

Paul and the Second Coming of Christ

Paul devoted five chapters in his epistles to the subject of the second coming; 1 Corinthians 15, 1 Thessalonians 4, 1 Thessalonians 5, 2 Thessalonians 1 and 2 Thessalonians 2. Every chapter in 1 and 2 Thessalonians ends with a reference to the second coming of Christ. But, how did he define the second coming of Christ? What did he say compared to what others said?

This has been a hot topic for years among Christians in the church, because many dispensationalists say Paul preached and wrote about a “secret coming of Christ”, no one knew about prior to his salvation. They say the prophets did not write about it in the Old Testament and the coming Paul preached is even different from the one Jesus preached in the four gospels. But is this true?

Is the coming of Christ in Paul’s epistles not found in the Old Testament Prophets?

Is the coming of Christ he wrote about a mystery no one knew about prior to his salvation?

Did Paul preach a different coming of Christ than Christ in the Four Gospels? We will answer these three questions and you decide for yourself.

The Coming of Christ in Paul’s Epistles and the Prophets

Every dispensationalist I have ever known says the coming of Christ Paul preached and wrote about in his epistles cannot be found in the Prophets. According to them, it is not found anywhere in the Old Testament. They say it’s found in his epistles only. But does Paul agree with them? Did Paul say the coming of Christ he wrote about cannot be found in the Old Testament Prophets? Did he say the coming he wrote about is found in his epistles alone? What saith the scriptures?

In 1 Thessalonians 4 when describing the coming of Christ for the church Paul said in verses 15-17:

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

When describing the coming of Christ for the church he said in verse 15: ***For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord.*** What Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 4 about Christ's coming and the resurrection of the saints is based upon what the Lord said in his word. If this is true, then the coming of Christ Paul wrote about was not something new, for it was according to what the Lord said in Prophets of the Old Testament.

Some object and say, the *word of the Lord* is not what the Lord said in the Old Testament, but what the Lord said to Paul orally by revelation. But, again what saith the scriptures? Is the word of the Lord in 1 Thessalonians 4:15 the word the Lord spoke to Paul orally or is it the word of the Lord written down in the Prophets? Paul gives us the answer in no uncertain terms in 1 Corinthians 15:50-57. When writing about the coming of Christ for the church he said:

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

According to these verses the coming of Christ for the church and the resurrection of the saints will fulfill prophecy. Old Testament prophecies will come to pass and be fulfilled when the Lord comes for the church. These verses plainly say that when the dead are raised and those who are caught up without dying: ***THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting?***

O grave, where is thy victory?

Paul is quoting **Isaiah 25:8** and **Hosea 13:14** in these verses. He plainly says that when the Lord comes and the saints are resurrected, the prophecies of these two Prophets will come to pass. Therefore, *the word of the Lord* in 1 Thessalonians 4:15 is what the Lord said in the Prophets; Isaiah and Hosea. Therefore, the coming of Christ Paul wrote about is found in the Old Testament scriptures.

Some object and say, how can the church partake of the resurrection God promised to Israel in the Old Testament? They say if it is in the Old Testament then it belongs to Israel and not us. People who say this have a

blind spot. They fail to consider how many blessings the church partakes of today that God originally promised Israel in the Old Testament. The Church already partakes of Israel's: **Gospel, Justification, Righteousness, Spirit, New Birth, Heavenly City, Father, New Covenant, God, Christ, High Priest, Mediator, Intercessor, Adoption, Mercy Seat, Sacrifice, Kingdom, Supper, Bible, and Gifts.** If the church partakes of all these blessings and promises originally made to Israel in the Old Testament, why is it so hard to believe we partake of their hope of resurrection promised to them in the Prophets? All of these blessings are found in the Old Testament and they were all originally promised to Israel, but I have never heard of a Christian turn them down or disown them because they are found in the Old Testament Prophets. Christians do not have a problem claiming Israel's gospel, justification, righteousness, sacrifice, Christ, and mediator even though they are found in the Old Testament do they? So why do they have a problem claiming Israel's hope of resurrection, even though it's found in the Old Testament?

Paul didn't have a problem with the hope God promised Israel in the Old Testament for he preached it. He said in Acts 28:20: ***For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.***

And what is the hope of Israel? In Act 26:6-8 Paul said: ***And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?***

The hope of Israel was their hope of resurrection promised to them in the Prophets. Paul said: ***I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers.*** God made that promise to their fathers in the Old Testament such as Hosea 13:14 and Isaiah 25:8 that Paul quotes in 1 Corinthians 15:54-55. Paul preached the hope of Israel, wrote about it, and suffered for it. The hope of Israel is the hope of the church. It's the hope of all believers, for it is the resurrection of life promised all believers at the second coming of Christ. In Romans 15:27 Paul said we partake of Israel's spiritual things and one of them is their hope of resurrection. That is why our hope is called the hope of Israel, just like our gospel is Israel's gospel ect. Ephesians 2:12-13 tells us that in time past gentiles like us were not only without Israel's Christ, Israel's Covenants and Israel's God, but we were without their Hope also. But verse 13 shows us this is no

longer true. We have been made nigh to Israel's Hope, as well as their Christ, Covenants and God.

The Mystery of Christ's Coming

There are those who say that the coming of Christ and the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15 cannot be in the Prophets because he says it is a mystery in verse 51. Most dispensationalists define a mystery as doctrine and truth never committed to writing before its revelation and that is why they say the coming of Christ and the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15 cannot be found in the Old Testament, because Paul says it's a mystery in verse 51.

But, Paul does not say that the coming of Christ and the resurrection in these verses was a mystery. Look at what he really said:

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

The mystery is not the coming of Christ or the resurrection. The mystery is those who are alive when the Lord comes will never die. The mystery of Christ's coming is about those who are alive when he comes. The mystery is not his coming, but what happens to those who are alive when he comes. But, this mystery is like many others, it is found in the Old Testament and in the Four Gospels. When writing about the coming of Christ in this chapter in verses 54-55 he quotes two Prophets; Isaiah and Hosea. ***So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?***

When the prophets said; ***O grave where is thy victory?*** they wrote of the dead in Christ who will be raised victorious over the grave when Christ comes again. When the prophets said; ***O death where is thy sting?*** they wrote of those who will be alive when Jesus comes and will never die. They will never taste the sting of death.

Both the resurrection of the dead from the grave and the transformation of the saints who are alive at Christ's coming were prophesied by the prophets. But, prior to Paul the general belief was that all saints would be dead by the time the Lord comes again. But, Paul shows us that some saints will be alive and will never die and he quotes the prophets to prove it by saying; ***O death where is thy sting.*** This is a promise to those believers who are alive when Christ comes again. The promise is; they will never die; they will never sleep; they will not taste the sting of death.

In his earthly ministry Christ also said the saints who are alive at the resurrection of the dead will never die. In John 11 Lazarus who was Martha's brother died and after Lazarus died she came to Jesus and it says:

Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? John 11:21-26

When the Lord told Martha that her brother would be raised from the dead she understood it. She said; I know he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. But then Jesus said something else she did not understand. He went on to say; ***And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?***

When the Lord said *whosoever liveth and believeth in me*, in the context he was speaking of believers who will be alive at the resurrection of the last day. The Lord said they will never die. In the resurrection of the last day those who believe on Christ and are dead will be raised from the dead, but those who are alive and believe on Christ will never die. From what we see in these verses Martha knew about the resurrection of the dead, but did not understand that believers alive at his coming would never die.

The reason she did not understand is because it was a mystery according to 1 Corinthians 15:51. But, Paul reveals this mystery more fully in his epistles. But he does so out of the prophets who said: ***O death where is thy sting?*** When Isaiah made this prophecy he was writing about the saints who will be alive at Christ's coming who will never taste the sting of death. But, even though he wrote it down in the prophets no one understood it until Paul reveals it fully in his epistles.

This mystery of the saints alive at Christ's coming is one of those mysteries hidden in the prophets and one of those prophecies that was a mystery.

It's like the gospel. Even though the prophets said Christ would die for sins and be raised from the dead, the 12 apostles who followed Christ for 3

years could not see it, for it was hidden from their understanding according to Luke 18:34. Even though the Prophets Isaiah and Hosea prophesied that the saints at Christ's coming would never die or experience the sting of death, no one fully understood this until God revealed it to Paul who committed it to writing. The mystery is not the coming of Christ or the resurrection. The mystery is those who are alive when the Lord comes will never die. But, this mystery is like many others, it is found in the Old Testament and in the four gospels.

The Coming of Christ in Paul's Epistles versus the Coming of Christ in the Four Gospels

Many people say the coming of Christ in Paul's epistles is not the same coming Christ preached in the four gospels. Those who believe this theory say there are two future comings of Christ. Some even say there are three future comings of Christ. Even though Paul said Christ will come once in the future in Hebrews 9:28 and 1 Corinthians 15:23, these people insist there are two or more comings of Christ in the future.

But, does Paul agree with them? Is the coming Christ preached in the four gospels different from the coming of Christ in Paul's epistles? What saith the scriptures? God said we should compare spiritual things with spiritual. By comparing the coming of Christ in Paul's epistles, with the coming of Christ in the four gospels, we will see they are the same. What Christ said about his coming, is repeated by Paul over and over again.

The hope of all believers in Paul's epistles and the Four Gospels is the Coming of Christ

Matthew 24

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

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

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Christ told the apostles and his followers that they were to look for his second coming. He promised to come again over 20 times in the four gospels. The hope of the apostles and saints in the four gospels was the second coming of Christ.

1 Thessalonians

1:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

3:13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians

2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him.

2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

13 times in Paul's epistles he tells the saints to look forward to the second coming of Christ. Therefore, the hope of believers Paul wrote to is the same hope of believers Christ preached to in the four gospels; the coming of Christ. It's also called Christ's coming about 15 times in James through Revelation.

We should call Bible things by Bible names. The hope of believers in the Bible is called the coming of Christ nearly 50 times in the New Testament alone, but yet there are people who refuse to call it Christ's coming. They call it the "rapture". Even though Jesus and the apostles called it his coming nearly 50 times, these people still call it the "rapture". The word rapture does not appear in the Bible once, but the word coming referring to Christ's coming appears nearly 50 times. Why do these people prefer to call our hope the "rapture" when it's called the coming of Christ nearly 50 times in the New Testament? Is it because this would link the hope in Paul's epistles with the hope found in the four gospels and in James

through Revelation? There is no getting around the fact that both Jesus in the four gospels and Paul in his epistles says the hope of believers is the coming of Christ. Paul also said in Ephesians 4 there is only one hope.

Paul and Christ both said he would come as a thief in the night

In Matthew 24:43-44 Jesus said: ***But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.***

Jesus said he would come as a thief in the night. A thief comes unannounced at a time when people do not expect him to come. That is why he said be ye also ready for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2 Paul wrote: ***But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.***

This links the coming of Christ in Paul's epistles, with the coming of Christ in the four gospels, because they both said he would come as a thief in the night. They both compare his coming with the coming of a thief who comes unannounced, at a time when people do not expect him to come.

Paul and Christ both said he would come in the clouds

In Mark 13:26 Jesus said: ***And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.***

When Jesus was caught up into heaven in Acts 1 he said he would come again in like manner as he went up. He was caught up in a cloud and he will come again in the clouds

In 1 Thessalonians 4:17 Paul said: ***Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.***

Jesus said he would come in the clouds and Paul said he would come again in the clouds.

Paul and Christ both said he would come with angels

In Matthew 16:27 Jesus said: ***For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.***

Christ will not come alone. Angels will accompany Christ when he comes again. Presently, Christ is in the heavenly city New Jerusalem surrounded by an innumerable company of angels according to Hebrews 12:22-24. When he comes again they will escort him from heaven.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:16 Paul wrote: ***For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.***

Michael the archangel is the chief angel in heaven and he is the head of a multitude of angels who are called his angels in Rev. 12:7. At the coming of Christ, Michael and his angels will escort Christ as he descends from heaven. As a matter of fact before Christ comes again Michael and his angels will cleanse the heavens of satan and his angels for the coming of Christ according to Revelation 12:7.

Paul and Christ both said he would come with his saints

According to Jude 1:14 Enoch prophesied that when Christ comes again many saints will come with him. It says: ***And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints.***

Most Bible believers agree the coming of Christ Enoch prophesied of is the same one Christ preached in the four gospels. Enoch prophesied of the second coming of Christ in Genesis 5 nearly 3000 years before the first coming of Christ. Enoch shows us something about Christ's coming that is not mentioned in the four gospels: that when Christ comes again, he will come with saints as well as angels. This shows us that one verse of scripture does not paint the full picture of Christ's second coming. In the four gospels it is not mentioned that Christ will come with his saints but we know he will by Jude 1:14.

In 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 Paul said: ***And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.***

The saints who will come with Christ are the dead in Christ who are now with Christ in the heavenly city New Jerusalem. Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 4:14: ***For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.***

Paul and Christ both said he would come at the last trumpet

In Matthew 24:31 Jesus said: ***And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.***

In 1 Thessalonians 4:16 Paul wrote: ***For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.***

In 1 Corinthians 15:52 he shows us which trumpet it is: ***In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.***

We know that before the Lord comes again a series of trumpets will be blown and this verse tells us when the last trumpet blows, Christ will come again.

Paul and Christ both said Christ would come with a loud voice

In John 5:25-29 Jesus said: ***Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.***

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

The voice of Christ will be heard from one end of earth to the other when he comes.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:16 Paul said; ***For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.***

Every word in this verse has an important meaning concerning the resurrection at Christ's coming. It says when Christ comes his voice will be heard and so will the voice of Michael the arch angel. Why?

Michael the arch angel is the Prince of Israel according to Daniel 12:1-2. In Daniel 12 it says he will stand up for Israel and when he stands up for them the very next verse says; ***And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*** From this we see that the Old Testament saints will be raised at Christ's coming when they hear the voice of Michael the

arch angel who is their Prince. The New Testament saints will be raised when they hear the voice of Jesus Christ the Apostle and High Priest of the New Testament saints. That is why both voices will be heard in that day.

Paul and Christ both said his coming will be sudden and unexpected
In Matthew 24:42-44 Jesus said: ***Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.***

Jesus said he would come in such an hour as ye think not. I some time laugh when I read this because of all these experts who claim to know when Christ will come again. He said he would come in an hour that you think not, but there are 1000's of these prophecy teachers who say they know the hour and they will tell you the hour if you send them send for their \$19.95 book. Take my advice; save your money and believe what Christ said.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:52: ***In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.***

In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2 he wrote: ***But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.***

Paul could not tell them the times and seasons of Christ's coming because his coming is as or like a thief in the night. A thief comes unannounced and unexpected. He does not call you up and tell you he is coming.

Paul and Christ both said he would gather his saints together when he comes

In Matthew 24:31 Jesus said: ***And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.***

In Mark 13:27 he said: ***And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.***

Mark says when the Lord comes again he will gather together his elect from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. The saints in heaven are those who have died in the Lord. The saints on earth

are those still alive when he comes. Both groups will be gathered together in union never to be separated again.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:1 Paul wrote: ***Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him.*** According to Paul at the coming of Christ all saints will be gathered together just like Jesus said they would in the four gospels.

Where will this gathering or reunion of all saints take place? In 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 Paul shows us where. He said:

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. The gathering of saints will take place in the air.

Paul and Christ both said saints alive will be caught up without dying
In John 11:25-26 Jesus said: ***I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.***

In the context on John 11 the Lord was speaking of his coming and the resurrection. In that day dead saints will be raised and those who are alive and believe on him will never die. They will go out to meet the Lord when he comes in the air.

In Matthew 25 there is a parable of 10 virgins; five were wise and 5 foolish. The 5 who were wise were the ones waiting for the coming of the bridegroom. It says that at midnight when the bridegroom came they went out to meet him. The bridegroom is Christ and the coming of the bridegroom is his second coming according to verse 13. The 5 wise virgins represent the saints who are truly waiting for the second coming of Christ.

It says that when Christ the bridegroom comes ***they will go out to meet him.*** It's obvious who these saints are. They are the ones Christ said would never die in John 11:26. When he comes they are the saints who will go out to meet him in the air without dying. The 5 foolish ones are the lost who will be left behind and in that day it says they will cry unto God and say: Lord, Lord, open to us. But he will answer them and say, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 Paul wrote: ***For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.***

In John 11 Jesus said there will be saints alive when he comes and they will never die. Paul said there will be saints alive when he comes and will never die. In Matthew 25 Jesus said the saints who are waiting for his coming will go out to meet him when he comes. Paul said the saints who are alive when he comes shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Both Jesus and Paul said there will be saints alive at his coming and they both said they would be caught up and go out to meet him in the air.

Paul and Christ both said Christ's coming will be preceded by a major apostasy and the revelation of the antichrist

Mathew 24

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

In Matthew 24 the Lord describes the moral, spiritual, political and religious conditions of the last days that precede his coming. In verse 9-12 he describes the moral and spiritual condition of his own church in those days. He said many shall be offended by him in the last days. False prophets will arise and deceive his own people. He said the love of many saints will wax cold toward him and other saints and even begin to hate one another and even betray one another. We see this even now, but it will increase even more in the last days. This is the falling away, the apostasy predicted by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, and 1 Tim.4:1. A major apostasy within the church will precede the coming of Christ.

In Matthew 24:5 Jesus warned his church: ***For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.***

In Matthew 24:23 he said: ***Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs,***

and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Christ warned his church in the four gospels that they would witness many false Christ's all claiming to be Jesus Christ. According to some historians there were at least 30 false Christ's in Christ's day and in the book of Acts. Since that time 100's if not 1000's of men have made the claim to be Christ the Messiah. In 1 John 2:18 he said: ***Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.***

Jesus not only said an antichrist would come before he came, but many antichrists would come. If Jesus said that many antichrists will come before he does and if we have already witnessed many antichrists in church history, why do people think it is strange to say the antichrist will come before Christ comes when 100's if not 1000's of antichrists have already come?

Paul said in 1 Timothy 4:1-2: ***Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;***

In 2 Timothy 4:3-4 he warned: ***For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.***

In 2 Thessalonians 2 he said: ***Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.***

Both Jesus and Paul predicted a major apostasy, the appearance of many antichrists and the revelation of the antichrist himself would precede Christ's coming. But in spite of what they clearly predict, the majority of Christians deny what they said. They say there will be revival before Jesus comes not apostasy. They say the church will never witness the revelation

of the antichrist even though Paul and Jesus said it would. Who are you going to believe?

Paul and Christ both predicted wrath would fall on the lost after the saints are gathered together at his coming

Luke 17

26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

Christ compares his coming to the days of Noah and Lot. The point the Lord is making in these two examples is that salvation and wrath are seen together. When Noah entered the ark for the last time and God shut him in, the flood came immediately and destroyed those outside the ark. Once Lot went out of Sodom fire came down from heaven and destroyed the Sodomites left behind. The Lord is careful to tell us that it was in **the day** Noah entered the ark the flood came and destroyed them all. And it was in the **same day** Lot went out of Sodom that it rained fire and brimstone from heaven upon the Sodomites. Not 3 1/2 years or 7 years later, but the same day the angels delivered Lot out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. And the Lord said; **even thus shall it be when the Son of man is revealed.**

Therefore, when Christ comes again the saints will be saved and the lost destroyed IN THE SAME DAY. Jesus will come with his angels at the last trumpet and gather together his saints to meet him in the air and in that same day he will destroy the lost still on the earth with fire from heaven, as he destroyed the Sodomites in Lots day.

1 Thessalonians 4-5

4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

5:1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

5:3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

5:4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

5:10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

What Paul wrote in these verses about the coming of Christ agrees with what the Lord said about his coming in Luke 17. When the flood came Noah was saved. When the fire fell Lot was saved. Noah and Lot were both saved in the same day that the lost suffered the wrath of God. In Noah's day there was salvation and wrath. In Lot's day there was salvation and wrath, but it was in the same day. This is exactly what Paul says in these two chapters about the second coming of Christ.

In 1 Thessalonians 4 he describes the salvation of the saints when Christ comes again and in 1 Thessalonians 5 the destruction of the lost in that same day. In the same day the saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air in chapter 4, it says then sudden destruction will fall on the lost in chapter 5:3.

This is the wrath and salvation of 5:9. The salvation and wrath of 5:9 is future; it will come in the day of the Lord which is Christ's coming. The saints of God are appointed to salvation in the day of the Lord, but the lost are appointed to wrath. The same day the saints are saved out of this world in chapter 4, the wrath will fall on the lost left behind in chapter 5. The day of the Lord's coming will be a day of salvation to the saints and a day of wrath to the lost. The day of the Lord will be like the days of Lot and Noah. When the flood came Noah was appointed unto salvation. When the fire fell on Sodom and Gomorrah Lot was appointed unto salvation, but the Sodomites were appointed to wrath.

Paul describes the wrath that will fall on the lost in the same day the saints will be saved in 2 Thessalonians 1.

7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

Notice the contrast between the saved and lost when the Lord comes again. When he comes again the saints will be glorified according to verse 10, whereas the lost will be punished with everlasting destruction in verse 9. When he comes the saints will rest in verse 7 at the same time he takes vengeance on the lost in verse 8. The same angels that will gather the saints out of this world, will then turn and take vengeance on the lost left behind, just as they did in the days of Lot. (The same angels that saved Lot destroyed the Sodomites)

This is the wrath to come we are saved from in 1 Thessalonians 1:10. It's not a period of time. It is the coming of Christ in fire with his angels to take vengeance on the lost. No saint of God will suffer this wrath. We are appointed unto salvation in that day.

Paul and Christ both said when he comes he will judge all men

In Matthew 16:27 Jesus said: ***For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.***

At his coming Christ will judge his people's works and reward them according to their works.

Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:1: ***I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.***

In Paul's epistles he says Christ will judge his people when he comes.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15: ***Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day (The day he comes again. See 1:8) shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon,***

he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

In 2 Corinthians 5:9-10 he also wrote; ***Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.***

Both Christ and Paul plainly say the coming of Christ will be a day of judgment. He will judge the lost in his wrath and consume them with fire. But he will also judge the works of the saints with fire. Not them, but their works. If the works we have done in this life as Christians make it through the fire at his coming, we shall receive a reward. According to Christ some Christians will even be given the privilege of ruling over cities in the coming kingdom of God. Paul said if we suffer we shall also reign with him.

Paul and Christ both said that when he comes his kingdom will come
In Matthew 16:27-28 Jesus said: ***For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.***

Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:1: ***I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.***

When he appears his kingdom will come and his kingdom will come when he appears. In verse 18 he wrote: ***And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.***

Paul expected the kingdom to come when Christ comes. He calls it his heavenly kingdom for the kingdom of God is a heavenly kingdom. It comes down from heaven and that is why the kingdom of God is also called the kingdom of heaven.

The kingdom of God is the inheritance of all saints of all ages.

All saints from all ages will live together in the coming kingdom of God.

Jesus Christ will reign forever as the king in the coming kingdom of God.

Saints who serve the Lord in their life time will rule and reign with Christ in the kingdom of God.

The heavens and earth will be made new in the kingdom of God.

All evil will be purged from the kingdom of God.

The lost shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

The devil will be cast into the lake of fire.

The kingdom of God will come when Jesus comes. It is not here now, but it's coming when Jesus comes again.

Once the apostles asked the Lord to teach them how to pray. He said here is how to pray: ***After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. (Matt. 6:9-10)***

They were told to pray for the kingdom to come. When will the kingdom come? When Jesus comes. Therefore, the so called Lord's Prayer, which is really the apostle's prayer, is a prayer for the second coming of Christ because that is when the kingdom of God will come.

Summing this up: The coming of Christ found in the four gospels is identical with his coming in Paul's epistles. They both said:

*The hope of all believers is the second coming of Christ. They call it his coming over 50 times in the New Testament and we should call Bible things by Bible.

*He will come as a thief in the night.

*He will come in the clouds of heaven.

*He will come with his saints.

*He will come with his angels.

*He will come at the last trumpet.

*He would come with a shout and loud voice.

*He will come sudden and unexpected.

*He will gather together his saints from heaven and earth.

*The saints alive when he comes will be caught up without dying.

*His coming will be preceded by a major apostasy and the revelation of the antichrist.

*At his coming he would also destroy the lost in his wrath with fire from heaven.

*He will judge all men at his coming.

*When he comes the kingdom of God will come.

This of course means Christ preached the hope of the Church long before Paul was saved and what Paul wrote about the coming of Christ was based upon what the Prophets and Christ said before him.

There is one hope of all believers throughout the Bible. It's the resurrection and transformation of all saints at Christ's second coming. Christ is coming

once in the future and when he does the saints from all ages will be saved and transformed and the lost will suffer the wrath of God in the same day. After the saints are saved in that day they will enter into new heavens and a new earth just as Noah did after the flood destroyed the earth in his day.

The following is from Arthur W. Pink comparing what Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 with what the Lord said in John 14:1-3. *“The one Scripture which sets forth more fully than any other the order of events which shall occur at the return of Christ for His saints, is found in 1 Thessalonians 4. “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord!” (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17).*

In this passage three things claim special notice: first, the descent of the Lord Himself; second, the resurrection of the sleeping saints; third, the translation to heaven of those believers which shall be alive on the earth at that time.

We would call attention to the close relation the above passage bears to our Lord’s words as recorded in the opening verses of John 14 — “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:1-3).

There is a four-fold correspondence between these two passages:

The Savior said, “I will come again;” Paul wrote, “The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven.”

The Savior promised, “I will receive you unto Myself;” Paul declared that the saints shall be “caught up together to meet the Lord in the air.”

The Savior promised, “Where I am, there ye may be also;” Paul assures us, “So shall we ever be with the Lord.”

The Savior prefaced His gracious promises by saying, “Let not your heart be troubled;”

Paul the apostle concludes by saying “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” There can surely be no questions that these passages, running so closely parallel relate to the same event. How wonderful is the verbal agreement of Holy Writ! How the comparison of one passage with another, brings out the unmistakable unity of the Scriptures.”

By comparing these verses together there is no denying the fact that Christ and Paul preached the same coming and resurrection.