

churches in America are flat or declining, ✦false teachings are common, and ✦love for SELF is more common than love for OTHERS!

SUMMARY: Today is not a day to fear, but to be ever-ready for Jesus' return! By the Spirit working through the Word, GOD will keep us ✦aware of our sin, ✦sorry for our sin, and ✦trusting alone in Jesus as our Savior! Therefore, let us remember who we are as believers in Jesus Christ: <sup>NIV</sup> **Hebrews 10:39** "...we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved." And all God's people said: *Amen!*

### Topics in Part 2:

- Things Will Be Proceeding As Normal
- Jesus Will Return
- Some Rejoicing, Others Terrified
- All the Dead Will Be Raised
- All Bodies Will Be Changed
- Spirits Will Return to Their Bodies
- All Will Be Gathered and Separated
- All Will Appear Before Christ
- Every Knee Shall Bow
- All Will Be Judged
- The Final Judgment Will Take Place
- All Will Go to Their Eternal Places

This and other sermons are available on Bethlehem's website: [www.blc7500.com](http://www.blc7500.com)  
Please share them with your family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers!  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Rd., Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230

# "The Return of Jesus"

Today: Part 1 – What Will Happen  
**BEFORE** He Returns?

Next Week: Part 2 – What Will Happen  
**WHEN** He Returns?

Based on Various Passages

25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

24<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity – 2010

November 14 → 8:15 & 10:45

**Introduction**: God created a *perfect* world but people sinned, which brought separation and death; therefore, God promised to send His Son to bring restoration and life for all people of all time! In regard to the two comings of Christ, the Bible says: "...Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him." (Hebrews 9:28 ESV) Therefore, *as Christians*, God has ✦made us sorry for our sins, ✦enabled us to trust in Jesus as our Savior, and ✦caused us to eagerly anticipate Jesus' second coming!

### What Will Happen **BEFORE** He Returns?

**When are the Last Days?** The Concordia Self-Study Bible defines the last days as "the whole period introduced by Christ's first coming. These days are last in comparison to OT days, which were preliminary and preparatory." (1921) **Think**

**about it like this:** The OT focused on the Savior to come; since then, once the Savior had †come, †lived, †died, †risen, and †ascended, His promised return has been anticipated!

**What Will the Scoffers Say?** They will mock us for waiting on Jesus: <sup>NIV</sup> **2 Peter 3:4** They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised?” But we are to remember this reality: <sup>8</sup> “With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.” In other words, we are bound by time *but the Lord is not*; therefore, *TO THE LORD*, a thousand years are LIKE a day!

Furthermore, *we should view Jesus’ return as patience and love!* God is allowing time for more and more people to repent and believe – *before it is too late!* But no one should wait – *not even until tomorrow*, because, as the Bible says: <sup>10</sup> “...the day of the Lord will come like a thief.”

### **What are the Birth Pains?**

1. **Many will claim to be Christ:** The internet lists at least 16 people who have made that claim, including Jim Jones (Jonestown), David Koresh (Waco, TX), and others who are still alive and leading people astray! Jesus said: <sup>NIV</sup> **Mt. 24:5** “...many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.”
2. **There will be wars:** The internet lists 17 wars that are currently taking place in various places around the world. Jesus said: <sup>NIV</sup> **Mt. 24:6** “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.”

3. **There will be famines and earthquakes:** The internet states that “nearly 1 billion will still face chronic hunger this year.” (<http://www.mapreport.com/subtopics/d/0.html#m8>) Also, in ONE recent week (first week of November 2010), there were 34 earthquakes around the world with a magnitude of 5.0 or higher! ([http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/recenteqsww/Quakes/quakes\\_big.php](http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/recenteqsww/Quakes/quakes_big.php)) Jesus said: <sup>NIV</sup> **Mt. 24:7** “There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.”

**SUMMARY:** What do claims, wars, famines, and quakes indicate? Jesus told us: <sup>NIV</sup> **Mt. 24:8** “All these are the beginning of birth pains.” As birth pains indicate that a baby will soon be born, *so claims, wars, famines, and quakes point toward the closeness of Jesus’ return!*

### **How Do Christians Look Like Losers?**

1. **Persecution:** Jesus said: <sup>NIV</sup> **Mt. 24:9** “...you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death...” [www.PrisonerAlert.com](http://www.PrisonerAlert.com) states: “In more than 40 nations around the world today Christians are being persecuted for their faith. In some of these nations it is illegal to own a Bible, to share your faith in Christ, change your faith or teach your children about Jesus. Those who boldly follow Christ—in spite of government edict or radical opposition—can face harassment, arrest, torture and even death.”
2. **Decline, deception, selfishness:** Jesus said: <sup>NIV</sup> **Mt. 24:10** “...many will turn away from the faith... <sup>11</sup> many false prophets will appear and... <sup>12</sup> the love of most will grow cold...” Now, think about today: †85% of