

"WEEKLY WISDOM"
By Pastor Darryl Baker

For The Week of 03.01.10

"WILL EVERYONE BORN-AGAIN GO IN THE RAPTURE?"

1 Th. 4:16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

1 Th. 4:17 Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Recently I was an observer in a courtroom within our local community where I saw many different cases brought before our local judge. What really surprised me that happened consistently with adults, young adults, and teenagers was the disregard that people had for what this judge would say to them. One gentleman was trying to get out of a ticket that had a mistake on the date of the ticket. The judge after fully explaining the law to this man then persisted to try and get out of the ticket. Another young lady who when asked different questions just looked at him in silence was not any better in showing any regard for what the judge had said to her.

I bring this up as an example that in dealing with the subject of the rapture many believers are convinced they are going to go when the rapture comes but have not actually had much regard for what the scriptures say about this subject. Please know that my purpose in dealing with this issue is because of my concern for the obvious disregard by many about an issue that scripture is very clear about, yet it seems to go ignored. As a minister of the gospel, called and ordained by God through godly leadership, I took an oath just as Timothy was commissioned by Paul to preach the Word of God whether it is welcomed or not. I want everyone to be ready for the Lord's return which I believe is sooner than most think.

I know there may be some who read this article and don't know what the rapture is, so I would first like to briefly describe what the Bible refers to what we call the rapture. The word itself is not directly in the Bible, but it means, "catching away", which is what Paul said above in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 that when Christ comes back those who are alive and remain they will be "caught up", hence this is what we refer to as the rapture. Now right here in verse 17 we have some insight to those who will be ready when the rapture takes place. It is those who are "alive" and "remain". The word alive is a word that refers to having the life of God, or in other words to be born again just as Jesus spoke about in John chapter 3. The word "remain" is an additional key to those who will be

caught up with the Lord. The definition for remain is to survive. When you look at what we will be seeing from scripture about references to being ready for the Lords return you will see a similar word, overcome.

Rev. 3:14 "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:

Rev. 3:15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.

Rev. 3:16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

There are multiple references in the Bible that reveal some key truths about those who will go in the rapture. Here in Revelation 3 we have a letter to the church (believers) of Laodicea. Jesus is speaking here and it is amazing to me that in all the seven letters that Jesus wrote to the different churches in Revelation He told them all, "I know your works". There is no one who can become born again by works, but scripture clearly tells us we must work out our salvation once we are born again. It seems not many believers know this. Jesus tells this church here that they are lukewarm, and if they do not change He will vomit them out of His mouth.

If you don't understand what He is saying let me translate, you won't go with Him in the rapture. He goes on to tell them in the following verses that they were lukewarm because they were caught up in themselves and their possessions. He tells them that they need to buy gold refined in the fire, which scripture reveals to us is genuine faith found through the Word of God. It tells them they need to be zealous and repent. To be zealous means to be passionate in their pursuit of God. To repent for this church in Laodicea simply means turn back to God putting Him first over all their life.

Rev. 3:21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

Here is one of the many references that Jesus makes to those who are born again in which He tells them that if they overcome they will sit with Him on His throne as He overcame. To overcome for this church means to not give in to the temptation to become lukewarm. The word "lukewarm" is defined as "indifferent". There are too many who are born again who are indifferent when it comes to the things of God. For example, "It doesn't matter if I go to church or not. It doesn't matter if I read my Bible or not. It doesn't matter if I forgive those who have wronged me or not." Realize that just going to church doesn't mean you won't be lukewarm, but when you are zealous for God, you love going to God's house and worshipping Him because you are in love with Him. You enjoy reading the Word of God because it is Him speaking to you.

Let me be clear about one thing. Not going in the rapture does not mean that these people will lose their eternal salvation, but they will not enjoy what will happen in the first three years of the tribulation period, a time Jesus said has never been seen before on the earth. They will also die a martyr's death if they do not deny Jesus Christ. There are many different references to this subject of believers being left behind. Let's take a look at one of Jesus' parables that refer to this very subject.

Matt. 25:1 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

Matt. 25:2 Now five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.

Matt. 25:3 Those who *were* foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,

Matt. 25:4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

Matt. 25:5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

Matt. 25:6 "And at midnight a cry was *heard*: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'

Matt. 25:7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.

Matt. 25:8 And the foolish said to the wise, "Give us *some* of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

Matt. 25:9 But the wise answered, saying, "No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'

Matt. 25:10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

Matt. 25:11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'

Matt. 25:12 But he answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

I can only give a brief overview of what Jesus has said here but I will touch on the main points. This is a parable about ten virgins and the return of Christ for those ten virgins. The term virgin means to be pure. This is an analogy that Jesus is using for those who have been born again and cleansed from their sin. Notice five were wise and five foolish. The lamp represents one who has the Holy Spirit within them, but the foolish did not have extra oil in their vessels. When Jesus came they were not ready, they were too busy with their own lives and not zealous for God. The wise were ready and when Jesus came back they went with Him, the foolish did not.

To live the life of a foolish Christian is what the Bible refers to as one who is living for self, and not chasing after God. Jesus over and over again in talking about His return never said to just be born again because He was often talking directly to His disciples and He told them to be ready for His return. If we are living a life that is lukewarm in our walk with God, we will not go in the rapture. Jesus even warned the church in Sardis in

Revelation 3:4-5 that there were only a few in their church that had not "defiled their garments". He went on to say that if they would turn fully back to God then He would not blot out their names from the Book of Life which reveals those who are will have eternal life.

God is doing great things in these last days and He wants you to be a part of it. I pray you would examine your own life to see if you are lukewarm or not. If not we as believers need to be reaching out to those who are lukewarm as well as reaching sinners. Fact, time is short and we need to be about the Father's business, building His kingdom not our own. If you are not in a good church where people are hungry for God, go find such a church. There are many more examples Jesus gives in the Word of God about this subject. Don't be a foolish believer, be a wise believer and you will be ready when He comes.