

Three Camps

The topic of the Second Coming of Jesus had become a point of much controversy. Many people have made millions of dollars off of speculating about it. Many have been brought to the foot of the cross because of this topic while others have been sadly lead astray. Today we will look at three camps of thought regarding Jesus' Second Coming.



1. It's Hogwash!

2. Freak-Out!

3. Ready & Waiting!

Camp 1: It's Hogwash!

2 Peter 3:3-10

2 Peter 3:3, 4—This camp's argument is that if Jesus was really going to come He'd be here already. So they choose to believe that the whole Second Coming thing is a sham—Hogwash. Since they have nothing to look forward to, they just go through life trying to satisfy their "lust" for pleasure.

2 Peter 3:5-7—They have to *decide* to forget the facts of history which says that God is all-powerful, trustworthy, and that he has judged the world in the past and will do it again.

God's Response:

2 Peter 3:8—God's not bound to time. He can take as much time as He wants and it's still as if it was yesterday.

2 Peter 3:9, 10—God is giving people time to accept Him so they will not be lost. But God won't always wait. He will come! And when He does it will catch those in the Hogwash Camp totally off guard.

Camp 3's Response:

2 Peter 3:11, 12—Live a godly life and speed up His coming by spreading the Gospel around the globe.

Camp 2: Freak-Out! (AKA. Newspaper Watchers) Matthew 24 & Luke 21

Matthew 24:4-6a & 7-12—These people see problems and think that since the world is filled with the problems that are listed in this chapter then Jesus' coming must be about to happen tomorrow or the next day. They say, "All these signs are being fulfilled how much worse can it get?"

This often causes a mad race to be prepared—to tie up the loose ends of their lives. But when the disaster is over and Jesus didn't come they go back to life as normal because it's impossible to live at a constantly feverish pace.

Some people spend tremendous amounts of time and money "getting ready." They buy land in the country and stockpile the necessities of life all the while keeping one eye on the newspaper so they'll know when to go into hiding.

The problem with the Freak-Out Camp is that their trust is in themselves for the end times and to get them to Heaven. All this focus on watching the signs tends to get them focused on the world's problems instead of God. While the Bible does tell us to watch (see below) it adds "and pray." We are not to be watching out for bad things but watching to make sure we are walking with God.

God's Response:

Matthew 24:6b—This verse clearly says that these things are not the signs of the end but the signs that we are *nearing* the end.

Matthew 24:8—The disasters and wars that are predicted are called the *beginning of sorrows*. The Greek word for sorrows is "ōdines." It literally means "birth pangs." So these disasters serve to warn us that Jesus is coming and as the "birth pangs" get stronger we can know that we're getting closer. But how much worse it can get no human knows.

Camp 3's Response:

Matthew 24:14—The real sign of Jesus' coming is the gospel going to the whole world. This camp focuses on telling the gospel so many people will be saved. When the gospel has gone to the world He will come soon!

Camp 3: Ready and Waiting!

Luke 21 (and 2 Peter 3, Matthew 24)

We've already seen a lot of camp 3's position. They strive to live a life that's pleasing to God and they seek to share the gospel with the world. Here's some other things that the Ready and Waiting Camp does.

Luke 21:9—They don't fear because they trust the God who's in control.

Luke 21:13—They see trials as an opportunity to testify of God.

Luke 21:14, 15—They rely on God to give them their defense.

Luke 21:16-18—They have an eternal perspective. They realize that they may die, but that death is only temporary. God has them protected for eternity.

Luke 21:19—They are filled with patience. They're ready at all times and they are patient because they know that God's timing it the best.

Summery:

Luke 21:34-36—Keep in close contact with God so that you won't fall into the traps of the other camps but will be ready when Jesus comes.

Next Steps:

1. Watch! See if you're connected to Jesus and living in a constant state of preparedness.
2. Hasten! Share the gospel with someone this week.
3. Hand out signs magazines to help others have the opportunity to learn truth and meet Jesus.