

The New Testament Church
Last Things #1 – Occupy Till I Come – Luke 19:12-15
Pastor Paul Jehle – September 19, 2021

I The Doctrine of Last Things – Eschatology – (*Coming Again*, by Jerry Newcombe)

- A. What has the Church believed? – *the Last Days began with Jesus' ascension*
 - 1. The *Last Days* of the Jewish system – 70 AD - Christ returns in Judgment (Sproul, p. 158)
 - 2. *Last Things*; Return of Christ – post-tribulation or millennial (Ladd, page 19)
- B. Two extremes to avoid throughout history:
 - 1. An obsession with the Return of Christ and its “signs” – *avoid responsibility*
 - a. Believers thinking the return of Christ is a rescue mission; it is not (maturity of church)
 - b. Date-setters – happened throughout history, and recycles again today
 - 2. An avoidance of the accountability of Christ's Return – *no eternal perspective*
 - a. We tend to think this is our ultimate home and lose the perspective of eternity
 - b. Quote from Lorraine Boetner – (*Coming Again*, by Jerry Newcombe, page 44)
- C. There are numerous positions on how events will proceed prior to His Return
 - 1. The Tribulation – past (post-trib) or future (pre-trib) or (mid-trib)?
 - 2. The Millennium – present (post-mil), or future (pre-mil)? (p. 45 humorous story)
 - 3. The Anti-Christ / Mark of the Beast – past, present, or future? (or in person *and* in spirit)
- D. Our Church stance – *preach the gospel, He will bodily Return, but occupy until He comes!*
 - 1. We have had almost every position on our elder board the last four decades... for unity sake
 - 2. We affirm, with the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, that “*that all believers ought to live in fear of God's final judgment yet in expectation of His glorious return.*”
 - 3. “*We are to live as though Christ were coming today, but work as though He were not coming for 1,000 years.*” – (A. W. Tozer, *Preparing for Jesus Return*)

II So what can we do? *Occupy till I come* – Luke 19:11-27

- A. The disciples are in Jericho, about a six hour (18 mile) walk from Jerusalem...
 - 1. They think Jesus will establish His Kingdom as soon as they get there
 - 2. He must correct them - He will die, be raised, and then go away for years before returning!
- B. Jesus is the Nobleman who goes into a far country to receive a kingdom and then return
 - 1. The King is here, and now within His church, but the Kingdom is not fully here yet
 - 2. We are all given the same resource (a mina – four months wages)... what will we do with it?
 - 3. This is directed to all believers, not just the disciples, or leaders, all servants of the King
 - 4. He said to them “*occupy until I return*” – or in other words, do business, trade, produce
- C. Handling the gospel is similar to doing business...
 - 1. We have Christ within; we have something to give – an influence – beginning at home
 - 2. How do you get someone to want to buy what you have? *Serve, invest in people*
 - a. How would you take \$100 and bring back \$500 – *work at creativity*
 - b. Your *character* is what attracts people – not force, become attractive *in love*
 - 3. Remember the power is in the *mina*, it is the power of His creativity (gifts) in you!
- D. The responses: *this is similar to how the free market moves to Marxist control*
 - 1. Your mina has earned ten minas – in other words, influenced (invested) in many people
 - 2. *The more you invest with quality service, love and example, the more influence you may have*
 - 3. I have preserved your mina, “*because you wanted to reap more than you had given*”
 - a. Why did you do nothing waiting for my return? Blame God, others, we are victims
 - b. Take the mina from him and give it to those who are productive (the diligent bear rule)
 - c. Use what you have and you get more, hoard or become passive – you lose it
 - d. “*In the long run, there is good news for the believer, bad news for the wicked*”