

Fellowship Group Notes – 09/10 February 2011

Luke – 17:20-37: The Coming Kingdom.

*What is our understanding of the Second coming? What does Jesus say ... **Read** Luke 17:20-37. (For further reading see similar passages in Matthew 24 and Mark 13)*

v20-21 – The Pharisees ask when the Kingdom of God would come. But Jesus goes on to tell them how it will come about (v21-35) and briefly where it will come (v37). Why do you think Jesus doesn't answer their question directly?

Note: When Jesus says "the kingdom of God is within you" (v21) it's most popularly understood that Jesus was saying that the kingdom of God was in the "midst" or "among" them, referring to himself – as John Blanchard says: "the Pharisees were so blind that they were looking for a kingdom while looking at the King!" The kingdom is NOW but will be fully realised in the future.

v22-23 – Here we are told that false Christ's will come. Can you think of any from recent generations? What are we told about them in this passage and how should we react to them?

v24 – How will you know that the real Christ has returned? Will it be hidden to a few or seen by all? (Consider lightning and how it lights up the whole sky!)

v25 – What event had to take place before Jesus would return? In light of this do we live and serve God in a way that he could return at any moment? What does that kind of life look like? Do our lives look like this right now? What changes may we need to make?

There has been a significant amount of speculation in recent times regarding the coming of Christ. For instance Tim LeHay's "Left Behind" series. What are the problems this creates for Christians? And what are the strengths this offers Christians?

v26-30 – What two things do the "days of Noah" (Genesis 6-7) described here have in common with the "days of Lot" (Genesis 19)? What point is Jesus making by comparing his coming to those events?

At his coming is Jesus going to bring peace or punishment?

v31-33 – Jesus warns those on the roof or in the field not to go back to get their possessions. Why? What does this have to do with Lot's wife? How do we view our own possessions, family etc – would it be hard to leave them behind? How does this speak to us of our own discipleship?

v34-35 – Jesus tells of people in close physical proximity to each other, and warns that one will be taken and the other left. What does this teach us about the nature of Jesus' coming? Where will they be taken? What happens to those who are left?

v37 – Jesus ends with a mini-parable in order to answer the disciple's question of where this will take place. What does Jesus mean by this? (*Dr Ralph Wilson says that in saying this Jesus was referring to the common practice of vultures who gather and circle high above a dead carcass, this can be seen from miles around, therefore he suggests that Jesus is saying that there is no need to pinpoint a location right now because when he ... the Son of Man comes it will be obvious to all!*)

Conclusion

This passage encourages us not to look for signs of the end of the age, but calls us to faithfulness, readiness and godliness, as we recognise that we will all one day stand accountable before God.

Prayer Points

- Reg Morrish – in South Africa at the moment for 3 weeks working with the Christian charity 'Project Gateway' (www.projectgateway.co.za).
- Families within the church.