

IN PROPHECY, WE LOOK THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY

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9 “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” (1st. Corinthians 13:9-10, 12)

There are many interpretations out there concerning Bible prophecy and all can't be right, and all can't be wrong. Nobody who is truly a

Christian is trying to teach false doctrine, or doing the work of the “adversary”.

All those preachers, evangelist and pastors are reading the same Bible that I am reading and I assume all of them are sincere. It is beyond comprehension of myself to believe that one who has believed in the atonement of Jesus Christ through His sacrifice on a cross, and subsequent resurrection to a glorified man/God, would teach deliberate error.

Now we know that there are false teachers in the world, as Jesus told us that the end times would produce those who seek to deceive.

23 “Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” (Matthew 24:23-27)

But I don't believe that those who are “sincere” Christians are preaching error deliberately. I also, have been accused of preaching false doctrine when I propose anything on Dispensationalism or the Pre-Tribulation Rapture, but from that perspective, not wanting to deceive anybody, I have often prayed that God would show me if I error in teaching the same. What God has done in the past, and continues to do for me, is to re-enforce these doctrines and to preach them more earnestly, as the time is short.

Personally, I have pointed out errors of the “New Age” type of Christianity that focuses on your “Best Life Now” type of motivational speaking, that looks to numbers that fill their church, and money for their pet building programs they can afford from “fleecing the flock” ...There are plenty of TV evangelist, and you know who they are, who are willing to bend the message to their advantage.

So it is with the Prosperity Gospel that tells you to send them \$100 and God will turn right around and send you \$1000, which reminds me of the last political election and the mantra “Pay to play” that leads many people to send all their money to these TV preachers and forsake taking care of their family. God is NOT about riches in this life, but the riches of the life to come. God has a habit of taking care of His children, and giving them what they need, but it doesn't include multi-million dollar mansions and driving around in a Rolls-Royce and jet-setting to foreign lands in your private jet.

But even with that, the fact remains that there are sincere Christians who read the same scriptures as everybody else and come up with entirely different interpretations and we are reading the same messages. When it comes to the future of Bible Prophecy and what God has promised us in the near future, you have people who discount much of it. The preterist believe that everything of prophecy was fulfilled in 70AD with the destruction of the Temple and the dispersion of the Jews into exile.

To a futurist, Bible prophecy has yet to be completely fulfilled. But even amongst these folks there is disagreement on when these events will take place. Some believe the Rapture, the HARPAZO of the church will be at the end of the Tribulation. Others believe it will happen at the mid-point of the Tribulation, or even Pre-wrath.

Others, this minister included, believe that the "Removal of God's Church" will take place before the Tribulation starts in earnest and God's wrath pours down on rebellious mankind in a wave after wave of ever increasing crescendo of events.

But again, we are all reading the same passages and coming to different conclusions. I praise God that I was able to show a prior post Tribulation believer that Revelation 3:10, when taken in the original Greek, shows that God will "take us out of" not take us through the coming Tribulation. Pointing to Isaiah 26:19-21 coupled with Matthew 14:2-4, its sister verse, the brother was able to see what he had read many times, but failed to discern that the church is not present during this horrific time of Jacob's trouble. My brother told me that he had read those passages many times, but it never made sense until he looked up the original Greek meaning of the passage.

ARE ALL SINCERE?

We presume that all of those who read Bible prophecy are all sincere and believe that their understanding is the correct one. After all, things that are different are NOT the same, as the Rapture can only occur ONCE. The question is, "is the rapture before, during, or after the Tribulation?"...Speaking of a fellow brother in Christ, Hal Lindsey would be sincere and confident that the Rapture happens before the tribulation and we would agree. But there are others, such as Marv Rosenthal who teaches something called "Pre-Wrath and reading his commentaries, I believe he is sincere in that belief.

I have also been aware of post Tribulation teachers, and there are whole denominations that believe in such a theory when related to Bible Prophecy. I recall that the Church of God, when H. Armstrong was alive and his son, Garner Ted were both Post Tribulation believers and there are off-shoots of that denomination since the split of the Church of God who still believe it. But reading these still active preachers work convinces me that they too, are sincere about their position of Bible prophecy.

Although there are many different interpretations of the coming of our Lord as to when and where it will happen, there is one doctrine that a true Christian believes and we can all agree on. It is that we are all saved by Grace through Faith in the shed Blood and bodily resurrection of our Lord to become a glorified spirit being of flesh and bone. Jesus became what we will be in the "sweet by and by" a glorified man, immortal, and in the same image as our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (1st John 3:1-3)

That is the ONLY doctrine, in the final analysis, which really and truly bears eternal consequences. Preterist that trust Jesus for their salvation through faith, will meet up with futurist who also trust Jesus, who will fellowship with Pre-Tribbers, and Post-Tribbers that will fellowship with other protestants and Catholics who actually believe that only Jesus saves

Because in the final analysis, if you trust Jesus, and in Him alone for your hopes of salvation, then you will go to that blessed place of eternal existence, we call "heaven".

THE GRACE AND MERCY OF GOD

This is the central message of the Gospel. It is the focus of the entire Bible that was written as a love letter to the world, that God would redeem us by the blood of His Son. The rest is the product of us longing to know more about God and know that we are blinded by our earthly existence as being mortal and bound to this world we live on. We are finite attempting to comprehend the infinite. We can only know the True God of the Bible, by believing in the only Begotten Son of God. To see Jesus is to see God the Father, as they are ONE. As the opening scripture plainly tells us, we see "through a glass darkly". Paul said we only know in part, but the part that really matters is the part that we are saved by faith in Jesus. Everything else in the Bible is a discussion of what we discern to be truth as we read it....but we must diligently study God's Word, because cherry-picking scriptures to confirm our pre-conceived ideas and doctrines will lead many into errors of interpretations.

A LESSON OF THE TOWER OF BABEL

In the story of the Tower of Babel, God explains how the various ethnic nations came to be.

"And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." ([Genesis 11:6-7](#))

By scattering mankind over the whole earth, God removed the common bond of one language and ethnicity. God was insuring that no man could ever rule completely over other men, as Nimrod did when he was constructing the Tower of Babel.

Down though the ages, no man has been able to dominate all mankind, at least NOT YET. Not that some have tried to do so. We speak of people like Hitler, Napoleon, or the many Roman Catholic Popes that ruled the known world, but never completely ruled mankind on a global basis.

To date, this has prevented one culture or one world view to dominate all mankind. That diversity has allowed Christianity to flourish to the point that is part of world history.

That is because Christianity is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, rather than an accepted cultural duty, or a doctrinal edict by a majority ruling denomination.

God built that same diversity into the Church, which accounts for how and why sincere Christians can read the same Scriptures and come up with such widely divergent doctrines as preterist, historicism and pretribulationist futurism. It prevents any one teacher from becoming the only accepted source of information of the things of God.

WHY SO MANY DENOMINATIONS?

If everybody agreed on all point of scripture and Bible Prophecy, then the guy who articulated it the best could become the Great Oracle of God. (and what if he were wrong?)

There are so many denominations that have their own understanding of what the Bible says...Of course, we all can't be right. Someone has it right, and the others are wrong, but believe in their mortal understanding that they are right, but still wrong. We all have diverse teachings, but share the same salvation by grace through faith. And each are equally sincere because we all share the same awesome accountability before the Lord. So none of us who preach or those who hear the Word should take any of this lightly, but examine yourself to make sure you are in the faith of Jesus Christ.

4. "For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

5, Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2nd Corinthians 13:4-5)

In the end of all things of mankind's rule upon earth, we will be judged by how we used that doctrine that God delivered to us to lead others to the salvation which is found in no One, but Jesus Christ, our Lord. This is all true

down through the Ages, but there is coming a time, when even this truth will be corrupted by two men who will lead those left behind in this world to destruction.

TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE -- THE TRIBULATION

The necessity of understanding in the Church Age is demonstrated by a peek across the divide of the coming "Time of Jacob's Trouble" after the Church Age is concluded and this diversity will be replaced by a One World Religion that will be headed by one man promoting a mortal man, that many will look to as the "modern messiah".

A false prophet will arise that will direct all mankind to worship at the feet of the prophesied religious beast, the Anti-Christ. Since there will be no living, saved Christians on this earth that are guided by the Holy Spirit at that time of man's history, then the results achieved by the False Prophet are amply rewarded with the results that were unattainable during the Age of Grace, or the Church Age.

7 "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."(2nd Thessalonians 2:7-12)

The diversity of thought will be changed to a distorted edict of a false religion that will be imposed on the whole world, and those that do not bow before this false religion will be at war with the coming One World Government headed by the coming Anti-Christ.

That diversity of understanding is replaced by a universal religion imposed by the false prophet and directed toward the worship of antichrist.

"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (**Revelation 13:7-8**)

I had a comment on my blog space from a reader who disagreed with my assessment that those who are in the Tribulation are not the Church. The quote was "When we mention saints it's referring to us Christians found in numerous verses in revelation. So I kindly disagree with your article." to that I responded.

"Notice that those who go through the tribulation are called saints, but never called the church...they are called the elect...a saint is a saint if they believe on Jesus, no matter what the time period is. The Tribulation produces those who believe through much persecution from man, and dealing with the falling wrath of God. No where in scripture will you find God's people being subjected to His wrath, if they are following Him. Those who believe in Jesus during this horrific time of the Tribulation will be sorely tested and will not have the guarantee of God's Holy Spirit, save the 144,000 Jewish evangelist that preach the Gospel and it will cost them their lives and all who believe in the Name of Jesus...only a remnant will escape the Anti-Christ reign of terror and will most likely be those who escaped to the wilderness from Judea when the Abomination that causeth desolation reveals himself and proclaims himself, God. It will be as it was in 70 AD, when a remnant of Jewish people believed the Roman invasion of Jerusalem to destroy her, and escaped to Petra, which will most likely be where God will supernaturally protect them for a times, time and half a time...or 3.5 years...It may be the remnant of Jewish people that survive along with a remnant of Gentiles that did not take the mark of the Beast. "

Again, the success of the False Prophet in the final analysis, comes from the loss of spiritual diversity that is unique to the Church.

On doctrinal issues like the Rapture of the Church, for example, no matter what view one holds as doctrinal truth, the essential fact is that we all will obtain heaven's glory if we be found in Jesus Christ. The Rapture is called the Blessed Hope and I point all those who are "playing church" to its nearness. Why? Because if they are playing church, they may not be truly saved, just going through the motions and will be sorely surprised when they are "left behind" ...my message to those who are not serious about Jesus Christ, is to warn them of the closeness of our eternal reward found in Jesus, and unless they just "hanker" for being subjected to the worst time in all of mankind's history, they had better get right with God right now....Because it will be exponentially harder to find Jesus Christ in the Tribulation..Oh, it's possible and many will, but it will cost them their life from the popular execution of being be-headed as described in Revelation.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were **beheaded** for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years " (Revelation 20:4)

The hour of the coming of our Lord draws ever near. And I believe the Pre-Tribulation removal of the Church, in Greek, the HARPAZO found in 1st Thessalonians:

16 "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:

17 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."

and repeated again in 1st Corinthians the same thought :

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 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.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1st Cor. 15:50-53)

Both passages speak of us being changed and caught up....the Word for this is HARPAZO, or from the dictionary, "to be snatched away, by force"

Right now, we see through a glass darkly, because that is how God intended it to be on this side of eternity. I believe, and many others believe that the bible speaks of the Pre-Tribulation of the Bride of Christ. It is rather obvious, if you take a plain reading of scripture and don't inject your own bias. I don't believe that those who are truly God's people and don't agree with me, are preaching falsehood, but when the rapture happens, we'll all go at the same time. It's not a salvation issue, but it is a glorious belief that Jesus is coming for a Bride that is spotless and clean, and not from anything she has done, but what He has done.

For me, I will continue to preach and teach what I believe God has revealed to me. Those who belong to Him, truly, can believe or not believe as it will not matter when we are all raised into the air to meet our Lord Jesus and forever be with our Lord. The arms and hands of those who don't believe will be as mine, raised in praise to our God, and our Savior. I feel they will be just as thankful as I am, that they were wrong...

16"For God so loved the world, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17, God send not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through HIM, might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:16-18)

Belief with confession to others, what God has done for you. You believe in your heart and confess with you mouth, then my friend, you will join us at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, and to be forever with the Lord.

8 "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” (Romans 10:8-11)

Won't you join us, those who believe in Jesus Christ and Him crucified and resurrected and sits at the right hand of God waiting for His return. ? Believe these last two passages in your heart and mind, and you will. So come Lord Jesus..

This is pastor Mike Taylor, praying that I see you before our God and Savior, Jesus Christ. If you need prayer, counseling on salvation issues, or just a listening ear. Contact me at realteam1999@sbcglobal.net. God bless you all.

TILL WE MEET AT JESUS FEET