

The Voice of Prophecy

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"WHAT THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST MEANS TO ME"

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A Personal Testimony by H. M. S. Richards

Well, friends, I will say right now, it means everything to me.

I have been in this world for a long time. I have lived through two great world wars that have affected our own country as well as others, and dozens of other wars. I have traveled widely over the earth. I have gone around the world several times. I have seen thousands, and thousands, and thousands of graves. I have visited hundreds of hospitals in my life.

And I have conducted many, many funerals. I have shed many tears at them. I preached at my father's funeral service, and at my mother's funeral service. As long as I have been in this world, the death rate is 100 percent.

I am now an old man. Every moment in the service of Christ is precious to me. I long to see funeral processions stopped, all the mortuaries closed up, the cemeteries emptied.

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I long to see the day when everyone I meet will be young again, full of life's energy, zest, enthusiasm, enjoyment, planning great things, really living. I am anxious to meet all my loved ones and friends who have been taken away into the land of the great enemy. (The Bible says, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." 1 Corinthians 15 : 26.) That day will not come until after the second coming of Christ. The Bible says Jesus came to "destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3 : 8), and death is one of his works. The Bible says, "The wages of sin is death." Romans 6 : 23. Satan introduced sin into this world. We have all followed his example and become sinners, and death has passed upon us all. The apostle Paul says,

"As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

Romans 5 : 12.

The rest of the story is just wonderful;  
the apostle says:

"Much more they which  
receive . . . the gift of  
righteousness shall reign  
in life by one, Jesus Christ."

Verse 17.

He died for our sins, and if we will  
receive His gift, they will no more be charged  
against us.

"For as by one man's  
disobedience many were made  
sinners, so by the obedience  
of one shall many be made  
righteous."

Verse 19.

Jesus is that "one," and He is coming  
back again to receive His people, and to judge  
the world. This is what the second coming of  
Christ means to me.

Some years ago a very dear friend of mine,  
Arthur S. Maxwell, wrote a book called The  
Coming King. It was about the second coming  
of Christ. He once let us use one whole chapter  
in our broadcast. I want to tell you one story  
that comes from the first page.

He told us about a little boy in Palo Alto, California, who was dying of a strange disease. No one seemed to understand it. He was three years old, but he could not stand up. His arms were so feeble he could not lift a spoon to his mouth. His eyes never moved. He could hardly swallow. His parents had spent \$30,000 trying to find a cure.

Then one day a visiting doctor from another country happened to visit the hospital where the boy was lying. Instantly he recognized the symptoms and suggested a different medicine.

Well, you can imagine how eagerly the mother watched as the injection was given. Suddenly she cried,

"Look, look! His eyes are beginning to change!"

"Impossible," said the doctor, "it is too soon."

Ten minutes later the mother cried again, "Something is happening! He's moving his muscles!" (A mother's eyes are sharp.)

"It's your imagination, I'm afraid," said the doctor.

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"No, no," cried the mother. "Look! He's coming to life."

And she was right. The doctor snapped his fingers beside the little boy's ear. The child instantly turned his eyes to see what was happening. Then he slid off his mother's lap and stood up. Overjoyed, she carried him home. Today he is a normal, happy child. All because somebody knew what to do.

After telling this true story, Doctor Maxwell says, "Jesus knows what to do for every trouble, and when He comes again there will be many a transformation far more wonderful than this. And it won't take long. Not ten minutes, or even five. 'In the twinkling of an eye' shall 'this corruptible . . . put on incorruption, and this mortal . . . immortality.' 1 Corinthians 15 : 52, 53."

That is a wonderful promise, isn't it? The human body is good for 50, 60, 70 years, maybe 80, but it is usually pretty well worn out then.

Slowly but surely, it really dies a little every day. The hair gets whiter, thinner. Bones get more brittle, arteries harden, muscles less supple, vision less clear. Think of it: When Jesus returns, the process of decay and deterioration will end, suddenly and forever. This perishable shall put on the imperishable, this mortal shall become immortal. Did you ever stop to think what that will mean to you? I know what it will mean to me.

When Jesus came to the world the first time, He healed sick people, opened blind eyes, opened deaf ears; He even raised the dead in some cases. In Isaiah's great prophecy he spoke of these things when some seven hundred years before Christ he wrote,

"The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the dead shall be unstopped.

"Then shall the lame man leap as an hart /that is, a deer/, and the tongue of the dumb sing."

Isaiah 35 : 5, 6.

That prophecy will have its greater and more wonderful and universal fulfillment when Jesus comes.

Do you wear glasses? Well, you won't need to any more; you can just throw them away then. Suddenly it will be the way it was when you were a child, or probably better if you had bad eyes when you were young.

Are you crippled in any way? It will all end. The lame man will jump and run. Do you wear braces? Throw them away then.

Heart trouble? No more. You will not have to rest any more. The irregular beating will stop. I know what that feels like. I have been through it. You will leap to your feet like a young man at a baseball game. Your heart will never trouble you any more.

Did the doctor shake his head and say that you have a disease that he cannot do much about, \_\_\_\_\_

but he is doing all he can to relieve the pain?  
Ah, friends, think of it -- when Jesus comes,  
a healing, cleansing torrent of life will flow  
through you. Just think of that. You will  
realize it is immortality, eternal youth.

Remember John, who was really getting to  
be an old man there on the Isle of Patmos, when  
he had his wonderful visions about the end of  
history and the coming of Christ. He heard  
Jesus say, "Behold, I come quickly." And he  
prayed the last prayer in the Bible. You know  
what it is?

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

That is what I say, too: "Even so, come,  
Lord Jesus."

If you want Christ to come, if you want Him  
to bring you eternal life, if you want to get  
rid of all your aches and pains and all your  
sorrows, and meet again your dear ones whom you  
have loved long since and lost awhile, \_\_\_\_\_



if you want to be well forever, immortal, in eternal youth, won't you pray that prayer with me right now? Let us say it all together -- the prayer that John prayed -- the last prayer in the Bible. All together now:

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Let us never forget that prayer. That is Revelation 22 : 20, next to the last verse in the Bible. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Let's suppose you die before He comes.

What then? Well, that is no problem to God.


"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump:  
. . . the dead shall be raised incorruptible."

1 Corinthians 15 : 52.

Even if you have been buried in some marble tomb or drowned in the deep Atlantic, blown to pieces on some distant battlefield, or crushed in an automobile accident, our loving Creator knows all about us, knows how to recreate us and bring us forth --

our very own selves, living, thinking, joyful, radiant, full of strength and vigor, beauty and eternal life.

The second coming of Christ means everything to me. That is why I preach it so much. I preach it everywhere I get the opportunity, because it is the one event most often recorded in the Holy Scriptures. The first promise in the Bible, made in the Garden of Eden, was an assurance to the woman, mother of the race, that her Seed should bruise the serpent's head. That act of bruising takes place at the second coming of Christ, as we read in the 20th chapter of Revelation. Christ descends from heaven, binds Satan under His feet for a thousand years. Then at the end of that time Satan is cast into the lake of fire and destroyed forever. Jesus came to destroy the devil. (Hebrews 2 : 14.)



I preach the second coming of Christ because it is tied up with every great, fundamental doctrine and promise in the Bible for practical Christian living. I preach it because at the second coming of Christ, and then only, will redemption be complete and the work of Christ upon the cross be fulfilled, when all of God's people are immortalized and sin, even the marks of it, will be wiped out of this earth, and we will have a new heaven and a new earth. The only marks that sin will ever leave will be those marks and scars of victory on the brow of Jesus, His hands and His side, and the marks of the nails in His feet.

I believe in and preach the second coming of Christ because the church militant cannot become the church triumphant until Christ returns. The twelve apostles cannot rule on twelve thrones until that time.

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Only after the second coming of Christ will there be a world government upon this earth, when Christ truly will be King of kings and Lord of lords. Only after the second coming of Christ will the earth itself be delivered from the bondage of corruption, the evil that sin has wrought.

I preach the second coming of Christ because I love Him, I want to see Him. It is then that our Lord will put down all sorrow, sin, injustice, pain, and death.

My friends, it is one of the most certain events in Scripture because the second coming of Christ is imminent. That means it is the next great event in God's program. No man knows the day or hour; God has not revealed the time. Because of this, the Lord has said:

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

Matthew 24 : 42.



To watch means to be ready for the event, to be expecting it, to look for it, to plan for it. Our blessed Lord is no deceiver, and I as His follower am under the responsibility to obey His command and watch for His return. It is just as clear a command as any of the Ten Commandments. I must be watching for His return.

Be careful of drawing conclusions in your mind as to when Christ will come. You may be sure it will not be the exact time that you imagine. It will come as a great surprise. There are signs that His coming must be near. But Jesus said distinctly,

"In such a time as ye think  
not the Son of man cometh."

Matthew 24 : 44.

The second coming of Christ will change the world. It will bring the resurrection of our beloved dead who confessed the faith of Jesus.

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It will mean the transfiguration into His likeness of all living believers. It will do away with poverty. It will close all hospitals, because nobody will be sick. It will bring eternal peace, the end of war, the end of pain, just as sure as you are listening now.

Education will not purify and change the world, or stop war, or bring eternal peace. Neither will Congress, or the president, or kings or rulers anywhere. Legislation will never do it. Evolution will not bring it. The world will be swung back to God, to take part once more in the music of the spheres, not by any acts of man, but by the coming of the Son of man, in the glory of His Father and the glory of all the holy angels.

Do you want Him to come? Try to imagine a wife whose husband is away at war, or away on business

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where he is obliged to be traveling for weeks and months, or even years. Friends come to see her, or she may be talking over the back fence to her neighbors. We can picture her telling them how much she loves her husband, how wonderful he is, how much she misses him. Then she ends by saying, "But I hope he doesn't come back in my day."

What would you think of a wife who would say that? If we really love someone who is absent from us, we want him to return.

What Christ is saying by His Holy Spirit right now to you, and to me, and to the church at large, to all men everywhere, is:

Lovest thou Me more than these? -- more than your job, than your friends, than your business, than your pleasure -- you name it. Lovest thou Me more than these? Lovest thou Me more than the world and the things in the world? \_\_\_\_\_

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Or even the work you are trying to do for Me?  
More than ambition or glory that may come to you  
while I am away?

Do we really love Him more than we love  
these other things? Would we like to see Him?  
to look into His face? to touch His hands  
wounded for us? to hear Him speak with that  
lovely voice of His which raised the dead,  
healed the sick, comforted the sorrowing?

When the great white cloud appears, when  
the music of the ages fills the sky, when we  
see the King in His beauty, what will we do?  
Will we flee in fear and terror and shame from  
His presence, or look up into His face with  
gladness saying,

"Lo, this is our God; we have  
waited for him, and he will  
save us: this is the Lord;  
we have waited for him, we  
will be glad and rejoice in  
his salvation."

Isaiah 25 : 9.

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What does the second coming of Christ mean  
to me? Everything. Everything.

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Amen.

THE VOICE OF PROPHECY

Box 55

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November 5, 1978

QUARTET:

Theme.

RICHARDS, JR.:

(Organ under)

This is H. M. S. Richards, Jr. You will hear the music of the King's Herald's, Del Delker, <sup>you</sup> Jim Teel, and Brad Braley. Today my father, H. M. S. Richards, presents the message, "WHAT THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST MEANS TO ME."

ORGAN:

Organ payoff into "Be Thou My Vision."

QUARTET: (1st song)

"Be Thou My Vision." 77-E-58 1:31 E<sup>b</sup>

RICHARDS, JR.:

Millions today are lacking a deep sense of personal worth. Their lives seem to be ultimately pointless. They really wonder if they matter at all. Friend, do you sometimes feel that way? Let us show you why your life is of tremendous value and why life is not pointless. Write us today for our free NEW LIFE Bible guides. They'll open up new vistas and give you a sense of worth and purpose. Our address is The Voice of Prophecy, Box 55, Los Angeles 90053. And as you write us for your NEW LIFE Bible guides, please take a moment to mention the call letters of this station.

RICHARDS, JR.: (Cont.) We'll consider it a real favor. Now our address  
once again: The Voice of Prophecy, Box 55, Los  
Angeles 90053.

Orchestra on tape.

SOLO: (2nd song) "Together at Last." (Album) 2:54  
(Del)

RICHARDS, JR.: Here now is my father, H. M. S. Richards, his  
subject: "WHAT THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST MEANS  
TO ME."

RICHARDS:

Talk: "WHAT THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST MEANS TO ME."

Have faith in God -- Creator and Amen;  
Have faith in God -- Great Father of all men;  
Have faith in God -- 'Till Jesus comes again.  
Have faith, dear friend, in God.

HMSR

**Prayer.**

QUARTET: (last song) "We Know Not the Hour." 77-E-44 2:06 B<sup>b</sup>

"We know not the hour of the Master's appearing,  
Yet signs all foretell that the moment is nearing;  
When He shall return, 'tis a promise most cheering,  
But we know not the hour."

RICHARDS, JR.:

What a sight that'll be. We can hardly imagine it -- Christ coming in heavenly glory. But I think we can get a little foretaste of that glory by just looking around us at the abundant beauty in our world. God put beauty here for our enjoyment and to remind us of who He is and what He's like.

We'd like to bring some of this God-given beauty right into your home by way of our new 1979 WALL CALENDAR. This WALL CALENDAR features six full-color reproductions of outstanding outdoor scenes photographed by Harold Kehney. His photographic artistry has captured some of nature's most intriguing moods. You can have one of these beautiful CALENDARS free of charge by simply writing us a letter. Our address is The Voice of Prophecy, Box 55, Los Angeles 90053. That's The Voice of Prophecy, Box 55, Los Angeles 90053.

And now, a closing word from my father.



RICHARDS:

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We hope our program has served to give you spiritual strength for the coming week. Now -- we invite you to join us next week -- at this same time -- for another broadcast sponsored by The Voice of Prophecy. Then my son, H. M. S. Richards, Jr., will present the subject: "WHO BROKE THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS?"

Until we meet again next week, let us keep looking up . . . ever going FORWARD IN FAITH!

CLOSING THEME:

"Near to the Heart of God."

Time: 1:00

Out cue: . . . "Amen" at approximately 29:20.

ORGAN:

Up and fill to close.