



LIGHT OF THE
WORD

April 2010

Dear Friend of Light of the Word,

“Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book”
(Revelation 22:7 NKJV).

The onslaught of earthquakes in various parts of the world has the attention of many. The problem with the economy, the lack of justice, and the bickering and division among our nation’s leaders is causing many to feel hopeless. Is it a sign that we are living in the last days? It seems clear from prophecy that Jesus could come back at any time. I think it’s prudent for all Christians to be aware of the signs of His coming, and just as importantly, to be READY for the return of Christ.

So, let me ask you, are you ready? Are you ready for the return of Jesus Christ?

The book of Revelation is about the coming of Jesus Christ. It is a book that gives us hope as Christians. No matter how bad the world gets around us, we as believers have the promise of God that Jesus will come again and will make everything right. The Lord will reward us at that time—He will honor all that we have done in His name.

Sometimes we get bummed because it seems that those who do evil are living large in life and those who do what is right seem to get bombarded by injustice and unfair practices. We try to live a godly, honest life and yet struggle with finances and difficulties while we see the unjust living in luxury and seemingly enjoying a carefree life. The psalmist struggled with this same dilemma. He said, *“For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills. Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence. From their callous hearts comes iniquity; the evil conceits of their minds know no limits. They scoff, and speak with malice; in their arrogance they threaten oppression. Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth. Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance. They say, ‘How can God know? Does the Most High have knowledge?’ This is what the wicked are like—always carefree, they increase in wealth”* (Psalm 73:3-12 NIV).

Sound familiar? When you look around our world today, do you think the same thing? But just as the Psalmist, we need to put things into the proper perspective—into God’s perspective. The psalmist recognized this when he said, *“When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors! As a dream when one awakes, so when you arise, O Lord, you will despise them as fantasies. When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you. Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds* (Psalm 73:16-28 NIV).

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The Lord is aware of all your trials. He knows every detail about your life. God knows all about the injustices you face. But you need an eternal perspective. The Lord is not done in your life. He will fulfill His promises. He will come again and He will reward your faithfulness.

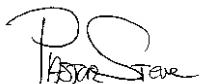
Don't neglect the hope of Christ's return. Hold fast to the Gospel and stay close to the Lord—seeking Him on a daily basis through prayer, the reading of His Word, and in fellowship with other believers.

When Jesus addressed the seven churches in the Book of Revelation, He said to the church of Ephesus, *"I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first"* (Revelation 2:2-5 NIV).

Are you on fire for the Lord? Are you closer to Jesus today than you were yesterday? If not, you need to 'return to your first love' and put God first in your life. Get back into the Word. Start praying. Go to church. Hold fast to your commitment to Christ in these last days. Jesus said to the church in Ephesus, *"To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God"* (Revelation 2:7 NIV).

Does the thought of Jesus' return excite you or frighten you? The answer to that question will be a gauge as to whether you are ready for His return. If you are excited—keep the hope of His return planted firmly in your heart. It will strengthen and encourage you as you face the day to day trials of living in this world. However, if the thought of the Lord's return scares you, then I encourage you to get right with God—return to your first love so that you will be ready to go when Jesus Christ comes back to get His church!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pastor Steve', with a stylized initial 'PS' above it.

Pastor Steve