

WCCC 2024

Brother Timothy Kwok

For a little while, He who is coming will come(1)

Peace to you brothers and sisters. We thank the grace of the Lord that we are able to gather in this way. Let us begin by reading the Word of the Lord.

"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,"
Hebrews 12:1

We know the theme of this conference comes from this verse, "Run with endurance the race that is set before us". The brothers have given me the burden in Hebrews 10:37 to the end of the chapter.

"For yet a little while,
And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.
38 Now the just shall live by faith;
But if anyone draws back,
My soul has no pleasure in him."

39 But we are not of those who draw back to [o]rperdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.
Hebrews 10:37-39

And 2 Peter 3:12, the first part,

" looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God,"
2 Peter 3:12a

Brothers and sisters, today, what do I want to fellowship with you? On one hand we want to see the coming of Christ. At the same time, we want to see how we are to run the race set before us. In other words, we are sharing of the coming of Christ and how we run the race.

I must confess that this is a topic I did not know how to talk about. I can share some teachings, there is no problem. But most of you who sit before me would know these doctrines very well. And you would have spoken these on the pulpit. But brothers and sisters, we thank the grace of God what each one of us have a hope, and because of this hope, the book of Hebrews says we are able to endure all the difficulties. And what is our hope? Our hope is the coming of Christ.

But brothers and sisters I have this feeling in my heart: the coming of Christ is not a teaching. It is an attitude in our life. It is our determination, our heart before the Lord. We know that you can

explain very clearly on the coming of Christ, but what matters is whether you are someone who waits for the coming of Christ? And if you cannot explain the teachings very clearly but live a life that is waiting for the coming of Christ, how different that would be!

I remember our elderly brother who stood on the pulpit many times, challenging and reminding us, "Are you ready?" Here you see a servant of God who not only shares on the teaching of the coming of Christ, but in his heart he has a desire. He is waiting for the coming of Christ.

Dear brothers and sisters, when you have a topic like this the burden in you is so great. I must confess to you before the Lord, that I can tell you of the teachings, but I am afraid that my heart cannot catch up; my will cannot catch up.

This is my prayer before the Lord: that the Lord speak in the depths of your heart. I can give you knowledge that you can understand with your head. Perhaps there are some you did not know, and some that you know very well. You may say, "what brother Kwok says, I have known." But what is important? That in these last days, do we know how important it is for Christ to come?

There are 5 aspects to the work of Christ, just like we have 5 fingers on our hand:

1. Christ coming to the earth;
2. His death;
3. His resurrection;
4. His ascension;
5. And His coming again

These are the 5 things you can count with your fingers. You cannot miss anyone out. We thank our Lord that when He came to this earth, He completed the work of salvation, He died and He lived for us, and for our sake ascended to the heavens. But what is more precious is that our Lord is coming again. When He comes again, the eternal purpose of God will be fulfilled.

We can talk and learn from the eternal purpose of God. And perhaps as we live in the eternal purpose of God we may be reminded. But brothers and sisters, we all wait for that day, the glorious return of Christ. When He comes again, the eternal purpose of God is fulfilled. When we read from the Word of God, we know that the entire purpose of salvation concludes on this point. If we do not lay hold of this point, we would not have a full understanding of the salvation of the Lord.

We thank the Lord that He indeed saved us. As we live on this earth He keeps us and protects us. When we have a burden He carries our burden. When we are sorrowful He comforts us. When we are in need He supplies. All this the Lord gives.

But brothers and sisters, we must know one important thing: that is the coming again of Christ. From Genesis to Revelations - the whole Bible - tells us this fact: we await for the coming again of Christ.

These are the opening words to remind us. I have no knowledge of the original language, and have only checked up some reference books. If in our midst there are experts in Greek and I have spoken wrongly, please correct me.

In the New Testament, there are 3 words describing the coming of the Lord Jesus. The first word is often used is *Parousia*, that is the coming again of Christ. It first appears in Matthew 24. It speaks of the coming again of Christ.

But in the New Testament 2 other words speak to the coming of Christ. I do not know how to pronounce these. One of them speaks of the coming of the Lord as a revelation. This word is used many times in the New Testament speaking as a revelation. The same word is used in Ephesians for the spirit of wisdom and revelation. The same word is used to describe the coming of Christ, as if His coming is shielded with a cloth. One day this cloth will be removed and the mystery of the generations will be made clear. We will see the coming of Christ.

The third word speaks of the appearing of Christ. It appears 6 times in the New Testament, mostly used by the apostle Paul. This appearing has to do with the glory of the Lord.

These are some references for you to know. On one hand it speaks of the coming of the Lord; on another it is like a revelation shown to us; and as He appears as the glory of the Lord.

Brothers and sisters, what do you feel in your heart concerning the coming of the Lord? Have you ever asked if you love the coming of the Lord?

This is the theme of our conference: to run the race that is set before us. What does the coming of Christ have to do with our running? By the grace of God let us consider this - how can we run the race that is set before us?

Brothers and sisters, we run all our life, don't you agree? We are like an athlete, like Paul said in 1 Corinthians. We all run this race, but why do we run? On this earth we run towards crowns that are corruptible, but we run to obtain an incorruptible crown.

I'm not sure if you have ever raced in a track and field event. Have you ever run a race without a finish line? This is impossible! We may all run hard, but we run towards a finish line. You do not run with no aim. Whether a short or long race, we run towards the end. If we run the race, we need to have an end. When is it our end? Our end is the coming again of our Lord.

In me there is a feeling. Young people, listen to me. Your end point isn't the day you lay in your grave. Today we do not wait to die. We look around and see others who pass into death, and ask when we are going to die, thinking that the day we die we finish the race.

No, brothers and sisters! This is the heart of the unbelievers. If you are a nonbeliever, you wait for the day of your doom. If you are not running the heavenly race, no matter how talented or gifted you are, you are the same as the people of the world. You can run for 70 or 80 years.

I saw a report that some of us are going to live a 125 years. But even if you live 5 years longer than Moses, you will, at the end, lie in the tomb. But that is not our hope. Our hope is the return of Christ. We are not walking towards the tomb. We desire that while we are alive, the Lord comes. And our journey comes to an end. Our racing comes to an end.

Brothers and sisters, as we read Hebrews 12, we "run the race before us". In the English translation it speaks of a race, while the Chinese translation speaks of a journey, like one

without an end. But this is not so. We are running a race. This is not a picnic where you stroll around. It is not a walk in the park.

What does it mean to run? You must expend your strength. You will get tired. If you say you are running, you must put in your effort. You cannot run any way you want. The writer of Hebrews reminds us that we run today the race set before us.

Brothers and sisters, there is a race set before each one of us. It is not one where we can finish with ease. We strive in our running of this race. Do you know that your life is a running of a race?

There is a popular phrase in China now, "to lay flat". Many now say "I will now do nothing. I will just lay flat." (editor's note: similar to "quiet quitting"). As Christians we cannot just lay flat. It is not possible! We need to strive and give effort. We run with endurance the race. In our lives there is a race, and we run on this track. As we run this race, we truly are waiting on the coming of the Lord.

Someone who runs waits for the coming of the Lord. Because when you run, you run towards a goal. You know your finish line and run towards it. This is the pursuit of your life and goal. Brothers and sisters, have you run yet?

I used to be in the track and field team, and I remember the training. Our coach treated us inhumanely. I remember throwing up after training. We all did. Our coach had no compassion. "Are you done throwing up? Now continue running!"

Why? Because he wants us to receive the reward when it comes to the actual race. We threw up but continued running, to a point where our muscles felt like a machine. We would be tired but still continue running.

Brothers and sisters, if you run you realize that you need to put in the effort. Let me ask you a simple question, "Who runs with you today? Who is leading the race?" Have you thought of this question?

On the television you may watch the paralympics. One event is a race among blind athletes. They cannot see what is ahead of them. But they have an assistant runner who runs slightly ahead of the athlete. They hold in their hand a rope, and the athlete holds on tightly to the other end of the rope. This rope will tell him to run to the left or right, when to speed up. This rope passes on a lot of information.

Brothers and sisters, the book of Hebrews, chapter 3 tells us,

"Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling" - Hebrews 3:1

This heavenly calling comes from the Lord. When He comes and calls us, He calls us to be with Him. This is not an earthly calling. He calls us to run the heavenly way. This is not of earth. The end of this race is not on earth but in heaven.

But don't you agree that we are all blind? Do you know how to walk the heavenly way? You may be full of zeal and vigor, but how to do you walk it? You may run very fast, but sadly, you do not

know the way. Your spiritual eyes are blind. You do not see where the way is. You want to run, but you need someone to lead and guide you. Otherwise you are wasting your time. You are running the wrong course.

Brothers and sisters, Hebrews 3:1 tells us that the Lord has a heavenly calling, and He will be our best companion. He calls us to run with Him. He will be our best companion. On this race, do you think you run alone? That you just look down and keep running, hoping to run the right way. We will definitely get lost. But our Lord calls us to run together with Him.

Hebrews 3:14 says,

“For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,”

Brothers and sisters, we need to have faith. We need to know who is beside us. We cannot leave Him. This union with the Lord cannot be interrupted. Can you imagine if the blind athlete and his assistant loses their connection? If the rope is cut off - if the fellowship and communication is cut off - then immediately we have problems. You won't know where to go.

Where is the crisis in our service? We are full of zeal and want to do something for the Lord. We want to rush and go forward, but do not have good fellowship with the Lord. If we run in this way, we will discover we are running the wrong way.

It is not whether we put in the effort, or strive hard, or even whether or not we are running. The matter is this: Are we running the right way? How do we run the right way? We thank the Lord that He is not just an observer sitting in His seat. He is not sitting there looking at us running the wrong way.

That is not what our Lord is doing. He is not sitting in heaven observing us running. We thank the Lord that He came, and said, “Let us run this heavenly way together.” That this race is not run by yourself. He wants to lead us. As long as the fellowship is not interrupted, He can lead us on the right path. He will allow us to run continuously on the right way.

If you are waiting for the coming of the Lord, and if you want to run the way ahead, there is one thing you must figure out first. This is the journey of our life, but it is also the race in which we run together with our Lord. If He does not lead us, we do not know where to go, or where is right or wrong.

I have seen some marathons. It is a long journey and the runners took the wrong turn. Others are running to the finish line, but they are running somewhere else.

Brothers and sisters, this is not so for us. We cannot be like this, where the Lord is not leading us in racing and we have not seen the proper goal.

When I was younger and joined some races, people who ran together with us were our competitors. Some will run faster than others. Paul tells us that we are all running in order to receive the reward. Who is your competitor on this track? Who are you running against? Have you thought about this?

This is my view. We run against ourselves. You are not running against others. When I reflect on our spiritual fathers, high above on the mountaintops, I wonder how I can run with them. If I am in the same race with them, I would give up at the starting line. There is no competition, no chance of winning.

Another phrase that is becoming popular in China is "if there is no comparison, there is no hurt". If you compare with this brother or sister, either you get hurt or they get hurt. My feeling is that in this race you are not racing against those around you. You run against yourself. Our Lord leads us in this race to bring us forward, but you run against yourself. Have you run forward?

Let me put this in a simpler illustration. For example, if you love the world at 50%, and you also love the Lord at 50%. And tomorrow you love the world 45% and the Lord 55%, what has happened? You have run forward. If your desire for the Lord's desire is 60% and tomorrow it is 65%, you have run forward. If your desire for the Lord is 60% and 65% tomorrow, you have moved forward.

Brothers and sisters, you are not racing against others, but yourself. Have you run forward? Today you love the Lord at 60% and tomorrow at 60%, you would have stood still. Never mind if others are loving the Lord. Look at yourself first. Have you run forward?

I have seen some elderly brothers whom I admire in my heart. In their advanced age, though their bodies have weakened, they have never slowed down. They keep going forward, day by day. Their heart longs after the coming of the Lord, and their desire grows stronger and stronger day by day. Their understanding of the purpose of God and the testimony they live out shows us that they have never stopped running. They may walk with a cane or need someone to assist them in walking. Perhaps they can't stand and have to sit when preaching. But do you see that they have never stopped? They keep running the race.

The coming of the Lord is a precious promise. Do you treasure this promise? When this promise is set before us, do you strive to continue onwards?

Hebrews tells us that "the just will live by faith". This comes from Habbakuk 2:4. It was a time when Habbakuk cries out to the Lord. "Habbakuk" means "to embrace". Like a child he embraces the legs of the father, asking "O Father,, why is this happening?" And God explains, "That the just will live by faith".

But Hebrews tells us this, "that if anyone draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him."

Brothers and sisters, Hebrews not only tells us that the just will live by faith, but also tell us that if someone draws back from this race, my soul is not pleased. What does it mean to draw back?

If you love the Lord 50% today but 45% tomorrow. And the day after, 40%. What has happened? You are drawing back! Your desire for the coming of the Lord also declines. This is called drawing back. The Lord says to press ahead. He is leading us ahead. 60% then 65%, then 70% and it adds up.

But if you keep drawing back, the Lord says, "my soul has no pleasure in him." Forgive me for asking, brothers and sisters, are you moving forward or are you drawing back? Perhaps people

around you may not know, but you know yourself. Is the world more and more lovely to you, or less and less? Is the making of money more and more important to you, or less and less? Is the sin that entangles you gripping tighter and tighter or is it getting looser and looser? Your morning devotion times with the Lord, is it getting longer and longer or shorter and shorter?

A brother shared with me that as he prays at the end of the day, he tells the Lord, "sorry Lord, I am too tired. Goodnight." Do you pray like this?

Brothers and sisters, the Word of the Lord tells us to run ahead. If you draw back, His soul takes no pleasure in us. We do not seek to please man or of the elderly brothers. You need to seek the pleasure of the Lord. Ask if the Lord is pleased. The Lord wants you to run ahead, so that the world draws you less and less, and your heart for the Lord grows more and more. That you may desire His return more and more. If you draw back from this, the Lord says that He is not pleased. He does not say that He will forsake us. We thank the Lord that He does not say that if we do this He will cast us away.

On the track and field team, if you keep on coming in last, the coach may tell you not to come anymore. We thank the Lord that He does not give up. He encourages us. While the Lord is ahead, He waits for us, calling us to come unto Him. But we do not go up, we draw back.

Forgive me for saying this. I thank the Lord for many dear brothers and sisters around me who have walked very well, but for many reasons, whether the love of money, the pride of life, the lust of the eyes, and they have drawn back. After a couple of years when you meet the same brother, you do not see spiritual growth, but you see spiritual decline.

My dear brothers and sisters, I pray dearly that after we hear the Word of the Lord, we do not say, "I have known more of the teaching of the coming of the Lord", but we sincerely run this race. We are not running against others, but we need to look upon ourselves. Have we grown? Have we moved forward spiritually? We cannot slow down. We cannot draw back, lest we do not receive the reward.

The author of Hebrews encourages us with the words of Habbakuk, "the just will live by faith." We know that this appears 3 times in the New Testament.

1. In Romans
2. In Galatians
3. Here in Hebrews.

Each time has its own emphasis. But we are not here to explain this Bible verse. From the Bible verse it tells us that there is a type of people called the just. What does it mean to be just? They are the right person before God. When God sees them, He nods. And then they are right. It is not the outward keeping of the commandments or the rules. You do not become righteous by doing this or that.

Romans tells us that we are justified by faith. Those of us who are justified because we believe are justified through the salvation of Christ. Every one of us are just. We stand on the ground of the just. But brothers and sisters, you have the position of the righteous man, but do you live the life of a righteous man? How would you live if you live in righteousness?

Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 4 that he has finished the course. He has run the race and is nearing the finish line. Just like an athlete reaching the end of the race. Paul says that for these people there is a crown reserved for them - a crown of righteousness. The righteousness is the same as "the just". The righteous are the ones who finish the race.

I remember the elderly brother who said, "what is an overcomer? He is someone who continues to the finish line." He is not someone who stops halfway. He is not someone who draws back halfway. Who is an overcomer? He who persists to run towards the end. Paul knew that he would receive the incorruptible crown of righteousness that would not fade away. The crown would tell Paul that his life was right. We thank the Lord that Paul did not stop there. He wrote, "not just for me, but for all who love His appearing."

From one aspect, it is those who love the finish line. Those who desire and love to get to the finish line. From another aspect, it is those who love the appearing of the Lord. :Paul says this is right. This is the righteous. This is the crown of righteousness.

Paul had faith. Paul had assurance of the crown reserved for him. This is the crown of righteousness because he loved the appearing of the Lord. He has called his companions, those who run alongside him in this race. Brothers, love the appearing of the Lord. We must love, and together with Paul we will receive the crown of righteousness.

Brothers and sisters, there is a key point here: do you believe this? One who is righteous lives a life of faith.

A commentary wrote this: a righteous man lives by the faithfulness of God. Brothers and sisters, how much faith do we have?

Galatians 2:20 tells us: "the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God". The original language "faith" is a noun not a verb. I live by the faithfulness of the Son of God. Hebrews tells us that the coming of the Lord is a promise. This is something the Lord has promised us. If Timothy Kwok promises you something he may not do it. Sometimes my heart is willing but my flesh is weak.

Brothers and sisters, the coming of the Lord is a promise. The One who promises is faithful. Do you live your life because of this faithfulness? The righteous person's end is the crown of righteousness. He receives it because he loves the appearing of the Lord. In his life he laid hold of this assurance: that God is faithful, and what He has promised He will surely cause to come to pass.

Heaven and earth will pass away. There are so many difficulties on this earth. We are so near to the last days. I don't think I need to describe this to you. You need only look around you and in the newspapers. As all these things are happening, are you a righteous person? Are you right? If you are right, you will be someone who loves His appearing. You say to the Lord, "Lord, I love you. I want to see you. I desire the day of your appearing." When you love it this way, God in heaven nods and says "this is right".

Brothers and sisters, it is not about what we do. Oftentimes we do wrong. But if we desire His coming, we are right.

When we read Hebrews we notice this: "but we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul." How do we understand this verse? I have said that we do not draw back, and that we go forward. But the author of Hebrews reminds us that we are not of the group that draws back. If we draw back, it says here that we draw back to perdition.

This perdition does not speak of our eternal condemnation. In the original language you can translate this as "waste". Like in Matthew 26 and Mark 14, it speaks of a waste. Remember the story of Mary who came with the alabaster jar? She came before the Lord and broke the alabaster jar, as if to say that she reserves nothing for herself and pours it out unto the Lord. The disciples saw it and were not pleased. They said, "what a waste".

Brothers and sisters, the Word of the Lord is solemn. Can I say this? If you draw back, your whole life is a waste. You can say many things to others. How successful you have become.

A young brother told me, "Uncle a bank has hired me to be a manager. This big company has hired me. Do you know how much I make a year?" He happily tells me that he makes 6 digits a year. This is much more than I make. A few years later he comes to me again. "Uncle now I make 7 digits". I open my eyes. I have never thought of that much money.

However, he no longer comes to the meetings like he used to. In the past he prayed fervently, but no more. In the past he would serve enthusiastically, but now he says, "no time".

People may see him as a successful person. Not many make a 7 digit salary. The Lord makes a good definition here, but in my eyes - forgive me - your life is wasted.

Brothers and sisters, how can I share my burden with you? You work hard, you pay the price. You have sweat on your brow. You make plans for this and that, so that you may climb higher and higher up the ladder. But spiritually you are descending lower and lower. You draw back, and the Lord says "I am not pleased." Why is He not pleased? You have wasted. You exist, but you are a waste.

Does it matter what others think about you? Does it matter what the Lord thinks of you? This is the Lord's exhortation to us. That if we draw back, we draw back to such an extent our lives are a waste.

I don't have to give you many examples. A dear brother told me that he wanted to pursue a doctorate, and then after that he wanted to be a university professor. And after that he wanted to become a dean. Then after he became a dean, he wanted to be the president of the school. He becomes the president.

Isn't that good? What about the meetings? What about loving the Lord? What about waiting for the appearing for the Lord? Where did all that go?

Brothers and sisters, may the Lord remind us in our hearts and tell us this: you cannot draw back, you cannot draw back. You need to run the way ahead. Do not compare with this or that

person. Compare with who you were yesterday. Look at how much knowledge of the Lord you have gained.

The author of Hebrews tells us that we are a type of people filled with the hope of the coming of the Lord. We know that He who promises is faithful. Because of this faith, our soul will be saved. This salvation of the soul is not the salvation from sin.

Strictly speaking it is not salvation. It is so that you can be made complete. You can be right. That your soul is in the right place; restored. Our soul is like something that is damaged. Perhaps you disagree. But you need only look around and look at yourself, and we confess that our souls are broken. Our minds are broken. We are mindful of many things we should not be. We are focused on things we should not. We need not even speak of our emotions. We love things that we should not love. Things that we should not put our emotions into. What about our will and our decisions?

Sometimes we enter a fearful state. We decide to sin. Don't tell me this never happened to you. I am such a person, and I am guessing you are too. Do you not know that this is wrong? That by doing this you will offend the Lord? That the Lord will not be pleased? Clearly you knew!

I usually joke about this: that as I go to a business deal, I tell the Lord, "Don't come with me. Stay here, I will come back to you. Where I go you cannot go." I have determined that I will do the things I should not.

Brothers and sisters, our minds, our emotions, our will is broken. If you think that you are complete, I am sorry, that thought alone renders you incomplete. How do you restore and repair your mind, your emotion and your will?

The author of Hebrews tells us that this is by the faith of the Lord. By laying hold of the faithful Word of God. He will surely return. Christ will come again. Because He is coming, our minds can focus on that. We look unto His coming. If that is on our mind, we will do many things differently. If we love His coming again, we will put away many things we would otherwise have loved. If you have set your determination, you will be able to stand boldly at the judgment seat of Christ. If you have determined that you will please Christ, that you do not want the Holy Spirit to grieve for you, that you do not want to be someone who draws back; that you have determined not to be someone who lives like that; brothers and sisters do you see? Your mind, your emotion and will has been restored.

In the original language it is just soul. How can we have a complete, perfect soul? It is not about going from class to class. How do we do it? We live by faith before our Lord. We press on by faith. By faith we run the race that is set before us. We know that the finishing line is so close. It is just a little while. Just as our strength is running out and we can't run anymore, but we gaze upon the finish line. We want to press on and persist, to run with endurance. Our mind is right, our emotions are right, our will is right.

Thank the Lord that this is His calling. The Lord calls us to wait for His coming, for the return of Christ, and to run with endurance the race set before us. We cannot stand still. We cannot draw back, but we run ahead.

My dear brothers and sisters. When I was young I was always fearful of sermons on the coming of the Lord. I would be afraid of His coming. But thank the Lord that I have improved a little. Now when I think of the coming of the Lord I am rejoicing from the bottom of my heart.

Do you love His appearing? Run straight ahead the race set before us. May His smiling face be your satisfaction.

Let us pray.

Dear Lord, we thank you that we are never alone because you walk this heavenly journey together with us. May we truly see your glory. We can see the heavenly calling and we will run after you. Lord, speak. Draw our hearts towards you. We love your appearing. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen