

A MESSAGE OF JOY

The world today surely needs a message of joy! There *is* just such a message found in the Word of God. It is the message that prophets, angels, Jesus and His Apostles, and the Church down through the ages have preached. This message, like the sound of a trumpet, reaching the ears of the whole world, sounds the alarm to awaken and prepare them for one of the greatest and most sublime events in the history of the world!

Jesus Christ Died For You

John 3:16 tells us, *“For God so loved the world that He gave His One and Only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”* We read in 1 Tim. 2:5, 6: *“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men -- the testimony given in its proper time.”* Yes, Jesus came, died and was raised from the dead on the third day. He ascended to heaven where He sits on the right hand of God waiting for the “proper time” when He will come with His bride, the church, to establish the Kingdom, for which He taught us to pray, to come right here on earth.

The purpose of Jesus’ first advent, in addition to redeeming man from sin and death, was to select a church who would be His Bride, and as joint-heirs with Him in His Kingdom would bless all the families of the earth. (See Acts 15:14; Rev. 19:8, 9; 22:17; Rom. 8:16, 17; Gen. 12:1, 2.) Jesus told His disciples in Jn. 14:1-3, *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”* When Jesus ascended, an angel promised that He would return in like manner (Acts 1:11).

The Return Of Christ

All down through the ages, Jesus’ followers have been looking for and expecting Him to return in their day with great expectation. This hope has been a source of comfort even under the severest persecution right down to our day. Present world conditions suggest to us that His return is very near. Bible prophecies offer us signs that indicate we are living in the end times as evidenced by the tremendous increase in knowledge especially brought about by the computer and the internet, and the fantastic methods of travel even to outer space (Dan. 12:4); many wars, civil and otherwise, have touched all continents, bringing famine, starvation, and pestilence to the people (Matt. 24:7); the uncertainty and insecurity of the world’s monetary system as well as the potential nuclear weapons that many nations now possess are causing men’s hearts to fail them (Luke 21:26). All these things are evidences that the Lord’s return is near. But when exactly will He return? *No one knows the day nor the hour.* Jesus told His disciples that they should *watch and pray* so as to be prepared for that day (Matt. 25:13).

The Resurrection Of The Dead

When the Lord returns it will be for the purpose of fulfilling His promise to His Church, His espoused Bride, that we read about earlier. In 1 Thess. 4:13-18, the Apostle Paul reveals to us the way that this is to occur. He will first raise up those of His church who have died, then those who are still alive will be instantly changed, and both *together* will be caught up in the air to be with their Lord forever. (See also 1 Cor. 15:23, 51, 52; Mat. 24:31; Rev. 20:6.) These will all have part in that grandest of all unions, the *“marriage of the Lamb and his bride”* (Rev. 19:6-9). Later, a resurrection of all mankind will occur (John 5:28, 29), and Isaiah 26:9 tells us: *“When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world*

shall learn righteousness.” Just what does this mean? It means that there is coming a time when all mankind will be able to learn the ways of righteousness, unhindered by the great deceiver Satan, for *he “will be bound to deceive the nations no more”* (Rev. 20:1, 2).

The Kingdom Of God On Earth

Jesus, in giving a guideline to His disciples as to how they should pray, began that prayer as follows: “Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done *in earth as it is in heaven....*” (Matt. 6:9,10). It is this kingdom for which untold millions of Christians have prayed and are still praying that will soon be established on this earth. The kingdoms of this world, which have proved themselves incapable of ruling with justice and unable to give the people peace, prosperity, liberty, and happiness, will be done away with and replaced with the righteous Kingdom of God under the rulership of Jesus and His Bride. (See Dan. 2:35, 44, 45; Psa. 2:9-12; Isa. 11:1-9; Rev. 11:17, 19:15.)

In this Kingdom, all evil, sin, sickness, pain, and even death will be done away with (Rev. 21:4; Isa. 35:5, 6). There will be no more wars (Psa. 46: 9, 10). There will be everlasting peace throughout the whole world (Isa. 9:6, 7). What great joy and peace of mind there is in knowing and believing that all this will soon be a reality. If you would like to pursue this subject in greater depth, please send your request for the booklet, “*God’s Plan of the Ages*” to:

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