The Rapture – Completes the Reformation (Part 5)

*By Stephen Phinney*

The Lord had me write in my prayer journal a few years ago; *Loneliness is the absence of Holiness.* Even though the Rapture is going to be the most glorious event of all the ages for the true indwelt Christian, but for those who will not be caught up in the air – well, they simply will be overwhelmed with despair.

Predicting the end of the world can be both a sure bet and a fool’s errand. Few question that the total destruction of civilization, the human race and yes, the world is near to its end. The tricky part about predicting the Biblical Apocalypse is its timing. Scientist, scholars, astrologers, prophets and kings have tried to forecast this impending doom that most agree is sure to come. Postmodernist now tell us that 2012 is the new year of choice for the implosion of mankind. The Mayan calendar tells us that December 21, 2012 is the day. The 12 most popular human dooms-day scenarios are: an attack of the asteroids, a disease infested pandemic, micro-machines taking over, green keepers projected gamma-ray bursts, the return of the ice age, ocean acidification, a solar storm, super-volcano, the well thought out geomagnetic reversal, let’s not forget the nuclear war, the growing popular artificial black-hole, or the X-factor (space shifting to a different quantum state). Interesting as it is, not one of these popular predictions include the most documented historical dooms-day view of all times – what is stated in the book of Revelation.

I wish I could say the reason for this oversight is because the true Christian Bible holds to a religious point of view but then why would most of the intelligible world quote the prophesies of the most demonic, devil infested, people of all time - the Mayans. Sin really does make you stupid!

What does the Rapture have to do with the postmodern dooms-day predictions? To start with, it washes out all of the predictions made in the Word of God. If Satan can fill the minds with his philosophies of dooms-day maladies, he then will be able to help the people shake off panic that Rapture could ignite. For example, the Word talks about the day when demons will roam the earth like stray dogs. Now, if Satan was smart, he would come up with some kind of ridiculous culturally acceptable fad, like zombies and vampires. How about making these demonic beings friendly and miniature saviors – like ET? Here is another good one – consider the New Jerusalem, 1,500 miles square, descending from on high. What does that sound like, an alien spaceship of course? That is probably one that ET won’t phone home about. All of these culturally accepted masks of Zorro become ways to keep the young minds deceived and turned away from the sharp accuracy of the Word of God. Everyone wants a superhero but few want a hero that actually promotes destruction of a rebellious people. Seriously, who would want a hero that is destined to destroy kingdoms, leaders, religious prophets and even the land they stand on, that come against the narrow minded views of a God that says there is only One way to come unto Him?

In order to escape the deceptions of these cute little mascots of the devil is by becoming a born-again indwelt Christian. The Rapture does show favoritism, I must agree. But the type of favoritism is whether a person is born-again or not. Some teach the theory of partial Rapture, only very good Christians are Raptured, while the bad Christians are left behind to pay for their sins. Yes, there are theologian types that teach a partial or split Rapture. I now it is surprising but certainly true. The Word of God does not support such fables primarily because you cannot divide up the Oneness of the Body of Christ. All get Raptured and all get translated at the same time and place. Do not be easily deceived by teachers of partialities – like, a person will miss the Rapture unless he has spoken in tongues or is a member of a certain church or is fully sanctified. There is only one qualification for the Rapture and that is to be washed in the blood of Jesus through the process of Salvation.

Don’t get me wrong, there are some indwelt Christians that are walking in obedience more than others but this is not what determines whether one has their ticket for this final flight. Also, there are many who are deceived into thinking they are Christians but they are not. They have been given stinky thinking through upward training that if one holds to the teachings of a church that they are saved. The truth being said, if any human has not repented of their sins, acknowledged that they are going to Hell without Jesus, that He is the only way, truth and life, AND has been filled/sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:13) – they have no ticket, at least for the Rapture. God does not call us to cast Judgment on who is or who isn’t – only God can determine that. Just don’t assume your loved one is going to Heaven based on some kind of pew sitting philosophy that they adhere to.

*Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.* (1 Corinthians 4:5 NASB)

By the way, when is the Rapture going to take place? I think most Bible believing Christians knows that it is an imminent event but when exactly? Did you know that the Rapture is mentioned 30 times in the New Testament alone? In fact, if you read Jesus testimonies carefully, you will find that He constantly referencing His return. There might be a reason for that! I have a Bible software that allows you to do word searches, I typed in the words “alert & watch” and was amazed as to how many verses are referenced. One of my favorites is:

*"Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them.* (Luke 12:37 NASB)

Which ones are not alert or are watching - those who hate being called slaves of course! Have you noticed how much of the world spends their day fighting some type of slavery? An old historian friend of mine says this single issue alone is what makes the world turn. He also says that for without the fight of slavery, the world would come to an end. In order for one to understand true salvation, he/she must accept volunteer slavery to Christ Jesus.

*For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave*. (1 Corinthians 7:22 NASB)

*For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more.* (1 Corinthians 9:19 NASB)

People, who fight slavery, are usually caught up in the ways of independence and self-sufficiency. Since this type of person is not waiting for a Master, they are sure to miss the signs of their Master coming. Christians that are not watching for Christ will not be alert to the signs of His coming. On the other hand, faithful servants do watch and are alert. They listen for every sign and rumbling of His presence. What exactly is this faithful servant to be watching for? Simple – they are supposed to be watching the fulfilling of the signs of the times and as they see God’s Word being fulfilled, they understand that His coming is soon to be embraced. How many true Christians do you observe studying end-time events? Most hide at the stroke of a pen that mentions the scary details of Revelation. Some on the other hand are blissfully caught up in the details of watching and listening for their Husband’s arrival. I happen to be one of those!

No one knows the day or the hour when the Rapture is going to take place but we are warned and encouraged to watch and be on the alert for this day! Matthew 25:13 says; "Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.” We are blessed with many scriptures that prepare us for the birth pangs of the coming tribulation. Believers who know their Bible see these signs pop-out on the news almost daily. You would think that it would cause them to be dooms-day focused but that is simply not the case. Those Christians are secure in their identity in Christ find great comfort and excitement in hearing dooms-day updates – for it is a reminder that their Husband is on a cloud not so far away. On the other hand, Christians that are gripped by fear when they hear of the signs of the times are insecure and do NOT know who they are in Christ. These people typically don’t read articles like this – the titles alone scare them away.

Adults are really not that different than children. Some children cower at sudden sounds and images, while others are attracted to finding out what made that noise. In either case, all Christians are called to be alert and watch for the signs and wonders of the end-times. It isn’t a suggestion to the strong type – it is a mandate to comfort and excite us. This does not mean that we are looking for tribulation, but we ar4e looking for the translation before this great Tribulation period. We are not looking for the Antichrist, but we are looking for our Jesus Christ. Remember – Loneliness is the absence of Holiness and those who fear are very lonely people.