

Sermon 講道信息-May 五月 28, 2023

It's Sure and Certain 確定無疑

2 Peter 彼得後書 3:3-7

When I was about 12 years old, I would ride the bus to and from school.

在我大約 12 歲的時候，我通常會乘坐公共汽車上下學。

The journey was about 10 kilometres.

那是一段大約 10 公里的路程。

Today, buses have GPS, and arrival and departure times are posted digitally.

今天，公共汽車有導航系統，到達和離開的時間均以數字方式發佈。

You can even track buses on your cellphone.

您甚至可以在手機上追蹤公交車。

When I was 12 years old, none of that existed.

在我 12 歲的那個時代，這些都不存在。

Many times, I had to wait in the pouring rain not sure when the bus might come.

很多時候，我不得不在傾盆大雨中等待，不知道公共汽車什麼時候會來。

There were days when I thought, "I'm giving up; I'll start walking."

有時，我會這樣想，「放棄了吧;開始走路吧。」

Sometimes, when I started walking, the bus arrived, saw no one at the bus-stop, and drove past me.

有時，當我開始走路了，公共汽車又到了，看到公車站沒有人，車就從我身邊駛過。

So, I knew it was better to wait.

如此看來，等待是最好的。

"The bus will come. It may not come when I expect it to. But it will come. I'll wait."

「巴士會來的。它可能不會在我期待的時候到來。但它會到來。等著吧。」

Sure enough, the bus eventually arrived.

果然，公交車終於到來。

One of the bedrocks of Christian faith is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

基督教信仰的基石之一是耶穌基督的第二次降臨。

Shortly before his crucifixion, Jesus tells his disciples in John 14:1-3,

在被釘十字架前不久，耶穌在約翰福音 14：1-3 中告訴自己的門徒，

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come back** and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."

「你們心裏不要憂愁；你們信 神，也當信我。在我父的家裏有許多住處；若是沒有，我就早已告訴你們了。我去原是為你們預備地方去。我若去為你們預備了地方，**就必再來**接你們到我那裏去，我在哪裏，叫你們也在哪裏。」

In Matthew 25:31, Jesus says that the Son of Man

在馬太福音 25：31 中，耶穌說那人子

- a special term that refers to Jesus
- 一個特指耶穌的術語
- will come in all glory to judge the world.
- 終將要榮耀地來審判世界。

As the disciples watched him ascend to his Father, they are told in Acts 1:11,
當門徒看著祂升到祂父面前時，在使徒行傳 1：11 中，他們被告知：

“This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

「這離開你們被接升天的耶穌，你們見他怎樣升上天去，他也要怎樣來臨。」

Jesus knows he will die for the sin of the world;

耶穌知道自己會為世人的罪而死;

Jesus knows he will be raised from the dead;

耶穌知道自己會從死裡復活;

Jesus knows he will return to his Father in heaven;

耶穌知道自己會回到祂在天上的父那裡;

and Jesus knows he will come again.

耶穌知道自己會再來。

But why is the Second Coming of Jesus so important?

那麼，為什麼耶穌的第二次降臨如此重要呢？

Well, we know this world is still trapped in rebellion against God.

我們知道這個世界仍然被困在對神的悖逆中。

Christ’s death and resurrection guarantee victory, but final victory still awaits.

基督的死和復活保證了勝利，但最終的勝利仍在等待的過程中。

The day will come when there will be no more death, mourning, crying, or pain (Revelation 21:4).

那一天，將不再有死亡、悲哀、哭號或痛苦（啟示錄 21：4）。

1 Corinthians 15:23-24 teach that when Christ returns, believers who have died will be resurrected.

哥林多前書 15：23-24 教導說，當基督再來時，死去的信徒將復活。

Then the end will come.

然後末日就會到來。

Jesus will destroy all dominion, authority, and power.

耶穌將摧毀所有的統治、權柄和能力。

Everything will be placed under God.

一切都將置於神之下。

And there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

到來的是新天新地。

The Second Coming of Jesus is so important because it is the conclusion, the completion, the consummation of all of history.

耶穌的第二次降臨是如此重要，因為祂是整個歷史的終極，結論、和完成。

History began when God said, "Let there be light" in Genesis 1

歷史從創世記 1 章中神說的「要有光」開始，

and it concludes in Revelation 22 where we are told

在啟示錄 22 中結束，在那裡我們被告知

"They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light.

And they [believers in Jesus] will reign for ever and ever."

「他們也不需要燈光或日光，因為主 神要光照他們。他們（相信耶穌的人）要作王，直到永永遠遠。」

The injustices we see now will finally be made right by Jesus.

我們現在看到的不公正最終將由耶穌更正。

The unfulfilled hopes we experience now will finally be realized in Jesus.

我們現在所經歷的未實現的盼望最終將在耶穌里實現。

The brokenness we feel now will finally be healed in Jesus.

我們現在感受到的破碎最終將在耶穌里得到醫治。

The cross and the resurrection of Jesus guarantee these;

十字架和耶穌的復活保證了這一切；

but it is the Second Coming that completes salvation.

但第二次降臨才是救贖的徹底完成。

Hebrews 9:28 says,

希伯來書 9：28 說：

"...so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him."

「基督既然一次獻上，擔當了許多人的罪，將來要第二次顯現，與罪無關，而是為了拯救熱切等候他的人。」

But this raises a question. 於是，這就提出了一個問題。

It's the question that lies at the heart of the false teaching Peter exposes.

這正是彼得所揭露的關於錯誤教導的問題的核心。

Listen to what the false teachers say in 2 Peter 3:4:

請聽假教師在彼得後書 3：4 中所說的話：

"Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."

「他要來臨的應許在哪裏呢？因為從列祖長眠以來，萬物與起初創造的時候仍是一樣啊！」

The false teachers scoff.

假教師發出譏諷。

They say there is no Second Coming. 他們說沒有第二次降臨。

There is no promise. 沒有應許。

Nothing has changed. 一切都不曾改變。

It's as if they say, "How foolish to wait at the bus-stop. The bus won't come; it never does. Get on with your life as you want to."

這就好像在說，「在公交車站等車是多麼愚蠢，公共汽車不會來，永遠都不會來。所以只管繼續隨心所欲地生活吧。」

And this is the first point. 這是第一點。

Where there is no belief in the Second Coming of Christ, there is no constraint on our morality or ethics.

如果不相信基督第二次降臨，我們的道德或倫理就沒有約束。

God's not coming, so who cares what we do?

神不會來，誰還在乎我們做什麼？

And what happens then?

然後會發生什麼呢？

It's not long before humanity pursues its "own evil desires", as verse 4 says.

不久之後，正如第 4 節所說，人類就會追求「隨從自己的私慾」。

As some say, "As long as I don't get caught, I can do what I like."

正如有人說的，「只要不被抓到，我就可以做我喜歡的事情。」

The irony is that by rejecting belief in the Second Coming, that there is a final account to be given before God, we reject objective truth.

具有諷刺意味的是，通過拒絕相信第二次降臨，拒絕在神面前有一個最後的交代，我們還拒絕客觀真理。

Truth becomes what we make it.

真理成為我們創造的東西。

So, we live in a world of competing truths because we don't know truth.

所以，我們生活在一個真理相互競爭的世界里，因為我們不認識真理。

So, try talking about abortion, euthanasia, gender identity, climate change, aboriginal rights, social welfare, policing, legal systems

所以，試著談論墮胎、安樂死、性別認同、氣候變化、原住民權利、社會福利、警務、法律制度

– it's not long before the labels are out:

– 標籤很快就貼出來：

right wing, transphobic, pro-choice, climate change denier, "woke", religious nut, and so on.

右派、跨性別恐懼症、支援選擇、氣候變化否認者、「覺醒」、宗教瘋子等等。

Remove a sense of ultimate justice that the Second Coming means, and we rapidly lose touch with reality.

倘若拿掉第二次降臨所意味著的終極公義，我們馬上就會和現實脫節。

I read the story of a US Navy sailor on a ship bound for Japan.

我讀過一則故事，是關於一個美國海軍水手在一艘開往日本的船上，

He broke a rule and was busted down one rank, fined, and given extra duty for three weeks.

因違反了一條規則，他被降級和罰款，此外，他還需要額外工作三周時間。

Because he was looking forward to his 21st birthday on July 22, he consoled himself by thinking,

他安慰自己，因為 7 月 22 日是他期待的 21 歲生日，

“They can bust me, they can fine me – but they can’t take away my birthday.”

「他們可以抓住我，他們可以罰我款- 但他們不能奪走我的生日。」

As July 22 approached, his excitement increased.

隨著 7 月 22 日的臨近，他也表現得越來越興奮。

There will be a party and a celebration.

將有一個派對和慶祝活動。

When he went to bed on July 21, he happily said to himself,

7 月 21 日上床睡覺時，他開心地對自己說：

“They can bust me, they can fine me – but they can’t take away my birthday.”

「他們可以抓住我，他們可以罰我款- 但他們不能奪走我的生日。」

The next morning, he found out that overnight the ship had crossed the international date line – and it was July 23.

第二天早上，他猛然發現，一夜之間，這艘船越過了國際日期變更線——時間居然是 7 月 23 日了。

This sailor assumed that no matter what he’d done, nothing could interrupt his 21st birthday.

這位水手固執地認為，無論他做了什麼，沒有什麼可以影響到他的 21 歲生日。

Instead, he lost touch with reality.

事與願違，他與現實脫節了。

During this sermon series, we’ve learned again and again that when our culture, our society, our world thinks the Second Coming is untrue and there is no such thing as judgement,

在這個講道系列中，我們一次又一次地看到，當文化、社會和我們的世界都認為第二次降臨是不真實的，根本沒有審判這回事情時，

soon it doesn’t matter what we do or how we behave.

很快你會發現，我們做什麼或如何表現都變得無關緊要了。

Without the accountability of the Second Coming, everything is up for grabs.

沒有第二次降臨的責任，一切都可以亂來。

And guess what, we lose touch with reality.

你猜怎麼著，結果就是我們與現實嚴重脫節。

But where there is belief in the Second Coming,

但是，只要我們的信仰裡存在第二次降臨，

our lives are ordered wisely,

我們的生活就是明智而有序的，

our hopes are held faithfully,

我們的盼望是信實的，

and our trust in Christ is secured confidently.

我們對基督的信任是充滿信心的。

We can, with the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:18,

我們就能夠，如使徒保羅在哥林多後書 4：18 中所說的，

fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, for what is seen is temporary but what is unseen is eternal.

我們不是顧念看得見的，而是顧念看不見的；原來看得見的是暫時的，看不見的才是永遠的。

And when our eyes are fixed on the eternal, we do not lose touch with reality.

當我們的雙眼定睛於永恆時，我們不會脫離現實。

On Monday, I spoke with a dear friend in England.

星期一，我和一位親愛的遠在英國的朋友交談。

He's the pastor of a culturally diverse congregation

他是牧師，其會眾來自非常多元的文化背景

– perhaps even more diverse than Trinity.

—也許比三一教會更多元化。

He was telling me how recently he saw an Arab Christian and an African Christian talking together after the service.

他對我說，最近聚會敬拜結束後，他看到一位阿拉伯基督徒和一位非洲基督徒一起交談。

Both were new to the church and had only just met.

兩人都是教會的新人，才剛剛見面。

When their conversation ended what did they do?

當他們的交談結束後，他們做了什麼？

They held each other and embraced – Jesus brought them together.

他們互相擁抱—是耶穌把他們帶到一起。

My friend cried with joy.

我的朋友喜極而泣。

Those two Christians, from such diverse cultural, ethnic, and language backgrounds, displayed the reality of eternity

這兩位基督徒各自的文化、種族和語言背景如此不同，在此刻卻展示了一個永恆的現實

– life with Jesus at the centre.

—以耶穌為中心的生命。

This is what excites me about Trinity.

這就是三一教會讓我興奮的地方。

We get to display eternal reality here

我們在這裡呈現永恆的現實

– for the Holy Spirit brings us together and our diverse cultures and languages are celebrated but celebrated under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

– 因為聖靈把我們聚集在一起，在耶穌基督的主權下，不同的文化和語言都被歡迎和慶祝。

Philippians 2:10-11 declare that one day every knee will bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

腓立比書 2：10-11 宣稱，眾膝都要跪下，眾口都要宣認：耶穌基督是主。

But we get to do this now!

因此，我們現在就可以這樣做了！

We are the advance party, the vanguard, the announcement, the preview of what is to come.

我們是先遣隊，是急先鋒，是宣告者，預告即將發生的事情。

We get to show by our lives and say by our lips,

我們可以用我們的生活來展示，用我們的口來宣告，

“Jesus is Lord and he’s coming again! This is reality!”

「耶穌是主，祂將要再來！這就是現實！」

And this changes everything.

這改變了一切。

Now, by the power of the Spirit, we say to the world,

現在，藉著聖靈的能力，我們對世界說：

“Do you want to know what forgiveness looks like?

「你想知道寬恕是什麼樣子的嗎？

It looks like this. 是這樣的。

Do you want to know what generosity looks like?

你想知道慷慨是什麼樣子的嗎？

It looks like this. 是這樣的。

Do you want to know what truth looks like?

你想知道真相是什麼樣子的嗎？

It looks like this.

是這樣的。

Do you want to know what God’s amazing grace looks like?

你想知道上帝奇妙的恩典是什麼樣子的嗎？

It looks like this.

是這樣的。

Do you want to know what Jesus is like?

你想知道耶穌是什麼樣的嗎？

Look at us!”

看看我們吧！」

Wow! And all because we believe in the death, resurrection, ascension, and second coming of Jesus.

哇！這一切都是因為我們相信耶穌的死亡、復活、升天和再來。

We are not just in touch with reality – we, by God’s grace, display reality!

我們不只是與現實接觸—我們，靠著神的恩典，展示現實！

In a world that's lost touch with reality, we are called humbly and graciously to display reality.
 在一個與現實脫節的世界里，我們被召喚謙卑而富有恩典地展示現實。

The second thing Peter says is that these false teachers have lost touch with God's Word.
 彼得所說的第二件事是，這些假教師與神的話語失去了聯繫。

Verse 5 says they deliberately forget that God created by his word,
 第 5 節說他們故意忘記神是以祂的話創造的，
 that God judged the world at the Flood,
 神用洪水審判世界，

and that God will bring judgement on this world by his word.
 並且神會以祂自己的話審判這個世界。

Now, Peter has already emphasized God's Word in the second half of chapter 1,
 現在，彼得已經在第 1 章的後半部分強調了神的話，

with examples of God's judgement in chapter 2,
 在第 2 章中以神審判為例，

and, as we saw last week, in the first two verses of chapter 3.
 因此，正如我們上周看到的第 3 章的前兩節經文。

The point here is that God has said what he did (creation) and what he will do (final judgement at the Second Coming of Jesus).

這裏的重點是，神說了祂已經成就的（創造）和祂將要成就的（耶穌第二次再來時的最後審判）。

His Word – his truth – stands at the beginning of everything and at the end of everything.
 祂的話—祂的真理—站在一切的開始和終結。

God is before time and after time – he is eternal.
 神在時間之前和時間之後—祂是永恆的。

Therefore, everything is from him and for him and is held by him.
 因此，一切都源自於祂，為祂而來，並歸祂擁有。

Two years ago, Oxford University professor of astrophysics, Pedro Ferreira, expressed how puzzled scientists are about basic truths about the universe.

兩年前，牛津大學天體物理學教授佩德羅·費雷拉（Pedro Ferreira）表達了科學家對宇宙基本真理的困惑。

He said, "We are at a complete loss at how to explain some of the most fundamental but baffling observations about how our Universe behaves. ... We're no closer to answering the big questions than when I started out."

他說：「我們完全不知道該如何解釋一些最基本但令人困惑的觀察結果，關於我們的宇宙是怎樣運行的。...我們並沒有比最初開始的時候更接近問題的答案。」

Now, we must avoid what is sometimes called the "god of the gaps" theory.
 現在，我們必須回避有時被稱為「空白之神」的理論。

This is when we say, “What science cannot explain must be God – God fills the gaps in our knowledge.”

這時當我們說，「科學無法解釋的一定屬乎神—神可以填補我們知識的空白。」

Nice idea, just not biblical.

是個好主意，只是不符合聖經。

When Peter says God’s Word stands at the beginning of everything and at the end of everything, 當彼得說神的話語站在一切的開始和終結的時候，

he reminds us that every part of existence, the parts we understand and the parts we don’t, 他是在提醒我們，存在的每一部分，包括我們理解的和不理解的，

is because God faithfully holds us.

是因為神信實地托著我們。

So, it’s not that science can explain away God;

所以，並不是說科學的解釋可以抹除神的存在;

it’s that science, or mountains, or beauty, or music, or plant life, or steak sandwiches, or colourful Chinese celebrations, or Filipino rice, or love exist because God’s Word is at the beginning and at the end.

科學、山巒、美、音樂、植物、牛排三明治、五彩繽紛的中國慶祝活動、菲律賓米飯或愛的存在，是因為神的話語存在於一切的開始和終結。

The irony is that by dismissing the Second Coming, these false teachers – and many today 具有諷刺意味的是，通過否定第二次降臨，這些假教師 - 以及今天的許多人 – scramble in darkness to understand creation from beginning to end.

– 在黑暗中爭先恐後地理解創造的開始與終結。

They have no certainty and no promise.

他們沒有確定性，也沒有承諾。

But God’s Word is sure and the Second Coming assures us that life is secure in Jesus.

但神的話語是肯定的，第二次降臨向我們保證，生命在耶穌裡是穩妥的。

But there’s still a question to ask

但仍然有一個問題要提出來

– a question we all have and the question that gave the false teachers a reason to say nothing changes:

– 一個我們都想問的問題，一個給了假教師理由來說一切都不會改變的問題：

“Why hasn’t Christ returned?”

「基督為什麼沒有回來？」

Or, “When will he return?”

或者，「他什麼時候回來？」

Jesus said he would return.

耶穌說祂會再來。

Even in the second last verse of the Bible, Revelation 22:20, Jesus says,

甚至在聖經倒數第二節，啟示錄 22：20，耶穌說：

“Yes, I am coming soon.”

「是的，我必快來！」

But soon was 2,000 years ago.

說快來，已是 2000 年前。

How is that “soon”?

這怎麼能說「很快」呢？

We know that some in the early church believed Jesus would return in their lifetime.

我們知道，早期教會中的一些信徒相信耶穌會在他們的有生之年裡再來。

Christians in Thessalonica, for example, were disturbed when other believers died before Christ came again.

例如，帖撒羅尼迦的基督徒深感不安，特別是當一些信徒死在基督再來之前時。

Paul answers them in 1 Thessalonians 4-5.

保羅在帖撒羅尼迦前書 4-5 章回答了他們。

He says the Lord will come like a thief in the night, when least expected.

他說，主會在夜裡像賊一樣地回來，在最意想不到的時候。

This is a sobering reminder to us not to pin down Christ’s return to certain events in our world.

這是一個令人清醒的警示，提醒我們不要把基督的再來於世界上的某些事件掛鉤。

For 2,000 years some in the church have gone on record to say Christ will return on this date, at this time, in this season.

2000 年來，教會中的一些人因為說基督將在這個日期，在這個時候，在這個季節再來而被記錄在案。

I remember when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1991,

我記得 1991 年伊拉克入侵科威特時，

several well-known Bible teachers said this was a sign of Christ’s return

幾位著名的聖經教師說，這是基督再來的標誌

because they claimed that in the last days Babylon would rise to challenge God

因為他們聲稱在末後的日子裡，巴比倫會起來挑戰神

– and the ancient city of Babylon is in Iraq.

—巴比倫古城就在伊拉克。

But of course, all attempts to fix the date have been wrong.

但是，當然，所有這樣確定日期的嘗試都是錯誤的。

In today’s passage Peter says scoffers will come in the last days.

在今天的經文中，彼得說在末世時將有許多譏誚者來臨。

When are the last days?

最後的日子是什麼時候？

It’s tempting to think the “last days” are a fixed time in the future.

人們很容易認為「末日」是未來的某個固定時間。

Peter could not mean this because he's describing scoffers who were already active in the church in his time.

彼得不可能是這個意思，因為他描述的是那些在他那個時代已經活躍在教會中的譏諷的人。

So for him, "the last days" had already begun.

所以對他來說，「末後的日子」已經開始了。

Pentecost – today – tells us the same.

五旬節 – 也就是今天 – 告訴我們同樣的事情。

At the first Pentecost, Peter quotes the prophet Joel in Acts 2:17-21.

在第一個五旬節，彼得在使徒行傳 2：17-21 中引用了先知約珥的話。

The prophecy – which refers to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost – begins "In the last days..."

那個預言 – 也就是指五旬節上聖靈的澆灌 – 始自「在末後的日子...」

In other words, the "last days" are not a time in the future;

換句話說，「末日」不是未來的時間;

the "last days" describe the time from Pentecost to when Christ returns.

「末後的日子」描述了從五旬節到基督再來的時間。

In other words, the last 2,000 years have been the last days.

換句話說，過去的 2000 年就是末後的日子。

We live in the last days as the church last century did, 500 years ago did, 1,000 years ago did, and 2,000 years ago did.

我們生活在末世，就像上個世紀，500 年前，1000 年前，和 2000 年前的教會一樣。

The challenge for us is not to try to define the time or season of Christ's return.

我們面臨的挑戰不是試圖定義基督再來的時間或季節。

Jesus told us that only the Father knows this.

耶穌告訴我們，只有天父知道這一點。

As I shared with staff a couple of weeks ago:

正如我兩周前與同工分享的那樣：

for the Second Coming, we're not on the organizing committee;

對於第二次降臨，我們並不在那個組委會裡;

we're on the welcoming committee.

我們是歡迎委員會的成員。

It's not the wait that is important

重要的不是等待

– it's knowing that Christ might return at any moment and therefore we must be ready.

– 重要的是知道基督隨時可能再來，所以我們必須做好準備。

What does it mean to be ready?

做好準備意味著什麼？

We will discover in the rest of this chapter.

我們將在本章的其餘部分繼續探討。

Christ is returning.

基督會再來。

The Second Coming is not some bizarre, irrelevant, primitive doctrine of Christianity.

第二次降臨不是基督教裡某種奇怪的、無關緊要的、或原始的教義。

The Second Coming is the inevitable conclusion to God's work of salvation.

第二次降臨是神救贖工作的必然結局。

It is the final consummation of God's victory;

這是神勝利的最後完成;

the ultimate declaration that Jesus is Lord.

耶穌是主的終極宣告。

On that day, every knee will bow, and every tongue confess

那一天，眾膝都要跪下，眾口都要宣認

– willingly or unwillingly – that Jesus is Lord.

— 情願或不情願 — 耶穌是主。

Those who do not know Jesus will face the eternal consequence of their decision.

那些不認識耶穌的人將面臨他們命定的永恆後果。

But those who believe in Jesus will be raised to everlasting life

但那些相信耶穌的人將復活到永生

– the final resurrection.

– 最後的復活。

And we will worship our Lord and enjoy eternal life in the new heaven and new earth.

我們將敬拜我們的主，在新天新地中享受永生。

In the meantime, we pray with the early church and with Christians in every generation since:

與此同時，我們與早期教會和自那以後每一代的基督徒一起禱告：

“Maranatha” “Come O Lord.” Amen.

「Maranatha」 「主啊，快來吧。」阿們。