

Structure For: No One Left Behind-No Dispensational Premillennialism

Mid-Week Advent Service #1

Wednesday December 4th, 2019

Text:

Matthew 24:37-42

³⁷ For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. ⁴² Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

³⁷ For just exactly as it was in the days of Noah, in this manner the 2nd coming of the Son of Man will be

³⁸ For as they were being in those days-the ones before the flood: continuing to eat and drink, continuing to marry and give in marriage up to that day Noah went into the Ark. ³⁹ And they did not know until the flood came and swept away all of them. In this manner also the 2nd coming of the Son of Man will be. ⁴⁰ At that time there will be 2 men in the fields: one will be aggressively taken away and one will be let go/let alone (not being demanded for his debt: forgiven). ⁴¹ Two women continuing to grind at the millstone: one will be aggressively taken away and one will be let go/let alone (not being demanded for his debt: forgiven). ⁴² Therefore you must remain awake during the night watch (stay awake/remain vigilant), because you have not known what sort of day your Lord is coming.

Acts 15:15-18

¹⁵ And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, ¹⁶ "After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, ¹⁷ that the remnant <Note:Or 'rest'> of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things ¹⁸ known from of old."

Focus Statement:

Christ came in His first Advent as the promised answer to the problem of sin that plagued God's people of the Old Testament. Through His death and resurrection He fulfilled the sacrificial system and purified His chosen ones to be the witness that He originally set Israel aside to be.

Function Statement:

Why it's important to know:

Christians who believe in Dispensational Premillennialism fail to understand and believe that God has been working throughout history and throughout Scripture to restore fallen creation by pointing us to our sin and pointing us to the Savior to come for all nations and people. The real danger in this view of End Times is the Secret Rapture which leaves the door open after for those who failed to believe when Jesus came to have a second chance. In reality unbelievers when HE returns will be sent to judgment

What the hearer should do as a result:

Understand the Secret Rapture and its second chance as false. Understand that we all need to be ready for the His next advent after which comes the judgment. We the Church need to witness with the urgency of the coming end any day.

Subject Sentence: Jesus Next Advent Doesn't mean a 2nd chance

Introduction: The Heresy of Dispensationalism and Rapture

Show Left Behind Trailer

The Movie about the Book Left Behind:

This is the trailer for the Movie “Left Behind” which is a big screen adaptation of the book of the same name. The book is narrative fiction based on what many Christians believe will happen before the end of the world. Particularly that there will be a day in the future when Jesus will return in secret, in other words He will not manifest Himself to anyone other than the true members of His Church. He has come to “rapture them”: meaning to take them out of the world and back to heaven with Him. He does this to protect them from the “hell on earth” that is to come, where Satan is given free reign. The result of His taking people away in the flash of an instant would mean that a person would be here before you one minute and gone the next. If a Christian was piloting a plane all of a sudden there would be no pilot. Christians driving cars or operating machinery would likewise all of a sudden be gone and their immediate absence would cause accidents and mass hysteria worldwide.

Teaching of a Secret Rapture is not Biblical, Orthodox, but is dangerous heresy:

This belief in a “Secret Rapture”: a removal of the Church from the world before it becomes hell on earth has an appeal to it. When you read the description in Revelation about how bad things will get and how evil society will become in the Last Days before The End the idea that Jesus would remove us just before everything goes to hell has an appeal to us. But the problem is that is not what Jesus teaches in the Gospels, it’s not what Paul teaches about “the Rapture”, and it’s not what Revelation teaches. It’s false. It’s not what the Church has taught and confessed throughout the ages. It’s heresy, and it’s dangerous. What Jesus does teach us is when He returns there will be “No One Left Behind” on this earth.

The Heresy of Premillennial Dispensationalism

But to understand why this heretical we need to start with the End Time’s view that it is an integral part of. Something called “**Premillennial Dispensationalism**” First of all what is Dispensationalism? It is the belief that Biblical history is made up of distinct periods of time when God was testing His people’s obedience to a distinct revelation of His will. What this means is that the Old Testament describes the testing and preparation of Israel to receive an earthly Messianic Kingdom where the promises of the Messiah ruling on the throne of David would be fulfilled literally. Israel was not faithful in their preparation for this so God postponed it by sending Jesus to provide a spiritual kingdom for the Gentiles who would be believe and pass the test. This would mean that Jesus death, resurrection, ascension, and the birth of the Christian Church at Pentecost mark a “New Dispensation”: a new way that God is working with and testing people on earth. Christians who hold to this view believe that God will, in the end, return after the Secret Rapture and bring the apostate Jewish nation into His kingdom before the Last Day.

The idea behind “Premillennial” and the literal 1000-year reign of Christ on earth:

This is where the “**Premillennial**” part comes in. All these dealings with people on earth, including the Secret Rapture of the Church, will occur before Christ returns visibly to inaugurate the New Millennium: a literal 1000-year reign of Christ here when it will be like heaven of earth. But towards the end of that 1000 years Satan and his demons will be loosed from their captivity they were placed in at the beginning of the Millennial reign. Satan will gather evil forces for the final showdown, the final battle: Armageddon. But Christ and His Church will prevail. After this comes Judgement Day, followed by a literal “New City of Jerusalem” descending from heaven where the Church will live on streets paved with gold, forever.

The comings and goings of Christ don’t match His testimony in Matthew and Luke:

As you can see by the picture this has Jesus coming and going quite a few times: comings and goings that don’t match what He tells us in Matthew Chapter 24 where He tells the disciples what to expect during the time between His Ascension and His Second Coming on the Last Day. He describes only one final return at the end of time. We are going to study what Christ in the Gospels and through the Apostle Paul’s witness teaches us to expect before that final return at our 3rd Mid-Week Advent Service.

God’s progressive revelation throughout Scripture: Grace through Sacrifice:

But for now let’s look at why this idea of God dealing with His people in different “dispensations” is not faithful to Scripture. God’s message to us opens with the Story of Creation: how God carefully crafted and made a beautiful universe for us, mankind, the pinnacle of His Creation, to enjoy forever living with Him in His real presence among us. That all ended with the Fall and the curse placed on creation. But from the ashes God was already promising His plan redemption: **Genesis 3:14-15** **“¹⁴ The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. ¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."** Until then God gave them the sacrificial system as the means by which He communicated His grace and forgiveness. We see this in action in the next generation from Adam and Eve. It was over God’s approval of Abel’s sacrifice that his sinful anger found its outlet in murder. Throughout Old Testament times sacrifice after sacrifice of perfect animals had to be made to mediate God’s wrath over our sins. Animal after animal because the death of an animal is only a place holder that looks forward to the perfect sacrifice that could atone for the sins of all men: the shedding of blood of the only perfect man since Adam: Jesus Christ.

Messianic Promise given to Abraham that his descendant would bless all nations:

This promise of the Messiah: the Anointed One: anointed and set aside by God to be this perfect Sacrifice is part of the progressive and continual revelation of Old Testament prophecy. It was part of God's promise to Abraham in **Genesis 22:17-18** **"¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."** Note that this descendant would not only bless the nation that God promised to build from Abraham's offspring, but He would bless all the nations of the earth. God's intention from the beginning was to redeem not just Israel, but through the Anointed One that would come from them, and through their witness, all the world would be saved by the Gospel Message.

Isaiah foretells of the Messianic Suffering Servant who was crushed for Jews Sins:

Isaiah the prophet who wrote prophetic words of both judgment and comfort to Jerusalem about what would befall them 40 years into the future has a big part in this progressive revelation. He warned them that if they did not turn away from idol worship and turn back to the LORD with their whole heart then the LORD would send a foreign nation to destroy their city and take them as captives. But Isaiah also wrote words of grace and mercy, comfort and assurance. He foretold of how the LORD would redeem them from captivity and allow them to return home to Jerusalem He would allow them to return not because they had suffered sufficiently for their sins for which they had been sent away. But because one would come: the Suffering Servant, who would complete what they still owed to the LORD for their sins. Isaiah writes about this Suffering Servant in **Isaiah 53:4-6** **"⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned--- every one---to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."** The Suffering Servant, who is God's Messiah, the Anointed One, the One set aside to be the perfect sacrifice would suffer in place of the Jews who were exiled.

God's perfect plan to send His Messiah to be the Lamb of God for the whole world.

But not just for the Jewish nation. **Isaiah 52:10** **"The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."** The Suffering Servant was sent not just for the sins of the Jews but to redeem all of God's fallen creation. God's plan has always been that all the ends of the earth should see and believe in Him and His perfect Sacrifice. He is, as John the Baptist testified about Him: **John 1:29** **"The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"** This is the reason the Father send His only Son to be born of Christmas Night. To be the culmination of God's plan of redemption for all creation by being the perfect sacrifice: perfect man and perfect God whose death and resurrection would make the whole world right with God, including you and I. There's no room here for Dispensational working on behalf of our God

The Heresy of the Secret Rapture

Where the term “rapture” means and where the concept comes from:

That leaves us with the heretical teaching of a Secret Rapture. The Bible does describe a “Rapture” that will happen when Jesus returns. **1 Thessalonians 4: 15-17** " ¹⁵ **For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.**" The English word “rapture” comes from a medieval Latin word meaning to seize and carry away. Those who are alive on the day Christ Returns again: His 2nd Advent or coming, they will be seized from the face of this dying earth and out of this dying universe and will go to be with Jesus forever. When this happens time will have come to an end. The earth and the universe will come to an end. There will be no more days left to live out. No one will be left behind because there will be nothing left to be left behind on.

The Correct Interpretation of Matthew 24:40-41 and the taking and leaving:

The teaching of a Secret Rapture comes from the quoting out of context of our Gospel Lesson. **Matthew 24: 37-41** ³⁷ **For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left.**"

Those who confess a Secret Rapture see verses 40-41 as being their proof text; two people working side by side on earth when all of a sudden one of them is gone! The one who has disappeared having been “raptured” off the face of the earth. But if we apply these verses in the context of the flood being an illustration of what will happen on the Last Day, we have a different picture. In Noah’s day, when the flood came, who were the ones that were swept away by the flood waters? Not Noah and his family. They remained safe in the ark: God’s gracious gift to protect them. Those sinful people who reused to repent and believe Noah’s warnings. They remained on earth. They were swept away by the flood waters. They were cast into hell for now and are awaiting final judgment.

Greek word study of these verses supports non “Secret Rapture” understanding:

And there is this when you examine the original language of the Gospel Message. The word describing the man and woman being taken is used in other contexts in Scripture to describe someone or something being “aggressively taken away” such as in being “swept away” by flood waters. And the one who remains is not taken because, as is this word is used in other place is allowed to remain because “his debt is no longer being demanded of him, but has been forgiven”

Conclusion:

Whether you or I are alive on that Last Day when Jesus returns, we will not be swept away into Eternal Hell. The debt of sin that we have incurred will no longer be demanded of us. The Messiah, the Anointed One, the one promised by the Father on that same day when mankind fell, He has made us good enough to live forever in eternal life. All of God's dealings with His sinful human race have centered on the same will and promise: that God Himself would act to restore His fallen Creation by providing the perfect Sacrifice to appease the wrath that a holy God has over sinful disobedience. We have His promise of this in the Old Testament and see the fulfillment of it with Christ's Advent on Christmas, which led to His suffering, death, and resurrection; all for you. And because we see over and over God keeping His word, we can know by faith for certain that when Christ returns on that Last Day, as promised, you and I will be welcomed into Eternal Life. Not because of who our ancestors were or were not. But because of what Jesus has declared us to be and earned for us. God's precious children. Part of His beloved family who will live with Him forever. Amen.