

CHURCH IN REGINA

"Matt. 25:4 But the prudent took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

HWMR Week 2—Watching and Being Ready in Order to Be Prepared by the Lord for His Second and Imminent Coming

The Believers' Attitude toward the Coming of Christ

Loving It, Awaiting It, and Taking It as an Encouragement

Since we know that the Lord's second coming is so precious, we should love the Lord's appearing (2 Tim. 4:8). The Bible concludes with "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20). From the record in the New Testament, it is not difficult to discover that in their hearts the apostles firmly believed that the Lord would come quickly, and they also lived a life in preparation for the Lord's second coming...**Do not think that since we are clear concerning the signs of the Lord's coming, we can be slothful and can first love the world and then pursue the Lord when the last week comes.** There is no such convenience. We should believe that the Lord is to be feared. In Luke 12 the Lord gave a parable concerning a rich man who endeavored to lay up wealth for himself so that his soul might enjoy itself and be merry. But God said to him, "Foolish one, this night they are requiring your soul from you" (vv. 16-20). **Every "today" that we have is truly the Lord's grace.** Therefore, as long as we have **today**, as long as we still have **breath**, we should **love the Lord and His appearing, await the Lord's coming (Phil. 3:20), and always take His coming as an encouragement.**

In 2 Timothy 4:1 Paul said to Timothy, "I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom." This is an exhortation from Paul immediately before his martyrdom. He said that he had fought the good fight, he had finished the course, and he had kept the faith, and that at the judgment seat he would be awarded the crown of righteousness, which would be awarded to all those who have loved His appearing (vv. 6-8). He reminded Timothy, and also us, by the Lord's judgment and kingdom, that **we should have a living that loves the Lord's appearing.** This will cause us not to be discouraged, not to backslide, not to become weak, but to remain faithful to the end.

Watching and Being Ready for It

When the Lord comes, He will come secretly as a thief to those who love Him and will steal them away as His treasures and bring them into His presence in the heavens (Matt. 24:42-43). Hence, **we need to watch and be ready** (25:13; 24:44). If we desire to be raptured, first we must **be filled with the heavenly breath and have oil in our vessels.** If we are **rooted on the earth and occupied daily with the anxieties of this life** and with earthly pleasures, we will not be raptured at that time. We should remember Lot's wife. Because she loved and treasured the evil world, which God was going to judge and utterly destroy, she took a backward look. Thus, she became a pillar of salt and was left to suffer in a place of shame. This should be a warning to us. If we love the world, the Lord will leave us here to pass through the great tribulation so that we may be put to shame until we become mature and are raptured.

Beseeking to Prevail to Escape

The Lord also reminded us to take heed to ourselves and to **be watchful at every time, beseeching lest our hearts be weighed down with debauchery and drunkenness and the anxieties of life**, and that the day of the great tribulation come upon us suddenly as a snare; for it will come in upon all those dwelling on the face of all the earth. We should **guard our hearts and give all the room to the Lord** so that we may prevail to escape all these things and stand before the Son of Man (Luke 21:34-36; cf. Rev. 12:5-6, 14).

To attain maturity is not an overnight matter. Therefore, **for His coming we must prepare ourselves, love Him, and grow in Him, that at His appearing we may be mature to be raptured and receive the reward.** (The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1990, vol. 3, "The Up-to-date Presentation of the God-ordained Way and the Signs concerning the Coming of Christ," pp. 585-588)

Church Meetings:

Lord's Table Meeting

Lord's Day

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Prayer Meeting

Tuesdays

7:00 - 8:00 PM

Young People's Meeting

Saturdays

7:00 - 8:30 PM

Small Group Meetings

Fridays & Saturdays

7:00 - 8:30 PM

Conferences & Trainings:

International Chinese-

Speaking Conference

February 13-14, 2021

April International Training for Elders & Responsible Ones

April 16-18, 2021

International Memorial Day Conference

May 28-31, 2021

July Semiannual Training

July 5-10, 2021

Contact Information:

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Pay the price.
Buy the
EXTRA PORTION
of oil in this age.

Prayer Burdens:

1. Lord, **appear to us today**. We are anticipating Your return – to rapture us to Your presence, Your *parousia*. May we stand with You in the open aspect of Your return, Your *epiphaneia*.
2. Lord, we want to **participate in the preaching of the gospel**. Cause the gospel of grace and the gospel of the kingdom to reach every nation. Fully restore the nation of Israel, make its branches tender and put forth its leaves.
3. Make us those who are **watchful** and **ready**, those who have **no desire to be on earth at Your coming**. We spend everything on You Lord. **Find faith** in us at Your coming.
4. Lord, enlighten us by the shining of the prophetic word. Lead us to the dawning day and to the rising of the morning star in our hearts. Today, we want to **learn to be in Your presence and to treasure Your appearing**.
5. Make us **chaste virgins** who are watchful and always exercised. Day by day we need more **oil**, more **Spirit** so we can continue to bear a shining testimony. Give us more oil as we muse on Your words in our intimate fellowship with You.
6. Lord, we are willing to **pay any price to buy more oil**. We want to **seize every opportunity to be filled with Spirit**. Spread from our spirit to every part of our soul. Qualify us to meet You at Your wedding day.

Europe:

1. Completion of construction at Gut Elim blending, conference, and training center in Germany. Current financial need €600,000.

Church in Regina:

1. Goal of 50 meeting ones by end of 2021.
2. New revival for year 2021. Preserve each family and renew our consecration to bear fruit, live a God-man life in our daily living.
3. Blending with other churches in the Prairies.

Christmas—is it a Christian Practice?

It is the day designated in today's calendars as the day of Christ's birth. Christians and non-Christians alike celebrate it. But does the Bible have a command to remember the birth of Christ? Is this the day on which Christ was born? Are today's Christmas custom and practices of Christian origin? Or is Christmas an example of mixture between paganism and Christianity?

Bro. Watchman Nee wrote, "Why would they set the Lord's birthday at December 25? Three days prior to this day is the winter solstice, which is the shortest day of the year. After the twenty-fifth, the days begin to be longer. **Idol worshippers everywhere in the world take this day as the birthday of the sun god**. In Rome at that time, the great festivals were conducted at the grand theaters as celebrations of this feast. The Christians tried to take this date for celebrating the Savior's birth... [We should then] realize that this date was ordained by men only. December 25 was made the birthday of Christ in Rome, so that while the idol worshippers are busy with their worldly ceremonies, the Christians can quietly accomplish their holy ceremonies. They call this day the birthday of the unfailing One (i.e., the sun)...This is the way the church at that time adopted the idol worshippers' festival as its own illegitimate child. This is the cause of the defilement of the truth of Christ.

How clear it is that Christmas is made by man! **Since it is made by man, why do we have to keep it? God has not commanded man to remember His Son's birthday!** Since He has not commanded us to do so, why should we keep it? All faithful children of God should know how to answer this question.

Why do men celebrate Christmas? I am afraid that **there is more realization of the flesh than remembrance of spiritual things!** The jesting, laughter, amusement, and much other wantonness that disturbs the quietness of the spirit are not only harmful to the body, but inflict deadly wounds to the spirit...**Strictly speaking, Christmas parties at their worst are nothing but opportunities for the flesh, and at their best are something to stir up the soul and to cause confusion. The most beneficial thing for the spirit is to keep the Lord's Word, to remember only the Lord's death, and nothing else.** Hence, in order to receive the greatest benefit, **we should not celebrate Christmas.**

I do not know when God's children will separate the **worldly** things from the **spiritual** things, the **human** things from the **divine** things. If our brothers and sisters will one day **happily separate themselves** from the literary clubs, the concerts, the welcome parties, the entertainment clubs, and the social gatherings, and will make a clear-cut separation from the world, they will receive power to be God's witnesses. Alas, jesting is the **greatest destroyer of a godly living**, and revelling is a worm in one's spiritual living! Social celebrations and gatherings are the weapons that put the believers' holy life and power under a siege! Young believers should beware of these things! (The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Set 1, Vol. 07: The Christian (5), Chapter 6, Section 1)

Announcements:

1. Brothers' Meeting on December 27, 2020 at 5:30pm via Zoom.
2. Western Canada Brothers' Fellowship on Jan. 14, 2021 at 9pm CST.
3. Western Canada College Conference on Jan. 22-23, 2021. Detailed schedule to follow.
4. Life-Study Reading Genesis Msg. 66 will resume on Jan. 4, 2021.