

## **Know What We Believe About the End Times**

**Text: Revelation 19:11–14**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- It will be a normal day... the people of the world... will be going about their business ... the kids will be off to school... people will go to work... it seemingly will be just another day like any other day.
- But suddenly... even faster than the blink of an eye... things will change... millions of people will vanish from the face of the earth... and the world will be thrown into chaos and confusion.
- This sounds like science fiction... but it is not... this is the next chapter in God's divine plan... as revealed in His Word.
- The Bible doesn't leave us guessing about the future...it gives us a roadmap ... a prophetic timeline of end time events ... events which will lead up to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to this world.
- Today as we continue our sermon series "Know What We Believe" ... we look at what the Bible says about the end time events... things that will happen in the days leading up to the Return of Christ.
- It is important that we understand what the Bible teaches about the end times because if we don't... we won't live like people who are ready...we won't have the urgency we need to have as we preach, proclaim and serve the Lord...and we won't live with the assurance that God is in charge and in control of this world.
- Today from the Bible we will walk through events that will soon unfold ...And let's ask the most important question of all: Are we ready?

### **II. THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH**

- The next great event on the prophetic calendar of God... is what we call the Rapture of the church.

- At the Rapture...every living Christian in the world at that time... will be dramatically and supernaturally ...removed from the world before God's final judgment falls upon the earth.
- One of the places in the Bible that speaks of the Rapture is... *1 Thess. 4:16-17 "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. 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 so we shall always be with the Lord."*
- According to the Bible... here is the sequence of the Rapture:
  1. **Christ will descend** into the sky above the earth... accompanied by the living soul of every believer who is in Heaven.
  2. **A shout** will be heard... an archangel will speak with a loud voice.
  3. **A trumpet will sound... then the dead in Christ will be raised...**the physical body of every believer who has died will be resurrected and glorified... and then caught up into the air.
  4. **Reunion in the air...** in the air those resurrected, glorified bodies will be rejoined with their soul which has been in Heaven.
  5. **Then dramatically every living believer will be transformed** ...glorified... and caught up to meet the Lord in the air.
  6. **The Church will be taken to Heaven.**
- The Rapture will be invisible to the unbelieving world...all of this will happen in a flash ...in the twinkling of an eye.
- The Rapture is the first event... in a series of events that will lead to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to this earth.

### III. THE TRIBULATION

- The Lord will rapture His Church... to remove His people from the earth... before His final judgment falls on the unbelieving world.
- *2 Peter 2:9 “The Lord knows how to rescue godly people” ... 1 Thessalonians 1:10 “...Jesus...will deliver us from the wrath to come.”*
- Before the great flood fell on the earth...God rescued Noah...before God’s judgement fell on Sodom and Gomorrah... He delivered Lot... and before God’s final judgment falls on the earth... the Lord will remove His Church.
- After the Rapture... the world left behind will soon enter into a seven-year period called... the tribulation:
  - Not long after the Rapture... the Antichrist... will rise to power... at first, the Antichrist will appear to be kind and benevolent... but eventually his real nature...his evil and satanic nature will be revealed.
  - The tribulation will last seven years... during that time... a series of 21 devastating divine judgments... will fall upon the earth.
  - Midway through the tribulation... the eyes of the Jewish people will be opened ... and the nation of Israel will finally accept Jesus as the Messiah, Savior and Lord.
  - In the face of the opposition of the Antichrist and his forces... a redeemed Israel will proclaim the truth about Jesus to the world... and they will expose the truth about the Antichrist.
  - Multitudes of people will be saved during the tribulation... but many will harden their hearts and remain loyal to the Antichrist.
  - At the end of the seven years of tribulation... in an attempt to wipe out the Jewish people ... and defeat the plan and purposes of God... the Antichrist will surround Israel with a massive army ... with the intention of obliterating the Jewish people.
- Just as the battle of Armageddon is about to begin... Jesus Christ... leading the armies of Heaven will come again to this earth.

- Jesus will defeat the armies of the Antichrist with two weapons... the glory of His appearance and the breath of His mouth... and the battle will be over in a second.

#### **IV. THE RETURN OF CHRIST**

- After the return of Christ... Jesus will establish His millennial reign on earth for 1,000 years.
- In His first coming, Jesus came as a baby in weakness, humility and obscurity...at His second coming, Jesus will come in power and great glory.
- In His first coming, very few bowed before Jesus...when Jesus comes again, every knee will bow before Him...and every tongue will confess that He is Lord.
- In His first coming, the door of an inn was shut in Jesus' face...at His second coming, the door of Heaven will open...and out of it will ride Jesus as the "King of kings and Lord of lords."
- In His first coming, the arrival of Jesus went largely unnoticed...when Jesus comes again every eye will see Him.
- In His first coming, Jesus came as a servant...at His second coming, Jesus will return commanding the armies of Heaven.
- At His first coming, Jesus came to wear a crown of thorns...in His second coming, Jesus will wear a crown of power and glory.
- When Jesus comes again... He will refurbish, restore and renew the earth...and Jesus Himself will rule the world from a restored Jerusalem.
- God's people will reign with Christ... and for 1,000 years there will be ... No war... No famine... No hunger... crime or corruption will not be tolerated.

- During the millennial reign... Satan will be bound and unable to deceive ... justice will be swift, fair, and righteous.... and the nations of the earth will live in peace under the rule of the Prince of Peace.
- At the end of those 1,000 years... the final judgement of the lost will happen...the Great White Throne Judgment.
- After that judgment... Satan, the demons and all unbelievers... will be cast into the Lake of Fire... all evil, sin, and rebellion... will be forever removed God's creation.
- And Christ will usher in... the New Heaven and New Earth...His eternal Kingdom... and the eternal home of His people.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

- The Rapture is not a theory... The Tribulation is not a myth...And the Return of Christ is not a metaphor... these events are real... and it could all begin at any moment.
- The Bible indicates that while many people will believe in Christ and be saved after the Rapture... most of the people in the Tribulation world will not believe ... they will believe the lies and delusion of the Antichrist and Satan... and they will be lost forever.
- The bottom line is... if you know you need to be saved today... you don't need to wait... you need to be saved today.
- The longer you wait... the harder your heart becomes...for many people... the Rapture will seal their eternal destiny as being lost and separated from God forever.
- You don't want to be left behind in this world after the Rapture...you don't want to face the wrath of God poured out on a rebellious world....you don't want to stand before the Great White Throne as one who has rejected Christ.
- Here's the good news... Jesus Christ has made a way... for you to be saved ... from your sins and the wrath to come.

- Jesus died for your sins... He rose again... And He's coming back...not as a suffering servant... but as a conquering King.
- Today I urge you to come to Christ... Come in repentance... Come in faith. Come and be saved.

**Closing Prayer** Let's pray together. Father, we thank You for Your Word—clear, true, and trustworthy. Thank You for revealing the things to come, not to frighten us, but to prepare us. Lord, we know the hour is late. We see the signs. We hear the trumpet in the distance. And so we ask: awaken hearts today. Draw the lost to Yourself. For those who are unsure, give clarity. For those who are afraid, give peace. For those who are resisting, break through with love and truth. We pray for salvation to come to those in this place who need to be saved, this city, this nation. We pray for boldness to proclaim the gospel until You return. And we pray, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Until that day, keep us faithful. Keep us watchful. Keep us ready. In the mighty name of Jesus Christ, our soon-coming King, we pray. Amen.