

“The Truth As We Know It”

The Rapture

3/22/15

Today I want to continue the thought of what The Apostle Paul called "The Faith of God." Last week we talked about the resurrection and our life throughout eternity. Today I want to talk about the rapture. Is there to be a rapture, when will it take place?

There is a lot of confusion about this subject and great arguments have been made by well meaning theologians. In any doctrine that looks to future events, we look through a glass darkly as spoken by Paul the Apostle. But I want to express my view on this as well. In 1Th 4:15-17 we read, "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (or precede) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

The resurrection will take place at the coming of Jesus."

The doctrine of the rapture is based upon the phrase, "then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:"

Also reading from Matthew 24:30-31 "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other."

Also in 1Co 15:51-52 we read, "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

Notice that it specifies the last trump which implies there are more

than one trump of God. More on that later as this broadcast develops.

For those who believe in a future Pre-tribulation Rapture, it is regarded to be a sudden and cataclysmic event that will be unlike any other phenomenon in history. Millions of people will disappear from the Earth without warning. As a result, tragic and unexplained accidents will occur on a wide scale basis, ushering in the tribulation period.

We, at The Church of God, do not subscribe to a Pre-tribulation rapture. We do not believe it can be supported by sound scripture analysis. There are many reasons why we believe that this doctrine is very dangerous to the average Christian because it gives hope of a miraculous deliverance from God's wrath that is not going to happen. God has always warned and delivered His people from major trouble that was in the future. But He always requires His people to follow His word in obedience and heed His warnings. John, the Baptist preached in Luke 3:7 "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" They were to flee God's wrath."

One divine principle we can rely on is that God does not change. What He did once he will do again. This principle is established in Ecclesiastes 3:15 which reads, "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requires that which is past." and in Isaiah 46:10 we quote, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done,"

Jesus warned the early believers to flee Jerusalem when they would see the abomination that makes desolate standing where it ought not. That was the Roman army led by General Titus surrounding Jerusalem as told in Matthew 24:15-16 where we read, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place,... Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:"

According to history, all the believers fled Jerusalem when Titus withdrew some of his army to take care of a skirmish on the Mediterranean coast. In fact, the Jews resented the Christians for abandoning them in their hour of need. This issue was one of the

reasons the Jews drove the Christians from the synagogues. So God delivered His people, but they had to flee. They had to pack up and get out in a hurry!

The very familiar story of Noah and the flood is another example of God's deliverance. God had Noah build an ark to save himself, his family, and the animals. But it was because of Noah's obedience to God's command that allowed them to be saved.

God brought the Children of Israel out of Egypt with a mighty hand, but it took them believing God and Moses for them to follow Moses out of Egypt into the unknown! It took a great deal of faith for them to leave, even though their life was hard and cruel, they had survived it any many wanted to go back to what they were familiar with.

We can see by these examples that to expect God to catch us away from any trouble before it happens is just not valid. I fear that many millions of Christians will be completely unprepared for what is ahead because they expect to be raptured away from it all.

Will God count us different and exceptional and allow us to escape any trouble or persecution when the faithful of every generation have had to make these very hard choices? I think not! In fact right now as this broadcast is going out, Christians are giving their lives rather than deny their Lord! God help us to have that same kind of faith! This we know, His grace is sufficient for us regardless of the cost!

No! We believe that we as believers will be here and have to endure severe persecution for three years and six months during the seven years of tribulation/indignation period, at which time God will come to our rescue in some way and will take care of us as He did the children of Israel in the land of Goshen. For the first several plagues the children Israel suffered the same things! They dealt with the water becoming blood; they suffered the frogs: the lice, the swarms of flies. But then God made a difference them in Goshen and the rest of Egypt. God protected them from suffering the rest of the plagues that He poured out the Egyptians! This is a glories type of what God will do for the Christians during the last three years and six months of the indignation while God is pouring out His wrath upon the wicked.

We have the great promise of Psalms 91:1-10 as we read, "He that dwells in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, *and* from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shall thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shall not be afraid for the terror by night; *nor* for the arrow that flies by day; *Nor* for the pestilence *that* walks in darkness; *nor* for the destruction *that* wastes at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; *but* it shall not come nigh thee. Only with your eyes shall you behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come near your dwelling."

Yes! There will be a rapture! At the last or seventh Trump of God! At the end of the wrath of God poured out! Jesus will return with ten thousands of His Saints with their new bodies and all those who have endured to the end and remain alive will be caught up and be with Jesus as goes and sets His feet on the Mount of Olives! Glory be to God! What a Hope!

Listen again next week.

This we do know, The Bible is God's Word, God's word is true, Jesus Christ is God's son, Jesus died to save us from our sin, Without Jesus we are eternally lost. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we might be saved. Atheism is a temporary condition for every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord! Jesus stands ready to save you now, Will you call on Him today?

Until next week, God bless.