the tribulation of those days.”*

Now here's the problem. Jesus has been talking about the tribulation of Jerusalem. He has spoken about a tribulation which is going to occur in that generation. And then He says, “Immediately after those days of tribulation, I am going to come again.” And that has provoked various responses.

**Liberals** pick up this passage, and they say, “Hmm. Jesus thought He was coming again soon after the fall of Jerusalem. But He didn't. And so He was wrong.” That's what the liberals say. Now we know that they're wrong because they contradict Jesus. So let's cross that one off and move on to the next one.

**Heretics** come to this passage and they say, “Jesus said that He was coming soon after the destruction of Jerusalem and the tribulation of those days. And so He must have. But since everybody seems to be uncertain, it must have been some sort of a **secret** coming, a **spiritual** coming. Yeah. That's it. It was a spiritual coming in AD 70 or so.” But what did Jesus just say about the **unmistakability** of His coming? He said you can't miss it. So we can cross that one off the list.

And so it's clear that what Jesus is saying is not that He was coming again in a few weeks or a few months or a few years or a few decades, **and didn't**, but that consistent with everything He said from verse 4 on, that the tribulation of the fall of Jerusalem is not equivalent to the tribulation of *“those days.”* That is, there will be the initial expression of this tribulation in the

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**2 The Exposition of the text is largely adapted from the sermons, “Don't Be Misled, My Coming Will Be Unmistakable” 8/8/99, and “The Fig Tree: That Day and Hour No Man Knows” 8/15/99, both by Dr. J. Ligon Duncan, First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MS, 3/14/99, [www.fpcjackson.org](http://www.fpcjackson.org).**

fall of Jerusalem, but that there will be a total time of trial and tribulation **in between the advents** ... which means in between the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Christ. And after **that** time, after that whole time **between the advents**, **THEN He will come again**.

Look at these words together. First let's look at *“those days”* in verse 29. What does it mean when He says, *“Immediately after those days?”* Does *“those days”* refer to the destruction of Jerusalem? Is this saying that Jesus will come immediately after Jerusalem's fall? No. So what does it mean? *“Those days”* refers to **the entire period of the time** between the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Christ. *“Those days”* refers to the whole period between His comings. Once you understand that, the word *“immediately”* doesn't give you a problem. Once you understand what *“those days”* refers to, *“immediately”* is no longer difficult. Now this *“immediately,”* this word, this concept, meaning **the imminent return of Christ** ... is very important for the living of the Christian life.

R. A. Torrey, a preacher of the last century, has said, “The imminent return of our Lord is the great biblical argument for a pure, unselfish, devoted, unworldly, active life of service.” You remember the disciples were expecting **what** to happen? They were expecting Jerusalem to fall, Christ to come again, and then what? That they would **reign** with Christ. They would **judge** the nations. They would sit on **thrones**. And that's why James and John were jockeying to sit at the right hand of Christ. Because they thought that they were in for some **ruling**. They were in for some **crowns**.

And now what's Jesus saying? “Not only is *“the end”* to be distinguished from the fall of Jerusalem, but in between the whole time of My 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, you will **NOT** be reigning in victory. You'll be undergoing **persecution** for My sake. And so the way that you'll express your ministry for Me, and your love for Me, here on earth, is not in sitting and judging nations now. That will come later. **Now** you will **suffer** for My sake.” And so He's completely changing the disciples' understanding of what they're about to face. And in so doing is preparing them to be **faithful** until He comes again.

Notice again in these verses, these incredible things which accompany the coming of Christ, and just add them to the fact that His coming will be unmistakable. He tells us that when He comes the sun will be dark, and the moon will not give its light, the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of heaven will be shaken. Now these descriptions are somewhat mind-bending. You can't **even begin** to imagine what this means for the whole cosmos.

Let me just mention two things however. This language is drawn directly out of the Old Testament prophets. It occurs over and over again in the writings of the prophets. And it is also drawn out of the book of Genesis. What were the first creations of God that were given rule over other parts of the creation? ... the sun, the moon, and the stars. **Genesis 1:16-18**, *“And God made the two great lights — the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night — and the stars. <sup>17</sup> And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.”*

What does **this** passage say? It's at least saying this: that when Christ comes again the rule of the sun and the moon are going to be set aside and displaced in order to show that all things have been put **under His authority**. The book of Revelation mentions this as well. You remember it tells us that in the new heavens and the new earth, there is no sun because there is no need for light because the Lord is the light. What is God doing? He's showing the **absolute reign and authority** of King Jesus. There's nothing in creation that He needs in order to reign

and rule. Everything is placed under His feet – even the cycle of day and night provided by the sun and moon. It’s an awesome expression of the **totality** of the **power** and the **rule** and the **sovereignty** of King Jesus. And of course, you can't miss this. When the sun and the moon are darkened, you won't miss it. So His coming will be **unmistakable**.

We see, of course, in verse 30 that Jesus makes it clear that **the sign** of the coming of the Son of Man ... **IS the coming** of the Son of Man. The Son of Man's coming is the sign of His coming. It will result, we are told, in **the mourning of sinners**. Sinners who **haven't** trusted in Jesus will **mourn** because they haven't embraced Him, and when He shows up, they'll realize it's too late, and so they'll **mourn** in grief and anguish. The Lord describes this in the Book of Revelation, **Revelation 6:15-17**, *“Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains,<sup>16</sup> calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb,<sup>17</sup> for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”*

However, in verse 31, we're told that it will result in joy and triumph for all those who trust in Him ... **because** they're going to be gathered by the angels. Again verse 31 alludes to the teachings of Old Testament prophets. It mentions the sounding of the trumpets so that Christ's Second Coming is not only going to be **seen**, it's going to be **heard** by everyone. And so all those who are God's children will be gathered to Christ. And this is another word of **assurance** in a time of calamity and crises. God's people can be confident and secure because the Lord will send His ministering angels to gather up all His people.

Now Christians must look for and long for that coming in accordance with Christ's word. The great Scottish commentator Alexander McClaren once said, “The primitive church thought a great deal more about the coming of Christ than it did about death.” I wonder if that can be said of us. I wonder if we think more about the coming of Christ than we think about our own deaths. As we get older, and as we begin to think about death in general, and our own death in particular, I wonder if that's true of us, that we think more about **His coming** than our death? I kind of doubt it. And yet, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is something that God calls upon us to cultivate in our hearts, to have an affection for, to gain a desire for. And so Jesus teaches about it in His Word.

Let's review then what we've seen in this passage. In verses 29 and 30, He tells us that His coming will occur only after much tribulation, and it will be accompanied by a transformation of the world; the darkening of the sun and of the moon and of the stars. And then in verse 31 we read that His coming will be heard as well as seen, and it will be a great day of triumph for His people who will be gathered to Him. This is the clear teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now while all of this helps us to understand **what's** going to happen, it doesn't help us to understand **when**. And so, in answer to the **when** question, Jesus gives us ...

#### **v. 32–34: THE PARABLE OF CHRIST ABOUT HIS TIMING**

<sup>32</sup> *“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>33</sup> So also, when you see all these things, you know that He is near, at the very gates. <sup>34</sup> Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.*

Now, many of the same lessons are carried over into verses 32-34, and, in fact, we're going to see several themes repeated. First of all, Jesus tells us that we need to be realistic about our trials in the here and now. And then He reminds us at the same time, just as we're realistic

about our trials, we need to joyfully expect the glory of His coming. He also tells us that we need to be ready for that coming. And the way that we get ready for His coming is by obedience to Him. Obedience to His Word, especially by a practical acknowledgment of the authority of His Word in our daily lives.

So first off, in verses 32 and 33, Jesus shares a story with His disciples. And it's a story to remind them to be ready. He chooses to share the parable of the fig tree. Many of the trees in Israel were evergreens and so the leaves didn't change, and they didn't lose their leaves. They stayed year-round. But the fig tree did lose its leaves in the winter, but by the summertime, it was back in full leaf again. And so the parable of the fig tree is used by Jesus as an illustration for watching the signs. Jesus is basically using the parable of the fig tree to say, when these things occur, which I've been telling you about, you'll know that My prophecies about the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of Israel are coming about, and that all My words about coming again are going to happen, and so you must be ready. And so He's using the parable of the fig tree to tell them to be ready.

He goes on in verse 33 to say that when all those things have appeared, He's near, He's right at the door. What Jesus is saying is that **all these things** are the signs which He's mentioned in the first half of the chapter. And so when He says, He's near, He's referring to the Second Coming. The point was that the very next step in the unfolding of God's plan, after the fulfillment of all these things, was going to be the Second Coming of Christ. It may take a lot of time, but in terms of sequence, it's the next great event in the unfolding of God's plan.

And so the disciples must be alert for the fulfillment of Jesus' Word. Their present hardships must not dim their future hope. Remember, the disciples thought two things were going to happen. Turn back to the first three verses of Matthew 24. Look at verse 3. The disciples had asked, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age? It's very clear that the disciples thought those things were all going to happen at the same time. When will these things be? When will the destruction of Jerusalem be? And what will be a sign of your coming? Because the disciple reasoned like this. If Jerusalem is going to be destroyed, surely that means the end of the world. If that means the end of the world, it means the coming of Christ in glory. If it means the coming of Christ in glory, it means that we're going to rule with Him as kings, and we're going to judge the nations. So what were the disciples expecting at the end of the world? They were expecting to reign. **They were going** to reign with Christ. **They were going** to judge the world. **They were going** to wipe out the infidels. **They were going** to judge the Romans. It was going to be a time of triumph.

And Jesus has spent much of this chapter saying, let Me tell you friends, you're in for tribulation like you've never seen before. You're going to be persecuted with a greater intensity than we've ever experienced during my three years with you. They're going to kill you, they're going to banish you, they're going to exile you, they're going to do all kinds of things to you. You're going to experience tremendous hardship. And so Jesus makes it clear that they're about to endure incredible trials.

And so, you've been expecting triumph, now Jesus is telling you to expect persecution, but He also goes on to say, I don't **just** want you to expect persecution, I also want you to **joyfully** expect My coming. Because when all these things are seen and heard, then the coming of the Son of Man is near. In other words, the next great thing in the unfolding plan of God is going to be the coming of the Son of Man. He doesn't want His disciples to lose hope, because even though they're not going to experience the triumph they expected **now**, they **are** going to

experience the triumph they expected **later**, it's just going to come at a different time. And so throughout this passage, throughout the entire Olivet Discourse, Jesus' concern is that the disciples **not confuse those two issues**. The issue of the coming trials and tribulations. And the issue of the coming of the Son of Man. Trials and tribulations are coming and so they must be prepared. But the Son of Man is coming too and they must be ready.

And that's the message for us as well, isn't it? Christians must be prepared for present trials. But we must also joyfully expect His coming. We too, like the disciples, must not anticipate triumph in this age. But at the same time, we must not lose hope. We must confidently expect His coming. And we must be ready to rejoice in His coming. Remember, in the last verses of the previous section, Jesus said that at the coming of the Son of Man, the tribes of the earth should do what? Look at verse 30. **They will mourn**, all those who are part of the tribes of the earth, who have rejected the Messiah ... will **mourn**.

But the Lord Jesus wants His disciples to understand that the day of His coming for them won't be a day of mourning. It will be a day of **rejoicing**. It will be a day of **vindication**. It will be a day of **reunion**. It will be a day of **in-gathering**. It will be a day of **fellowship**. It will be a day of **glory** and **triumph** and so He says, even though you're going to go through these present trials, you must look for the coming of the Son of Man with joyful expectation.

Here and now, then, we must do two things. We must be prepared to fight the fight of faith in obedience to His Word and we must be expectant and hopeful because of His certain coming as He promised in His Word. And both of those truths are absolutely essential for His disciples, then and now, to live the Christian life. We must be prepared for the fight of faith, and we must be joyfully expecting His glorious coming. Now Jesus goes on to remind us why in the next verse, which is ...

#### **v. 35: THE WORD OF CHRIST ABOUT HIS AUTHORITY**

<sup>35</sup> *Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.*”

In this place today, among the people here today, there will be two tendencies. Most of us generally have one of these tendencies that's stronger than the other one. Some of us struggle with **assurance**. And though we love the Lord Jesus Christ, and we read His Word, and we follow in His ways, we wrestle with a sense of our eternal security. This verse speaks to that sense of security when it says that it's not possible for God's Word to pass away, even in the most trying of times. And so this verse brings comfort and security to those who struggle.

On the other hand there are those of us who have a tendency to **complacency**. And we can kind of sit back in our easy chair and rock along, and not be diligent in the commands of the Scripture. And this verse reminds us, “Don't be misled. Don't be deceived. Be diligent. Be ready.” And so God, in one little verse, speaks to both of those tendencies among Christians. When Jesus says, **“My words will not pass away”** He is calling on us to be secure, to have the assurance of our salvation, because we can trust His totally faithful and eternal Word. But also, when Jesus says, **“My words will not pass away”** He is calling on us to be faithful in **preparing**, realistic in **readiness**, and diligent in **obedience** because His Word is trustworthy and true, and He calls us to follow Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Now this whole passage reminds us that as Christians we must be wisely and biblically watchful for Christ's coming. How can we be watchful for Christ's coming? Does that mean that we should be looking for signs? That's not what Jesus stresses here. So if it's not about looking for signs, what does it mean to be watchful? Jesus tells us in the passage to be watchful means **to trust in His Word**. Which means that we're to have faith in Christ and in His Word.

Both halves of that sentence are important. First ... Faith, and second ... Christ's Word — those are the two things we need in order to be watchful.

That is, all our thinking about the Second Coming is going to be ordered by what? By our experience? No. By our hunches? No. By the signs we see? No. **But by Christ's Word.** And it's essential if we're going to be watchful that we be trusting, that we be faithfully believing in the Word which Christ has given us here in the Scriptures. That's how a Christian prepares to be watchful for Christ's coming. We are kept **by faith in God's Word.**

Now Jesus' words served as important counsel for His immediate circle of disciples, and for all who were going to go through the adversity and the persecution of the immediate future. But Jesus' words here are no less applicable to us. We must be ready to trust in His word even now. The time in between the advents of Christ is characterized by testing and tribulation. Not triumph, not ultimate rest. The ultimate rest is still to come. All of us have trials to endure here. And the Lord Jesus Christ is telling us we must be ready to trust in His Word even more than our senses in this time of trial and tribulation. And that's a very practical word. Because when people get in a pinch in the midst of a trial, they tend to grasp at straws. They will grasp at anything to find help and hope. And the Lord Jesus Christ is saying to His disciples, "You're going to go through trials, so before you get there, **you've got to have faith in Me, and you've got to anchor your faith in My Word,** or otherwise you'll grasp at straws in your time of trial."

And I find it interesting that John Calvin gives the same warning against the same thing in his commentary on Matthew. He says, "Nothing is more deadly for men who do not know which way to turn in their adversity than to be deceived." And therefore we must anchor our faith and our hope in what? In our circumstances? No. But in Christ and His Word. And so His Words are profoundly practical for us today. All of us are going to go through deep waters at one time or another. You may be there now. Christ is saying, "Anchor your hope in My word, and don't be deceived by those who will mislead."

We must be watchful for His coming. We must be ready. Not by trying to pry into the secret things of God and figure out His timing, but we must be watchful for His coming by being ready for His coming. How are we to be watchful? By doing our Father's business, just like He came to do His Father's business. We are to do our Father's business as if He were coming at any time.

Ever put your house on the market? Realtors can call at any time and tell you that they want to come be and have a preview tour. Or they can call at any time and say, "I want to bring someone by to see the house." And you want that house to sell, and so you want them to bring people by. How do you get ready for the coming of the Realtor? Do you stick your head out the window and wait for them to show up down the street? No, you can never be exactly sure when they'll show up, so you just have to keep the house clean. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, you keep the house clean. That's what Jesus is saying here! He's not saying stick your head out of a window and watch for Me to come. He's saying, keep the house clean. That's how you get ready for the coming of the Son of Man.

Here in verse 35, we have this glorious statement about **the permanent authority of Christ's words.** Jesus makes it plain that heaven and earth will pass away, but My Word will never pass away. The cosmos, the universe, the sky, everything we know in this universe will pass away, but not His Words. His Words will not fail, they will come true. Indeed, He's saying that His Words are more certain than the earth we stand on. His Words are more certain than the world beneath our feet. That's how certain His Words are. And He is asking you to live by it.

Yes, He says it's been two thousand years, and yet, it's more certain that He's coming again than that the sun is going to rise tomorrow. His words are more certain than the earth beneath your feet.

He speaks the truth. Will you believe Him?

Think about that ... You need to pray.

Take a moment to do that, and then I'll close.

*Our Lord and our God, thank You that You have given us a King. In this passage, we see Your Son. Open our eyes that we might see our sin and then see our Savior. O Lord, we want to be able to say, with our whole hearts, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly." So we ask, O Lord, that this would be a reality for us individually and as a congregation. That our desire would be for the coming of our Savior. But we know that we're too weak in our faith. And we're curious about things that you tell us are secrets and we neglect the things that you reveal to us in your Word, so help us not to make the mistake of failing to trust in the authority of Christ's Word. Not only in our trusting for His coming, but in our obedience to Him day by day. And help us we pray, to be ready for His coming so that we might rejoice in the day of His glory. As His children, by trusting Him. And we know that we can only be there by faith. And so, O Lord, if there is anyone among us this day, who comes here not trusting in Christ, we would ask that by Your Spirit that You would draw that person to Yourself— by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone — that they might embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord and King of their lives. And help us all to know and believe that the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever. Amen.*

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## **2 Peter 3:17-18**

*"You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."*