



May 17, 2015

What will Lead Up to Heaven?

Introduction

As we continue to study about heaven, it is natural to have questions about the end times leading up to Christ's return. Today, we studied the signs of the end. We looked at the three stages: the Rapture, the Tribulation, and the Millennium. While some of the information can be confusing or even frightening, we learned about what we can do to be prepared should Christ return in our lifetime.

1. When you think of the end times, are you alarmed or filled with hope? Why? What might change that for you?
2. Considering the different views of where the tribulation and rapture fall at the end times, what's your position and why? How does it affect your thoughts and feelings about the end times if that position changes?
3. David shared seven ways to be ready for Christ's return, even though only God the Father knows the timing:
 - a. Trust in Jesus who has our best interest in mind (*1 John 2:15-17; John 14:1-3*). Is your trust in your heavenly Father strong enough to be unwavering in the light of the tribulation events? Why or why not?
 - b. Make others a priority (*James 5:8, 9*). Are there relationships in your life that need this verse? How is being called to be patient and not quarrel direct us to make others a priority in our life?
 - c. Pray often (*1 Peter 4:7*). Do you have a daily prayer life? If yes, describe some benefits you have experienced from daily conversation with the Lord. If not, what is preventing you from making this spiritual discipline part of your daily life?
 - d. Serve! Do something that makes people's lives better (*1 Peter 4:7, 10*). Which one of your unique spiritual gifts can you use to glorify our God and prepare for Jesus' return by serving others?
 - e. Find a group for support (*Hebrews 10:24, 25*). Are you surrounding yourself with mature believers that you know have trust in the Lord and can encourage you?
 - f. Give to the Church (*Matthew 6:19, 20*). What ways can you give to the Church with your time, talent and financial resources?
 - g. Live a lifestyle of purity (*1 John 3:2, 3*). Do you loathe your sin enough to want it completely out of your life? In Matthew 5:29, 30, Jesus points out the importance of eradicating sin in our lives in a very dramatic way. Are you willing to do that with your sin? What steps can you take to purify your thoughts, attitudes, and actions?

Where do you think you're doing well and where do you think you may need to invest some time and energy? If you're willing, and for the sake of accountability, share specifically what changes you think you should make.

Conclusion

Matthew 24: 30b, 31 – “. . . they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.”