

## Jesus' Strategy to be Ready

May 4, 2014

### WHAT IS NEXT IN GOD'S AGENDA FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD?

#### The Rapture

- **Rapture** - *the state of being transported from one sphere of existence to another with ecstatic joy*
- The word "rapture" is never used in the Bible, but is referred to as:
  - "His **APPEARING**" - 1 Tim 6:14, 2 Tim 4:8, Titus 2:13, 1 Peter 1:7
  - "the **BLESSED HOPE**" - Titus 2:13
  - "His **COMING**" - 1 Corinthians 1:7, 1 Corinthians 15:23, 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 3:13, 4:15, 5:23, 2 Thessalonians 2:1, James 5:7-8, 2 Peter 3:4, 1 John 2:28
  - "Our **GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO HIM**" - 2 Thessalonians 2:1

- **The Rapture - what is it?**

#### **1 Thessalonians 4:15–18**

15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

#### **1 Corinthians 15:51–53**

51 Behold! I tell 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 trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.

- **Jesus commands us to be ready for His Coming**

#### **Matthew 24:36-51**

36 But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.

37 For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

38 For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark,

39 and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

40 Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left.

41 Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left.

42 Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.

44 Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

45 Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time?

46 Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.

47 Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions.

48 But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,'

49 and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards,

50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know

51 and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- **What does it mean to “be ready”?**
  - **What is required?**
  - **Who does the work?**

#### **1 Thessalonians 3:12–13**

12 and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you,

13 so that he may establish your hearts BLAMELESS IN HOLINESS before our God and Father, at THE COMING of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

#### **1 Thessalonians 5:23–24**

23 Now may the God of peace himself **sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be KEPT BLAMELESS at THE COMING of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

24 He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

#### **Ephesians 5:25–27**

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, **NOT HAVING SPOT, or WRINKLE, or any such thing; but that it should be HOLY and WITHOUT BLEMISH.**

### Matthew 7:21–23

21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’

23 And then will I declare to them, ‘**I NEVER KNEW YOU**; depart from me, **you workers of lawlessness.**’

### JESUS’ STRATEGY TO BE READY (Matthew 25)

- Parable of the Virgins
- Parable of the Talents
- Parable of the Final Judgment

### Zero Tolerance for Procrastination

#### Matthew 25:1–13

1 “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.

2 Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.

3 For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them,

4 but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.

5 As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept.

6 But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’

7 Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’

9 But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’

10 And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut.

11 Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’

12 But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’

13 Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

- *Any last minute scramble to prepare will be impossible; you must be ready the instant Jesus comes. Tomorrow is too late to start. If you’re not ready today, you are already late.*

#### Hebrews 2:1–3

1 Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

2 For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution,

3 how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

## **2 Timothy 4:8**

"Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing."

## **Hebrews 9:28**

"so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."

## **1 Thessalonians 5:1–11**

1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you.

2 For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

3 While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

4 But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.

5 For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness.

6 So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.

7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night.

8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.

11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

## **Make the Most of God's Investment**

### **Matthew 25:14–30**

14 "For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property.

15 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.

16 He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more.

17 So also he who had the two talents made two talents more.

18 But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money.

19 Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

20 And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.'

21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

22 And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.'

23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

24 He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed,

25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.'

26 But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed?

27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest.

28 So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents.

29 For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

30 And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

## **2 Peter 1:3–11**

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,

4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge,

6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness,

7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.

10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.

11 For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

## **Spend Life in Service to Others**

### **Matthew 25:31–46**

31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.

32 Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

33 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.  
34 Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.  
35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,  
36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'  
37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?  
38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you?  
39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?'  
40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'  
41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.  
42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,  
43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'  
44 Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?'  
45 Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'  
46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

### **2 Corinthians 1:6**

6 And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.

### **2 Corinthians 4:11–15**

11 For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.  
12 So death is at work in us, but life in you.  
13 Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak,  
14 knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.  
15 For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

### **2 Corinthians 12:15**

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.