

2nd January
I am The Door
John 10:1-10

Nola:

Well, this morning Alan and I going share some thoughts about the differences between the first coming of Jesus and His second coming. I will share four Physical differences, then Alan will share 3 differences in Purpose. Now we have to confess it was Rick Warren from Saddleback church in the United States that captured our attention to this subject.

Did you know that there are more verses in the Bible about His Second coming than His first coming?

On Thursday at Thelma's funeral, we reflected on Jesus' words in John 14:2-3

"My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am".

"I'll be back". This is the Blessed hope for followers of Jesus – And while there will be conflict, suffering and persecution before the end of the age at the return of Jesus – the final chapter of the book tells us you will win!

There are four Physical Difference between the first coming and the second coming of Jesus

1. THE FIRST TIME: Jesus' arrival Happened SLOWLY –He came into the world the way you and I came into the world; He was born into it. A pregnancy takes 9 months. Every woman who has been pregnant knows it doesn't happen instantly. Just ask Melinda! April seems along way away at times.

Why did he come as a baby, because He came to save us not to scare us. God, became one of us, to communicate with us. This is what the Bible says:

Luke 1: 31,34,37

"You will become pregnant and have a son, and you are to name Him Jesus'...Mary asked, 'How could this happen since I am a virgin? The Angel replied, 'Because nothing is impossible with God!'

NEXT TIME: Jesus arrival will happen INSTANTLY

The Bible says: "It will all happen in a flash, as fast as the twinkling of an eye."

1 Corinthians 15:52

Not only is he coming back instantly but he will come back without warning. Look at 1 Thessalonians 5:2

"The day of the Lord will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night."

Now a thief doesn't ring you up to inform you he is coming to rob your house! In fact, Jesus says this in Luke 12:39-40

"But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

We don't know when He will return. It could be today, or it could be tomorrow or even 1000 years from now, all we are told three times in the scripture is to be ready, be ready, be ready! And we will talk about that another time.

2. The FIRST TIME: Jesus' arrival was **QUIET** – It was very, very quiet, almost nobody heard of it! People were not expecting the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. We sing Silent night, Holy night. The Shepherds were told in Luke 2:11-12

“Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Bethlehem was really a village of about 300 people.

NEXT TIME: The entire world will **HEAR**

His return will be instant and it will be loud, the greatest celebration in history. As history ends with the Second coming of Jesus so we are moving to a climax. Here is what the Bible says:

*“For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with **LOUD** COMMAND, and with the **SHOUT** of the archangel, and with the **GREAT SOUND** of the trumpet of God!”* 1 Thessalonians 4:16

It will not be Silent night; it will be loud when everybody in the world will hear.

3. THE FIRST TIME: A **Single Star** was seen in the sky

You know the story, Matthew 2:2 The wise men, scholars, astronomers probably from Persia which is modern day Iran said, *“we saw the star in the east and we have come to worship Him”!*

NEXT TIME: Jesus will **light up the entire sky**

Matthew 24:27 **JESUS** says: *“For just as lightning flashes light up the ENTIRE SKY and EVERYONE can see it, so will be the return of the Son of God!”*

This is going to be a spectacular light show, that no one will miss. But then Jesus says in Matthew 25:31 *“When I come back in ALL my glory, ALL the holy angels will be with me!”*

This is going to be overwhelming; it is going to be brilliant; nobody is going to miss it. Many people today miss His first coming, the real meaning of Christmas, but nobody will miss His Second coming!

Revelation 1:7 *“He will come with the clouds and every eye shall see Him”*

4. THE FIRST TIME: ONLY A FEW PEOPLE HONOURED HIM. Just the shepherds and the wisemen, nobody else. Most people were totally unaware that the Son of God had come to earth. When He started His ministry there were only a few followers, it wasn't until after the resurrection that people realized He was telling the truth. Then hundreds, and then thousands, until to today there are billions of believers/followers Jesus. Approx'2.5 billion.

John 1:11 *“He came to His own people, but they did not receive Him”.* – They rejected Him!

In fact, they killed Him, they put Him on a Cross and didn't believe Him until He came back alive three days later.

NEXT TIME: Everyone will Honour Him. Look what the Bible says in Romans 14:11; *“As surely as I am the living God, EVERYONE will kneel before me, and EVERYONE will confess that I am God!”*

At His Second coming everyone will kneel before Him. Every politician, every celebrity, every sceptic, every atheist.

It is interesting the difference between the first coming and the second coming of Jesus. Remember: There was no room for Jesus, but at His second coming everyone will make room because He is coming back in His Glory. His first coming was predicted for 1000's of years, but everyone said it wasn't going to happen, but it did.

And now there are even more promises in the Bible that He is coming back a second time, and He will!

By the way we split history into B.C. and A.D. and even your birthday is determined by the Coming of Christ, because it is the single most important date in history, until the Second Coming.

Everything is dated by the coming of Christ AD & BC even those who don't believe in Christ still use that date for their own birthdate, all around the world.

Now let's summarize:

- When Jesus returns, it is going to happen in an instant, which means there is no time to switch sides. You can't say when He comes then I'll believe, no, wrong idea, you have to switch sides before. There will be no time to switch sides after he arrives.
- It is going to be loud, everybody is going to hear it
- It is going to be brilliant, there is going to be some brilliant fire type thing in the sky that everybody is going to see.
- And it will be undeniable. Everybody on the planet will bow and acknowledge Jesus is who He said He was.

Alan:

They are the physical differences, now we will focus on three different purposes. This is important because why He came the first time, and why He is coming back are completely different.

1. The First Time Jesus Came; He came to Save the world.

John 3:16 is the most famous verse in the Bible, literally billions of people have memorized John 3:16. Why, because it is the Bible in a nutshell. It explains why Jesus came to earth at the very first Christmas.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life! God did NOT send his Son into the world to condemn it, but to save it!" John 3:16-17 (NLT)

What's the premise? You have to believe

What's the promise? Eternal life

Remember when the angel appeared to shepherds, Luke 2:10-11 *'the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord"*.

Good News! A Saviour has been born! – For all people! Now, we all need a Saviour. On our own you and I will never get to heaven, because heaven is a perfect place, and we stopped being perfect a long time ago! We need a Saviour...we can't save ourselves!

God created you and me, He wants to save us, and he wants us to be with Him in heaven. But you have to make that choice. Unfortunately, many people say no thanks, God. I don't need a Saviour; I'm going to save myself. I'm going to be my own God. I don't need a Saviour, thank you very much! Do you know what keeps people out heaven? It is pride! I don't need God in my life.

NEXT TIME: He is coming to Judge the World

He is coming back to see which of those two choices did you make, to trust Me or not to trust Me, to follow Me or not follow me, love me or to not love me, to live for me or to live for yourself. Which of those two choices did you make? When he comes back Jesus will be your Saviour or your judge, it is your choice!

The Bible says: Acts 17:31

"He has set a day when the entire human race will be judged and everything set right. And he has already appointed the judge, confirming him before everyone by raising him from the dead."

Did you accept my Salvation or did you reject it? Were you prideful, or were you humble? See, God is not just a loving God He is a just and fair. Wrongs must be righted, and evils must be punished. You have probably noticed that Life is not fair, have you figured that one out? Often it seems as if the bad guys win! And people do wrong things against others and they get away with it, and you say that is not fair, that's unjust. You see racism or discrimination or prejudice, that's not fair! Why do you have a sense of justice?

Because God made you in His image. The reason you know what's right and what's wrong because you have been made in His image. One day he is going to come back and punish all the evils

In fact, this is what the Bible says:

"God will reward or punish every person for what that person has done. For those who have lived for God's glory and honour... God will reward them with life forever. But for those who continue to live for themselves and reject the truth, and follow evil instead of obeying God...they will receive God's anger and punishment." Romans 2:6-8

We are all too aware that we get things wrong, we hurt others, we are all flawed, we live in a fallen broken world. Most of us can't live up to our own standards let alone God's. But the good news is that you can choose today whether Jesus will be your saviour, or your judge when he returns.

2. THE FIRST TIME: Jesus came, he came to die for our sins

He loved us so much He came to pay the penalty of our sin. To die in our place!

"God's unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his OWN FAMILY by sending Jesus Christ to die for us." Ephesians 1:5 (LB)

Before the foundation of the world, He thought of you and me. The reason he created the universe was that he wanted a family. But he wanted a family that chooses to love Him. So, He puts us on earth and lets us have a choice. He didn't create us to be puppets, He gave us a choice. Only God's family is going to be in heaven, not everybody.

Note these three words: Die, adopt, family – He wants you in His family

NEXT TIME: He is coming back to gather His family

The Bible says it like this:

"He will send his angels all around the earth, and they will gather his chosen people from every part of the world." Matthew 24:31 (NCV)

The Chosen people are God's family – it will be Billions of people. But not everyone is God's family. Everybody is created by God, everybody is loved by God, no matter who you are or what you have done. God has a plan and a purpose for everybody's life. But not everybody lives for God's plan and purpose, not everybody accepts His son as Saviour, not everyone lives in friendship with God.

The only way you get into God's family is to be adopted into it. You say How, by saying, Jesus Christ, I accept what you did for me and I wanna be in your family. You don't work for it, you don't earn it, you are never going to deserve, it is just a free gift of God's grace. But you do have to accept it.

God gave you a gift at Christmas, a gift of salvation, freedom, the past forgiven, a purpose for living and a home in heaven – but for many they haven't unwrapped the gift and are not a part of God's family. Who is God's family anyway?

Look at the next verse: *1 Timothy 3:15*

"Then, even if I am delayed, you will know how to live in the family of God. That family is the church of the living God, the support and foundation of the truth".

Jesus said he came to build My church – My family – God's family is the church!

Now His church has all different kinds of names, Baptist, Anglican, Lutheran, Catholic, Methodist etc It doesn't matter about the label, it's the family of people who put their trust in Him. Not in a religion, but in Him.

I've heard people say I can accept Jesus, but not the church. Out of hurt, frustration and disillusionment people have given up on the church. Wrong! The church is God's family, and we are better together.

Some say there are hypocrites in the church, well there are hypocrites everywhere, I guarantee that there is not one person here this morning that has not failed to do what we said we would do. The very reason we need a Saviour is because everyone is a hypocrite! You say one thing and do another, fortunately God saves hypocrites.

3. THE FIRST TIME: Jesus came in humility

The first time at Christmas Jesus came in humility as a baby, there is nothing more humbling than to be born a baby in a barn. He didn't come in royal robes as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Can you imagine how humbling it was for God to become a man, a human being?

The Bible says this:

"Though he was God...he made himself nothing, taking on the humble position of a servant and becoming a human! And while living as a man he humbled himself even further by obediently dying on a cross!" Philippians 2:6-8 (NLT)

To take on human form and serve humanity and die on a cross is how much God loves you. He came in a very humble way. When he comes back at the end of history, He is not coming back in humility.

NEXT TIME: He is coming in all His glory as King and Lord of All.

King and Lord of all creation, King and Lord of every human being. King and Lord of all. The rest of that passage in Philippians 2 says:

"Because he humbled himself, God has exalted Jesus to the highest place and given him the name that is above every other name..."

Let stop right there, have you noticed that when people swear, they don't say oh buddha, or they don't say oh Thor, or oh Zeus? They say oh Jesus, why because that name has power.

It is not nice to take God's name in vain, particularly the Son of God. Use your own name if you want to swear, oh Alan, oh Geoff (cover a few people) oh, Kathryn!

so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God!" Philippians 2:9-11 (NLT)

When He comes back that is what is going to happen, and because He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, He is going to wipe out all evil.

I think that means the most to me because we all see the effects of evil in people's lives, day after day. We see the pain that evil in other people and evil in ourselves causes.

If there was no evil in the world there would be no suffering, there would be no sorrow, sadness, sickness or stress, it's all because we have gone our way in stead of God's way. When Jesus comes back, he is going to wipe out the effects of evil. I'm looking forward to the second coming because it is going to be the end of pain!

Matthew 25:13

"So always be ready, because you don't know the day or the hour the Son of Man will come.

How then do we get ready for the Second coming of Christ, that is just as certain as the First coming of Christ that we have been celebrating at Christmas?

In our reading this morning from John 10 introduces two "I am" sayings within verses of one another. Growing out of a confrontation with Jewish leaders following their excommunication of a beggar (John 9), Jesus transitions from the image of light and darkness to that of a shepherd and sheep.

The first statement, “I am the door” may seem strange, since it is the only inanimate object of all the “I am” sayings. As we reflect on the image of the door, and the verses that surround it, something profound, and beautiful happens.

For many shepherds, the sheepfold (where sheep slept overnight) was attached to their home. So, to enter the sheepfold was to come home. It would be hard to find a more powerful and contrasting analogy following an interaction for a man who was just kicked out by religious leaders. In keeping with light and darkness, the leaders were not able to understand the metaphor Jesus was sharing (10:6). They continued to be blind by their actions and the people they impacted.

As “the door” Jesus made it explicitly clear, he is the only means of coming home to God. He is the only way one can become part of the family of God. There is no other way. When you go through “the door,” you are home, able to go “in and out” (10:9), where you find an abundant life, complete with fullness and freedom. What an incredible metaphor! Especially for a beggar who found himself alone and in need of a home.

Many of us spend our entire life searching for this. Either by choosing the wrong door, or when we find that what was promised is not what was delivered. Today, we can walk through the door that Jesus has opened to us. He not only gave his life *for* us, but gives his life *to* us right now!

Let’s pray.