

Truth Matters! 8

Are We Depending Upon God Or Today's Spiritual Culture? (Pt. 1)

Isn't the prophetic accuracy of God's Word amazing? God states history will once again repeat itself in the following manner. Please read this carefully because Truth Matters to each of us concerning this crucial topic.

Do you recall God's simple Counsel to His Old Testament covenant people? They were to **obey**, especially in the area of rejecting the other false gods in the region. God knew many would not remain faithful and predicted their harlotry long before it occurred. Because they did not heed His Counsel to stay pure, God used His people's enemies to bring judgment. In 722 B.C. the Assyrians took Israel (the Northern tribes) captive. Later, God judged the Assyrians for their evil deeds. In 586 B.C. the Babylonians took captive. Later, God judged the Babylonians for their failures. God judged His disobedient Old Testament covenant people who had prostrated themselves to the false gods of the land. They committed spiritual adultery against their God. They were harlots in that they inquired after the other gods of their day.

Do you recall God's simple Counsel to His New Testament covenant people? We are to walk in faithful obedience, including the area of rejecting the other false gods of the land—and there are many today! Similar to the preceding paragraph, God has also stated that there will yet be a day when *the harlot* will raise her ugly head. During this time many Christians-by-name will not remain true to the Lord Jesus Christ and will go on to commit spiritual adultery—they will actually become an *unfaithful woman*. Take some time out and read this Revelation 17 passage carefully. This chapter is a wonderful example of a portion of the Word of God where Scripture interprets Scripture. Time and time again *this thing = that thing*, Scripture records. Look for the verb *to be* (“are,”/“is”) when reading this chapter. For example, it says “*the waters*” are *such and such*; the “*adulterous woman*” is *such and such*; etc. Note carefully how the woman's harlotry brings the judgment of God through the instrument of the beast. The wayward New Testament covenant people, accommodating the worldly mandate to commit spiritual adultery through alliance with opposing religions, will also incur the judgment of God through His people's enemy, the beast. (These are disobedient covenant people in name only—**not** those whose names are securely written in the Lamb's Book of Life who will not yield to the wicked compromise.)

The diagram below helps show the similarities between the Old and New Testament covenant people of God who have, in part and in the past, gone **and** who will, in part and in the near future, go the route of King Joash (2 Chronicles 24). In contrast to the disobedient covenant people of God, may we be His obedient people who, by His mercy and grace, miss this coming judgment by staying faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Disobedient OT Covenant People

They were told by God to follow only Him and not to adopt the practices of the world

They disobeyed and God sent judgment through the Assyrians and Babylonians

God then judged the very instruments through whom He brought judgment: the Assyrians and the Babylonians

Disobedient NT Covenant People

They are told by God to follow only Him and not to adopt the practices of the world

They'll disobey & God will send judgment through the one-world system of antichrist

God will judge the very instrument through whom He will bring judgment: the beast of Revelation 17

It's amazing how humanity will once again in the near future reject the clear Counsel of the one true God for the worldly agenda. (See Psalm 2) Aren't clear signs of this beginning to happen today!? I don't know about you but I see this appeal to syncretize (bring together as one) irreconcilable religious perspectives everywhere I go. This appeal demands of us things that we, if we continue in obedience to Him, cannot do. In our abiding in Him we find the provisions to endure this dark age. Praise God for this victory in Christ Jesus! He is faithful and will make all things new *in His time*. Before that time comes, though, He has predicted difficult days. May we walk in the patience and in the faith of the saints and in so doing save our souls – NIV says it this way: “By standing firm you will gain life.” (Luke 21:19 ; Also see Revelation 13:9,10 and 14:12)

Two very popular but potentially extremely dangerous teachings that could hinder preparedness on the part of God's people who are equipped to say “NO” to this spiritual adultery through regular time in His Word and obedience thereto include:

- 1) The preterist teaching that the end-time passages (even including the Second Coming of Jesus Christ by some full preterits!) have already occurred—during the early church period. This teaching negates the many passages that inform us today concerning worldly trends that take place just prior to the return of Jesus Christ. This view is absolutely false in light of the clear revelation in God's Word. Watch. Many of those who hold this view are even now calling for a merging of religious perspectives whereby (they think) global peace will finally be achieved. This is a lie and is playing into the hand of the future antichrist.
- 2) The pre-tribulational rapture teaching that God's people will be raptured before the antichrist comes on the world scene and sets up his global reign. The Scriptures actually teach that we will be present on the earth until the “final trumpet” (I Corinthians 15:51,52). If the final trumpet of this I Cor. passage is actually the final (or seventh) trumpet of the trumpet blasts found in the Book of Revelation, then we will clearly miss the full wrath of God (beginning at the bowl

judgments) and be gathered up to Him (I Thes. 4:13-18 ; Revelation 14:14-16), **but**, this does mean that we will go through a period of time during the early reign of antichrist. Given what the Word says will be handed God's people who will not compromise His Truths, we need to be ready for this time of persecution. That's exactly what the Word of God teaches when it says, time and time again, that we are to watch, to be ready, to be sober, to be discerning, etc. **Yes**, we are to do all this in relationship to His return, but, in light of His Word, this includes our discerning the days prior to and immediately following His initial appearing (Rev. 6: 14-17). If the pre-tribulation rapture position is accepted as *Gospel Truth* to the extent that the possibility of our experiencing the wrath of antichrist is rejected outright, then ill-preparedness will indeed occur. (See II Thessalonians 2:1-12)

We are calling for God's people to be contemporary Bereans who search the Scriptures to see what they say. If we neglect the Biblical Truths our precious Father has graciously given for the purpose of equipping us to better discern the many false teachings that are being propagated today, will we not potentially be contributing to our very own deception through the making of a conscious decision to cast aside one crucial means He has provided to help us avoid becoming deceived? For a partial list of important end-time passages, see www.endmin.com.

May God's people always persist in their going to His Word for instruction today. May we endure in His forever-settled-in-heaven Counsel. The Scriptures do not allow for the preterist interpretation that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ was fulfilled when Titus of the Roman legion came in judgment and sacked Jerusalem in 70 A.D. While the Scriptures teach the gathering of God's people prior to His bowls-of-wrath judgment, they do not teach the pre-tribulational rapture of the church before the revealing of the man of lawlessness—not one explicit passage!

For information about seminars addressing these crucial concerns that can be presented at your local church or Christian high school, college or seminary, please call us at 503.505.0850 or email us at email@therapturegathering.org.

May the Lord bless you and keep you in these exciting days before our Lord Jesus' glorious return! "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good." (Titus 2:11-14 ; NIV) What a day of rejoicing that will be. Until then, keep the Faith, but give it away some too. ☺

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