

July 19, 2026 - 2 Thessalonians 2:1a - "Our Lord Jesus Christ"

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 July 2026

Preacher: Carman Arroyo

[0:00] This is the reading of our Lord from 2 Thessalonians 2, verse 1a, not even the whole verse, which reads, now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him.

! This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God indeed. All right, so here we are, church. We have one sentence. We have three names, one gathering, and an entire church shaken to its foundation. The Thessalonians were confused about what God was doing, and when Jesus was coming back, someone had told them a lie. Perhaps it came through a false prophecy.

Perhaps through a rumor. Perhaps someone had even forged a letter in Paul's name. Whatever the source, the message was the same.

The day of the Lord has already come. You missed it. It happened quietly. It happened without you.

[1:24] These were people who had already suffered for the name of Christ. They had already buried loved ones. They had already stood beside graves of believers and wondered what would happen to them when Jesus returned.

And Paul had already comforted them in this very thing. And in his letter, in his first letter, he told them, The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God.

And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

And so we will always be with the Lord. The Lord descends. The dead rise. The living are gathered together with him.

And together they are always with the Lord. That is the promise that Paul had already given them. So when he now writes in his second letter about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, he is not introducing some type of new hope.

[2:43] He is calling them back to the promise that he had already given. But now someone was telling them that the very day that they were waiting for had already slipped by unnoticed.

And somehow they had been left behind. When I was a child, my parents dug a pond behind our house.

It was a pond between, and they put the dirt from digging that pond in between the woods. So there was the woods, the hill of dirt, and then the pond underneath.

And one summer day, while I was out playing in the woods, and my father was cutting the grass, and my brothers were playing outside, I wanted to go back home to get a drink.

So I started walking up that hill. And when I reached the top of the hill, I could not see anyone.

[3:51] My father was gone. My brothers were gone. The yard was empty. Immediately, my chest began to tighten.

I began gasping for air, and I ran towards the house as fast as I could. I searched every room. No one was there. And in that moment, I became convinced that Jesus had returned, and I was left behind.

That either God had forgotten me, or worse, I was exactly where I was supposed to be. I began to panic.

So I called my mother at work. We weren't supposed to call my mom unless it was an emergency. But to me, at that very moment, that was the most emergency that I've ever had in my entire life.

I remember thinking, if I could just hear my mother's voice, I will know that I am safe. That God could not have possibly forgotten her. A woman answered the phone and put me on hold.

[5:01] And what seemed like the longest few seconds of my entire life, I heard my mother's voice. Immediately, the fear lifted.

I could breathe again. I do not remember what I said after that. I only remember the relief of knowing that I had not been forgotten by God.

But my father did forget to bring me to go get ice cream with my other two brothers. You see, church, I needed to hear a familiar voice.

Tell me that everything was all right. The Thessalonians needed something similar. Not the voice of their mother, but the voice of the apostle of God.

They had been told that Jesus had come. And that somehow, they had been forgotten. This is no small lie.

[6:06] This is cruel. It does not merely get a date wrong. It attacks their assurance. It takes something Paul had described as a loud, public, glorious, and unmistakable, and turns it into something quiet, invisible, and already past.

Verse 1a names the subject. The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him.

Second part of verse 1 and the beginning of verse 2 names the problem. We ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken.

Paul will correct their understanding of the timeline. He will explain the certain things that have not happened yet. And if you want to know more about that, come back next Sunday.

But he begins by anchoring them in a person. Not merely what will happen, but the one who is coming. Paul names him our Lord Jesus Christ.

[7:18] I could think of no better title for this sermon. And this morning, I want to consider those names in a different order from the way Paul wrote them.

Because Paul writes, Lord Jesus Christ, we today will consider them as Jesus Christ Lord. I want us to follow the movement from the humility of Bethlehem to the saving work of the Messiah, the revealed glory of the King before whom every knee will bow.

Don't get confused that we're not reordering the words, but we are, I'm sorry, we are reordering the words, but we are not changing the truth. Then we will consider the promise that Paul attaches to those names as being gathered together to him.

And by the end, I want you to remember one sentence. Same Christ, both comings, one gathering. By both comings, I mean the first coming in humility and the second coming in glory. The same Christ who came to save his people will return to gather his people.

[8:41] Let us open up in prayer. Father God, we thank you. We thank you for your grace, for your mercy, for your love.

We thank you for your Son who came to this earth in abject humility. And Father, we thank you for your Holy Spirit who dwells within us today.

Father, I pray that eyes be opened so that they can see. I pray for ears to be cleared so that they can hear. I pray for strength to administer and proclaim your gospel well today.

Father, we lift all of this up in your Son's holy, holy, holy name. Amen. Amen. The first section that we'll be going through today is Jesus, the name of his humiliation.

And we see here that this name Jesus, it's a personal name. It's a human name. It's a name given to a baby.

[9:56] Matthew tells us why he was given it. You shall call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins. Jesus is a rescue name.

It is the name given to the eternal Son when he entered the world with a saving mission. Isaiah actually had foretold that entrance centuries earlier when he wrote, Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel.

And if you know the meaning of that name, it's God with us. Not God far away. Not God shouting down from heaven. God wrapped in human flesh.

God breathing our air. God feeling hunger, weariness, sorrow, pain, and cold. Paul says in Philippians 2 that the eternal Son took the form of a servant.

He humbled himself. He became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. And church, this is really staggering when we think, when we really think about this.

[11:10] The eternal Son of God did not merely observe our humiliation. He entered it. He took on our nature. He walked our roads.

He felt our weakness. He carried the obedience all the way to the Roman cross. That was his first coming.

Low, hidden, and bleeding. But church, that same Jesus Christ is coming back. Not someone like him.

Not a substitute. Not merely his influence continuing through history. The crucified and risen Jesus Christ himself will return. Just as the angels told the disciples on the Mount of Olives as Jesus ascended before their eyes.

They said this, this Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go.

[12 : 14] The Jesus whom they visibly watched ascend will personally and visibly return. And when Jesus rose from the dead, he did not rise a vague spirit or an unrecognizable force.

He stood there before Thomas and said, put your finger here. See my hands.

The body that had been crucified was raised and glorified. Our hope is not that someone similar to Jesus will appear at the end of history.

Church, our hope is that the incarnate crucified, risen, and ascended Jesus himself will return.

Because Revelation says, behold, he is coming with the clouds and every eye will see him.

No one will ultimately escape the revelation of his glory. Every eye will see him. Every person will stand before him. And here is what I want you to feel this morning, that the same Jesus who bled for his people is Jesus who is coming for his people.

[13 : 29] The one who knows your name because he died for you is the one whose face you will see. The hands once stretched out on the cross are the hands that will gather his church, his people, home.

That is Jesus. But, Jesus is not merely a man with a personal name.

He is also the Christ. So we move on to section two. Christ, the anointed savior. And this word Christ means Messiah, the anointed one.

Jesus is the eternal son who came in the flesh as God's appointed prophet, priest, and king. As our prophet, he proclaimed the kingdom because he is the word made flesh.

As our priest, he did not merely bring a sacrifice. He offered himself to put away sin. And as our king, he announced that the kingdom of God had drawn near.

[14 : 45] But this kingship did not look the way that the world expected. He entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey. He wore a crown made of thorns.

He was enthroned upon a cross. And to the unbelieving eye, his anointing looked like weakness. It looked like defeat.

It looked like failure. But the cross was not the collapse of his mission. It was the accomplishment of it.

At the first coming, Christ inaugurated his kingdom through humility, sacrifice, and resurrection. At his second coming, he would reveal and consummate the kingdom in power.

Paul had already told the Thessalonians in chapter 1 that the Lord Jesus Christ will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels and flaming fire.

[15 : 45] That was last week, if you remember. And then next week, later on in chapter 2, Paul says that the Lord Jesus will destroy the lawless one with the breath of his mouth.

The one who once remained silent before his accusers will one day speak and the rebellion itself will collapse before his word. The one who allowed men to mock him will return with all authority. The one who bore judgment for his people will come to judge evil and deliver his people from sin, death, Satan, and every power opposed to his kingdom.

Do you see the shape of this church? What's before us? That his first coming, the kingdom advanced through the crucified Messiah, and his second coming, the reign of that Messiah will be openly revealed.

Same Christ, two advents, one saving mission. And the Christ who bore God's judgment in the place of his people is the Christ who will defeat every enemy of God and vindicate all who belong to him.

[17 : 02] The one who saved you is the one who will fully and finally deliver you. But church, it's not enough to know that he is Jesus, the Savior, and the Christ, the anointed one.

Paul gives him another name, the highest name in the sentence, Lord. We move on to section three, Lord, veiled, and revealed.

Paul calls him our Lord Jesus Christ. The word is Kyrios, Lord, Master, Sovereign. Throughout the Greek Old Testament, that word is used for the covenant name of God himself.

Paul is not describing Jesus as merely a honored teacher, but he is identifying him with the divine authority and glory and rule of God.

Yet, at his first coming, the lordship was veiled. Pilate had a sign placed above his head, Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews.

[18 : 22] It was intended to mock him. a broken man, a bloodied face, a crown of thorns, a dying body displayed before a jeering crowd.

It was lordship, veiled in blood, and hung up as a joke. Isaiah had told us to expect as much when he said, he had no form or majesty that we should look at him.

And no beauty that we should desire him. The world looked at the lord of glory and saw nothing worth wanting.

But the veil will not remain forever. Paul tells us in Philippians 2, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is lord.

That means every knee, every tongue, every rebel, every nation, every person who mocked him, who ignored him, who rejected him, or tried to replace him with one day, will one day confess the truth that Jesus Christ is lord.

[19 : 47] lord, and that Paul had already told the Thessalonians that the lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command. This is an event, is not an event so hidden that Christ's people could miss it and wonder whether they had been abandoned.

Is the lord himself arriving publicly, gloriously, and unmistakably. We see this when Daniel wrote centuries earlier that to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him.

With Zechariah also saying the lord will be king over all the earth. So, we hear Paul's answer to this frightened church at Thessalonica.

and hear his answer to us as well. That the lordship of Christ has not been secretly settled somewhere while you are not looking. The kingdom has not quietly passed you by.

The return of the Lord will not be mistaken, overlooked, or hidden in the footnotes of history. His glory will be revealed publicly.

[21 : 11] His authority will be undeniable. His arrival will be unmistakable. At His first coming, His lordship was veiled beneath humility, and at His second coming, His lordship will be revealed in glory.

The world that crowned Him with thorns will see Him crowned with majesty. The world that placed Him on a cross will see Him seated upon a throne. And the world that mocked Him and gave Him the title king will now bow before their Lord.

The church, all of this, we bring all these three names back together as Paul wrote them, our Lord Jesus Christ.

And we want to look now at the promise attached to those names as we move on to section four, our gathering together to Him.

We see that we already saw this promise in Paul's first letter that I've mentioned before, and he's not offering something new here. He is naming what had already been described, the Lord descending, the dead rising, and the living saints being caught up together with them to meet the Lord.

[22 : 38] No dead believer is forgotten. No living believer goes it alone. The whole church will be united in Christ.

And Paul says, so we will always be with the Lord. That is what Paul summarizes here as our being gathered to Him.

And what I want us to see, church, is that each Lord's day, each gathering on Sunday is nothing but a foretaste of what eternity is going to be like.

This very day, singing, glorifying Him, it's going to be amazing. And we'll see that it will be the whole redeemed church of Christ.

Every nation, every century, every believer, every saint raised from the dead, every living believer transformed.

[23:44] All gather to Him. As Christ said in John 6, this is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me, but raise it up on the last day.

Church, do you hear that? I should lose nothing. Christ does not misplace His people. He does not forget their names. He does not lose track of graves.

He does not overlook suffering saints. He does not gather most of His people and accidentally leave a few behind. He will lose nothing of all the Father has given to Him.

Matthew 24 says that He will send out His angels with a loud trumpet call and they will gather His elect from the four winds. The same Jesus Christ who gathered a people to Himself through His first coming will gather that people to Himself when He comes again.

Bodily, visibly, gloriously, not one missing, not one forgotten, not one left, wondering whether the shepherd lost track of His sheep.

[24:59] That is why the lie troubling the Thessalonians was so wicked. It did not merely confuse their calendar, attack their confidence that they belong to a Savior who would preserve them, raise them, and gather them home.

Paul had already told them, we will always be with the Lord, and now he's reminding them, our being gathered together to Him is a promise that had not failed, and the Lord had not forgotten them, and the gathering had not passed them by.

And now we get to an area where I do want to discuss it a little bit because it requires us to pause and speak honestly about something because Christians who love the same Jesus, trust the same Christ, and confess the same Lord have disagreed for centuries about some of the details surrounding the end times.

Now, I do not want to hide any of those disagreements. Some of you may aspire or you're convicted in one camp versus another, other, but I also do not want a secondary disagreement to obscure the essential truth because here is the non-negotiable Christian confession that Jesus Christ will personally, bodily, visibly, and gloriously return to judge the living and the dead, raise the dead, and fully establish his kingdom.

That is fundamental Christianity. Faithful Christians differ about the sequence surrounding the return. We have premillennialists, amillennialists, postmillennialists, and partial praetorists understanding the details very differently.

[27:02] Those disagreements do matter and they deserve careful study, but they do not determine whether or not someone is saved. Faithful believers can disagree on timing and sequence while holding firmly to the same Lord.

However, I do want us to be cautious that any view or any sub section of a view that I've just named or any of the other ones that denies any future bodily resurrection or any future visible return of Christ falls outside of historic Christian orthodoxy and his heresy.

Paul warned Timothy about this and men who taught about it that the resurrection had already happened. Paul said that this teaching was upsetting the faith of some that the resurrection is not a side issue church.

The bodily return of Christ is not something that we can just put into the footnotes of history. So study it carefully and the details of it carefully hold to your convictions humbly no matter which part of the camp you're in.

But never release the truth every faithful Christian must hold with both hands that Jesus Christ is coming again.

[28:45] And church your stability does not come from mastering every single detail of an eschatological chart of an end times chart. Your civility comes from knowing that the person and who the person is coming.

And so brothers and sisters some of you may be sitting here today and be like sweet thanks Carmen it's awesome we know who Jesus Christ and our Lord is we kind of touched on a little bit of end time stuff what does this mean for me right now I don't even know what eschatological is but I want us to see that this promise that Paul gave the Thessalonians and in fact us is not just a promise for the end of history because we are in the end days ever since his ascension we have been consistently in the end times but it also matters right now in weeks especially like the ones that we as a church have just endured two people connected to this congregation have received cancer diagnosis in the span of two weeks and one of them is still in their twenties and only a few days ago one of our own passed away suddenly leaving his wife a widow in a home that suddenly

feels empty she loves

Christ her faith is real but so is her pain strong Christians still grieve strong Christians still weep knowing your loved one is with the Lord does not erase the ache of missing them here so when we get news like this and we start to wonder and we ask Lord have you forgotten me do you still see me have I somehow with all this been left behind while everyone else is able to live on with their life because you may not have been left behind by the coming of Christ but your circumstances can make you feel left behind by his care your life might feel as though it stopped a diagnosis at a hospital room an empty chair or a side of the bed that suddenly went cold and I will not pretend that these sentences can erase the pain that people are going through that you are going through because cancer is terrible death is an enemy and the

Bible never asks us to act otherwise because Jesus himself stood outside the tomb of Lazarus and wept Jesus knew that the resurrection was coming he knew that Lazarus would still walk out would soon walk out of the grave and still Jesus wept grief is not unbelief tears are not a denial of the resurrection but in the middle of that pain Paul directs our eyes to the same place he directed the Thessalonians to look at who is coming look at Jesus the Savior who entered our suffering carried our grief bore our sorrows and went into death before rising victoriously look at Christ the anointed priest who bore judgment for his people and the king who will finally destroy sin disease and death look at the Lord the one who is still Lord when the diagnosis comes still Lord at the grave site and still

Lord when the house goes quiet your circumstances have changed but your Lord has not he is the same yesterday today and forever and one day the Lord himself will descend the dead will rise in Christ and every believer separated by death will be gathered to him and so we will always be with the Lord Christ does not lose track of those bodies that have been weakened by cancer he does not lose track of saints placed in graves he does not forget widows when the house goes quiet he will lose nothing of all that the father has given to him so those grieving awaiting test results living under a diagnosis are facing a future you did not choose you have not been forgotten the Lord sees you the Lord knows you the Lord will sustain you when he comes to make all things new but there may be someone here this morning with a different fear you're not merely afraid that you might be left behind deep down you think you should you know what you have done you know the people that you have harmed you know the things that you have said and the things that you have thought you know the ways you have resisted

[34:56] God perhaps you have concluded there can never be a place for someone like me God might forgive others but he could never forgive me I deserve judgment I deserve hell and if by that you mean that you deserve God's judgment you're right we all do and the Bible agrees because none of us not the preacher not the elders not a deacon not a consistent church member is able to get to heaven on their own merit because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God the wages of sin is death every one of us has sinned against a holy God but that is what makes the gospel such good news

God does not save us because our sins are small he saves us because Christ is mighty to save at the cross Jesus willingly bore the judgment we deserve the innocent for the guilty the righteous for the unrighteous the sinless savior in the place of sinful men and women the justice of God was not ignored it fell upon the son that all who trust in him could have mercy his grace is greater than your guilt your sin is real but it is not stronger than his blood your past may be dark but you have not gone beyond the reach of Jesus Christ where sin increased grace abounded evermore church because Jesus Christ said himself whoever comes to me

I will never cast you out not who cleans himself up first not who repairs what is damaged not whoever proves that he deserves another chance another opportunity another anything whoever comes so come come with your guilt come with your shame come with your questions your weak faith your misunderstandings turn from your sin and turn to the Lord Jesus Christ because the very one who will return as judge offers you now as his savior the Lord is mighty to save and the hands that will one day gather his people are the same hands that were pierced to redeem them so do not be quickly shaken do not allow cancer death grief fear guilt or shame to convince you that Christ has forgotten you or that his grace could never reach you look at who is coming Jesus the savior who came to rescue sinners Christ the anointed one who died and rose again Lord the sovereign king who is coming in glory to his suffering people he says you have not been forgotten to the repentant sinner he says come to me and I will not cast you out and to his whole church he

promises I will lose nothing of all that the father has given me but raise it up on the last day so stand firm church stand firm and whatever you're going through he will see you through because the Jesus who came to save us is the Christ who reigns over us and the Lord who is coming to gather us not one of his own will be missing same Christ both comings one gathering for the glory of God in Christ alone let us pray