

## Jesus Is Coming! How Shall We Therefore Live?

Text: II Peter 3:1-13

Titus 2:11-14

I John 3:1-3

As we have been studying the end of the world, three responses will ensue:

1. Fear, followed by the fear of the Lord and repentance.
2. Rejection, dismissal and determination to follow the path of destruction.
3. Joy wrapped in hope, driven by love.

In the 1930s the Carter Family sang a song collected from the people living in the Bible belt; the refrain goes as follows:

“Oh, my loving brother, when the world's on fire,  
Don't you want God's bosom to be your pillow?  
Hide me over in the Rock of Ages,  
Rock of Ages cleft for me.”

In 1952, Eric Voegelin wrote *The New Science of Politics*. In this book he showed the similarities of the ancient cult, Gnosticism. This is basically the belief that the disorder of the world can be transcended by extraordinary insight, learning, or knowledge. This surfaced in the doctrine of “Enlightenment” in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which was set at variance against the influence of the Puritans in the times of America’s founding. Voegelin showed striking similarities in Gnosticism and a number of modern political theories, particularly Communism and Nazism. The belief that man’s best efforts will eventually bring peace and brotherhood is the delusion of many a youth educated by socialists and communist teachers right here in the United States and has now reaped the results of the chaos and destructive evidence in the streets of many of our major cities. One representative of the young anarchists said that we should not only do away with the police, we should do away with the jails. If we were living in the kingdom to come and Christ was on David’s throne, we could do that. However, until Christ comes, we had better keep the Ten Commandments as our governing principle, because man without God has no governing principle. And to use the term from the book of Judges, “In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6). During the 1960s and 1970s, William F. Buckley and the Young Americans for Freedom, being the antithesis of modern socialism, adopted Voeglin’s phrase as their slogan: “Don’t immanentize the eschaton!” Today it appears our world is on fire, in some cases quite literally. In other words, it is true, man’s best efforts will never bring utopia. Christ must come and He alone as the Prince of Peace will bring peace on earth and goodwill toward man!

Allow me to step us through the true eschaton, or what theologians would call eschatology. At any moment, Christ shall return and catch His bride away;

this is called the rapture. One of the ways the Scripture refers to this time is in II Thessalonians 2:1, "...our gathering together unto Him." We are taken to the New Jerusalem where the Judgment Seat of Christ takes place (Romans 14:10; II Corinthians 5:10) and the Wedding Supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9). Meanwhile, back on Earth immediately following the rapture, the Seventieth Week promised to Israel shall begin, also called the Seven Years Tribulation (Daniel 7:24). In the middle of the week (3½ years), the man of sin (Antichrist) is revealed; declaring himself as deity (II Thessalonians 2:3,4) and Jacob's Trouble (the Great Tribulation, Jeremiah 30:7) begins. In this last 3½ years, the 144,000 Jewish missionaries will launch the greatest evangelistic enterprise since the beginning of the Church age. During this time before the ending of the Great Tribulation, the first Battle of Gog and Magog will take place (Ezekiel 38, 39). At the close of the Tribulation, Christ returns in glory (Revelation 19:11-21) and defeats the unholy trinity consisting of Satan, the Antichrist and the False Prophet and all the forces of evil in the Campaign of Armageddon. Following Armageddon is the Judgment of the Nations (Matthew 25:31-46). Next on the docket is the resurrection of the Old Testament and Tribulation saints. Then the glorious reign of Christ on Earth for 1,000 years begins and Satan is bound (Revelation 20:1-7; Isaiah 9:6,7). After the end of the millennium, Satan is loosed and he gathers those who did not believe to fight one more time against Christ, and the second Battle of Gog and Magog takes place. Satan is defeated and cast into the lake of fire and now the Great White Throne Judgment takes place (Revelation 20:10-15). At this point God does another amazing feat; He purges the earth and universe by fire and recreates it all (Isaiah 34:4; Isaiah 51:6; II Peter 3:10; Matthew 24:35). Zion from above, the New Jerusalem descends from Heaven to Earth forming the Capital of the New Heaven and the New Earth. And thus begins the Eternal State (Hebrews 12:22-24).

The question remains in light of all this: How shall we therefore live (II Peter 3:11)?

#### I. DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE DARK.

II Thessalonians 1:7; 2:1-4; 5:9-11

Consider:

Exodus 10:21-23; 13:17-22; 14:19,20

Exodus 20:21

#### II. DON'T DITCH THE TRUTH.

II Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6

#### III. GET TO WORK.

I Thessalonians 5:6; II Thessalonians 3:10-16; Hebrews 6:12

A. Let us therefore labor in prayer.

II Corinthians 1:11: "Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf."

Colossians 4:12: "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."

B. Let us therefore labor together.

Philippians 1:27: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."

C. Let us therefore labor in love.

I Thessalonians 1:3: "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father."

Hebrews 6:10: "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."

CONCLUSION:

II Timothy 4:8

Revelation 1:3

-Pastor Pope-