

# The Fourfold Gospel

## PART 4: COMING KING

### STUDY OVERVIEW

Christ Community Church is part of the Christian & Missionary Alliance, a denomination that grew out of the ministry A.B. Simpson in the late 1800s. Simpson developed the Fourfold Gospel, which became core to the DNA of the Alliance. These lessons provide an overview of that message: Jesus is our Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King. Our identity in Christ is deeper when we understand his presence and power in these multi-dimensional ways.<sup>1</sup>

### STUDY OBJECTIVES

- To have a deeper love for Jesus and awareness of his multi-dimensional involvement in our lives.
- To have a deeper appreciation for the foundational beliefs of the Christian & Missionary Alliance.
- To love like Jesus, learn from Jesus, live like Jesus, and lead with Jesus.

### CONVERSATION STARTER

What are some of the beliefs you've always had about heaven? Where did you learn them?

### JESUS IS OUR COMING KING

Shortly before Pentecost, the disciples gathered around Jesus and he told them to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit, in whose power they would witness to others throughout the world. He reminded them that they would not know “the times or dates the Father has set” for the fullness of kingdom restoration (Acts 1:4–8). Even then, they wondered if Jesus would set up his kingdom on earth. But he had a different kingdom in mind, one that is already established but not yet fulfilled. As Jesus ascended into heaven, the disciples looked “intently into the sky” and messengers reminded them that Jesus would be coming back. The entire New Testament affirms that they looked forward to Christ’s return. The phrase often used is “the day of the Lord” (Acts 2:20, 1 Corinthians 1:8, 1 Thessalonians 5:2, Matthew 24:42–44). We affirm their example today.

#### What does the Bible say about the return of King Jesus?

- Revelation 1:7—Jesus will return in **bodily** form and the return will be both **public** and **visible**.
- Acts 1:11—Jesus himself will **personally** return; he will not send a representative on his behalf.
- Jude 14—Jesus will be accompanied by **angels**.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18—Jesus will also be accompanied by “those who have **fallen asleep**” and announced with the “**trumpet** call of God.”
- Matthew 24:36–44, 1 Thessalonians 5:1–3, Revelation 22:7—His return will be **without warning** (“imminent”), and Jesus says it will be **soon**.

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<sup>1</sup> [cmalliance.org/who-we-are/our-story](http://cmalliance.org/who-we-are/our-story)

- Romans 8:18–21, Revelation 22:3—Creation will be fully **liberated from the curse** and former bondage to decay.
- Revelation 20:7–10—Satan will be **destroyed**.
- 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 20:6, 22:5—Believers will **reign with Jesus** forever.

### **Why do you think Jesus has delayed his second coming for so long?**

- Matthew 24:10–14, 2 Peter 3:8—His delay allows more time for others to hear the gospel.
- 2 Timothy 4:1–8—We have a responsibility to preach/witness. Jesus as judge will reward a crown of righteousness to those who “long for his appearing.”

### **Think of someone you know who still needs to accept Jesus. Does your heart break for them?**

### **Why is there so much debate about the second coming of Jesus?**

Certainly, the second coming of Jesus is one of the great mysteries of Christian theology (1 Corinthians 15:51, Romans 11:25, Revelation 10:7). God’s ways are higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:8–9). Throughout history, believers have debated various interpretations of the “end times.” Even Peter, when writing about the “day of the Lord,” calls attention to Paul’s letters, which include “things that are hard to understand” (2 Peter 3:15–16). We should not be surprised when brothers and sisters have varying opinions about how Jesus will return. Below are three common views:<sup>2</sup>

1. **The Premillennial View:** After a great apostasy, Christ will return visibly to judge evil. Believers will be raptured (taken into heaven) preceding a 1000-year reign of Christ on earth. Afterward, Jesus will re-create the new heavens/new earth and execute a final judgment. Most premillennialists interpret the timeline in Revelation 19–21 literally. This is the official stance of the C&MA, and many at CCC ascribe to this view. This interpretation is common among Evangelical and Fundamentalist Christians, many of whom also believe the Church is the fulfillment of Israel (Revelation 20, Isaiah 64, Zechariah 14, Romans 11).
2. **The Amillennial View:** The kingdom began at Christ’s resurrection or ascension; we experience it by faith and only partially on earth, but it will be fully realized at the second coming. God’s full revelation is in both promise and fulfillment (Acts 2:16–21, Hebrews 1:1–2, 1 Peter 1:20). It views most prophecy and apocalyptic literature as being symbolic and metaphorical (for instance, the “thousand years” in Revelation means “a long time”). This view is common in many Protestant circles, Catholic and Orthodox churches, as well as Anabaptist groups.
3. **The Postmillennial View:** Christ will return after a “golden age” of Christendom in which life gets progressively better for an “era” (not a literal 1000 years). Most people will be Christians and Christ will reign on earth until the eventual final judgment of all living and dead. Common themes include the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham (Genesis 12) and salvation being made known to all nations (Psalm 22:27; Psalm 67:2, 7; Isaiah 2:2–3). This view was most common among churches urging social reform in the decades before World War 1.

### **What is most important as we consider the second coming of King Jesus?**

A hallmark truth of Alliance churches is our “‘big tent’ stance in reference to many doctrinal matters, encouraging believers of diverse backgrounds and theological traditions to unite in order to share the love of Jesus Christ.”<sup>3</sup> There is room for disagreement on *how* Jesus will return, as long as we have unity over

<sup>2</sup> Additional summaries and links can be found here: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_eschatology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_eschatology)

<sup>3</sup> From a summary paragraph in a news release here: <https://legacy.cmalliance.org/news/2009/02/24/student-outreach-center-opens-in-mongolia%E2%80%99s-capital/>

the *truth* of that second coming. What does it mean personally to us and practically to our churches if Jesus is coming again?

The whole focus of the New Testament's teaching about the return of Christ can be summarized in two simple propositions: first, because Christ is coming, **we need to be ready**—living lives that are pure, steadfast, prayerful, holy and reverent; and second, because Christ is coming, **we need to finish the task he has given us**—the preaching of the gospel.

## **RESPONSE**

Read Titus 2:11–15.

- How does our waiting for this “blessed hope” affect our lives today? How should we live?
- How can we help others become people who are “Christ’s very own”?

## **PRAYER**

- Give thanks for God’s salvation, given to all people, and for our blessed hope in Jesus’ second coming.
- Pray for the strength to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives.
- Pray that we would be people who are eager to do what is good.