

THE IMMINENT RETURN OF CHRIST

Text-- I Thessalonians 4:16-18; II Thessalonians 2: 2-8; Matt. 24:12-15

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

¹⁶For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

¹⁷Then **we** which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

¹⁸Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

2 Thessalonians 2:2-13

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

²That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

³Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

⁴Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

⁵Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

⁶**And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.**

⁷For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: **only he who now letteth (GREEK kat-ekh'-o: to hold back, restrain, to restrain, to hinder the course or progress of, to check the headway of, to hold secure, or keep firm possession of) will let, until he be taken out of the way.**

⁸**And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:**

Matt. 24: 12-15 ¹²And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. ¹³But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. ¹⁴And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. ¹⁵When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (**whoso readeth, let him understand:**)

Introduction: So much Controversy today concerning the "Return of Christ" The 3 theories are widespread throughout the church: **Pre-Tribulation; Mid-Tribulation; & Post-Tribulation.** I am fully convinced that the Bible teaches the **"Pre-Tribulation" & Imminent Return of Christ.**

CBN Poll 4/27/16 A LARGE NUMBER OF PASTORS DON'T BELIEVE IN THE RAPTURE

1,000 Senior Pastors Surveyed--36% believed in pre-tribulation Rapture of the church; 20% believed in post-tribulation Rapture of the church; 36% believed that the Rapture was not real; 17% believed "other ideas" on the matter.-**TOTAL---53%** did not believe in the Rapture or had "other ideas" on the matter

I want to show by the Scriptures why

- 1) I believe that the Pre-Tribulation Return of Christ to be true and His return is Imminent!
- 2) I want to look at the Powerful Forces at Play in the End-times
- 3) I also want to look at the Signs of the End-Times that I see in place today that I believe may be used to usher in the "Second Coming of Christ"

Tomorrow-Sept. 30th, 2019 Marks the 40th year of my salvation- my spiritual birthday

I studied this subject and settled it in my heart just a few months after my salvation—

Pre-Trib.- In the Past, A fundamental doctrine of the Baptist and Assemblies of God Churches.

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Please, If you do not agree with the Pre-Trib. Return of Christ **“put it on a shelf”** in your mind but do not *reject the Warnings of Christ* to be ready at all times or base your belief on feelings or the *“teachings of others”* I encourage you to **“search the Scriptures for yourself.”**

IMMINENT DEFINATION.: *synonym--impending, at hand, close, near, approaching, on the way, about to happen, on the horizon, in the air, in the wind, looming, expected, & anticipated.*

*****1. Pretribulation & Imminent Return of Christ vs. Mid-tribulation or Post-tribulation**

Scripture Contrast between the “Sudden Coming” & “Second Coming of Christ.”

Sudden & Imminent Return of Christ in Scriptures:

1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 21:34-36 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. ³⁵For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

1 Thessalonians 5:2 “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the LORD so cometh as a thief in the night.”

Matt. 24: 42-51 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. ⁴³ But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. ⁴⁴ Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. ⁴⁵ Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. ⁴⁷ Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. ⁴⁸ But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; ⁴⁹ And shall begin to smite *his* fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; ⁵⁰ The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of, ⁵¹ And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matt. 24:36 “But of the day and the hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.”

Matt. 25:1-13 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. ² And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. ³ They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: ⁴ But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. ⁵ While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. ⁶ And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. ⁷ Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. ⁹ But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. ¹⁰ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. ¹¹ Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord,

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Lord, open to us. 12But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. 13Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Other Study Scriptures: Mark 13:32-37 Luke 17 27-36

Second Coming Scriptures:

Matt. 24:30-31 “Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all of the tribes of man mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with the sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, and from one end of heaven to the other.”

Matt. 24:27 “For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Mark 13:24-27 Luke 17:24

Mark 14:14-15 “But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them in Judaea flee to the mountains: And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house.”

Mark 13: 20 “And except that the LORD shall shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect’s sake, whom he has chosen, he hath shortened the days.”

Other Study Scriptures: **OUR TEXT--** II Thessalonians 2:3-13

***2. Powerful Forces in Play in the End-times

I John 2: 18 & 22 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. 22Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

GOD IS AND WILL ALWAYS BE IN CONTROL. GOD IS ALLOWING SATAN TO TAKE TEMPORARY CONTROL TO FULFILL SCRIPTURE!!!! GOD IS SLOWLY LIFTING HIS GRIP ON THE WORLD. THE KINGDOM OF DARKNESS IS SLOWLY TAKING CONTROL!

II Thess. 2:6-9 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.⁷ For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (GREEK kat-ekh’-o: to hold back, restrain, to restrain, to hinder the course or progress of, to check the headway of, to hold secure, or keep firm possession of) will let, until he be taken out of the way.⁸ And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:⁹ Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.

Matt. 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

***3. SIGNS OF THE END TIMES TODAY

a. Falling Away—in America:

4500 churches closed its door & 1000 new churches started last year (Shafer Institute)

Only 6% of US churches are growing beyond their population growth area

In 1990-20.4% of US population was in church on any given Sunday (Church Outreach Magazine)

In 2000-18.7% of US population was in church on any given Sunday

In 2004- 17.7 % of US population was in church on any given Sunday

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In 2018- 64% of US population seldom or never attend church

----- In Europe

Greece- 16% of population attend church on any given Sunday (**2017 PEW Research Poll**)

Spain- 15% of population was in church on any given Sunday

France- 12% of population was in church on any given Sunday

Germany- 10% of population was in church on any given Sunday

UK- 8% of population was in church on any given Sunday

Norway- 7% of population was in church on any given Sunday

b. Technology- A Tool for Antichrist to Control the People of the World

Intelligent Uniforms FOX NEWS----Dec. 31, 2018

Ten schools in China have new "intelligent uniforms" that will track students' whereabouts with embedded computer chips.

The uniforms, which are equipped with GPS devices developed by a local tech firm, are meant to ensure that students don't skip class. Alarms are set to go off if a student walks out of the school building or falls asleep during a lesson.

According to [state-run media](#), although the school's administrators and parents have access to the location data, Principal of Renhuai Lin Zongwu said that **"we choose not to check the accurate location of students after school."**

The two chips embedded in the uniforms can be washed up to 500 times and can withstand temperatures up to 300 degrees Fahrenheit.

[According to ABC](#), the company posted a public statement saying the uniforms "focus on safety issues" and provide a "smart management method" that benefits students, teachers and parents.

The chips can also reportedly be used as a cashless payment system for snacks bought on school grounds, although parents and the school would see everything a student buys.

In addition, if students try to swap uniforms in order to leave the campus, the system is designed to prevent that: Facial recognition scanners at school gates match the chips with the correct student. Two years ago, China's Ministry of Education touted the development of "smart campuses" as part of its Five Year Plan.... WILL US START A SIMILAR PROGRAM TO ENSURE CHILDREN SAFETY ON SCHOOL CAMPUSES?

Wikipedia: China's Social Credit System:

The **Social Credit System** is a national [reputation system](#) being developed by the [Chinese government](#). By 2020, it is intended to standardize the assessment of citizens' and businesses' economic and social reputation, or 'Social Credit'

The system will be one unified system and there will be a **single system-wide social credit score for each citizen and business.**

The system is considered a form of [mass surveillance](#) which uses [big data analysis technology](#).

Implications for citizens

From the Chinese government's *Plan for Implementation*, the SCS is due to be fully implemented by 2020. Once implemented the system will manage the rewards, or punishments, of citizens on the basis of their economic and personal behavior. Some types of punishments include: flight ban, exclusion from private schools, slow internet connection, exclusion from high prestige work, exclusion from hotels, and registration on a public blacklist.

Travel ban-By the end of 2018, 5.5 million high-speed rail trips and 17.5 million flights had been denied to prospective travelers who were on a blacklist.

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Exclusion from school admissions- If the parents of a child were to score below a certain threshold, their children would be excluded from the top schools in the region.

Repression of religious minorities- City-level pilot projects for the social credit score system have included rewarding individuals for aiding authorities in enforcing restrictions of religious practices.

Debt Collection- An app showing a "map of deadbeat debtors" within 500 meters radius.

Public display- Mugshots of blacklisted individuals are sometimes displayed on large LED screens on buildings, or shown before the movie in movie theaters

Other-The rewards of having a high score include easier access to loans and jobs and priority during bureaucratic paperwork. Likewise, the immediate negative consequences for a low score, or being associated to someone with a low score, ranges from lower internet speeds to being denied access to certain jobs, loans and visas.

*****FORBES--- China's Social Credit System Jan, 21, 2018**

If an individual has a lower social credit score, they might find their ability to purchase what they want such as high-quality goods or a new home to be restricted. They might also be prohibited from buying airline and train tickets or renting an apartment. Some people with low social credit scores can expect to be blocked from dating sites and not be able to enroll their children in a school of their choice.

Actions That Adjust Social Scores

Social credit ratings can go up and down based on an individual's actions. Purchasing diapers for a child might bump your score (the system assumes you're a responsible caregiver) while it might take a hit when you purchase alcohol. If you are found guilty of disrupting or blocking check-in counters or passageways in an airport, as obsessed fans did at the Beijing airport as they fought to gain access to their pop idols, your social credit score can be lowered.

Reception Of The Social Credit System In China

Currently, most Chinese citizens have a favorable view of the commercial social credit score systems in place; a survey of Chinese citizens shows 80 percent of respondents either somewhat or strongly approve of social credit systems.

c. Days of Noah- Matt. 24:37-39

Matt. 24:11 "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold"

Matt. 24: 48-51 "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and eat and drink with the drunken: the lord of that servant shall come in a day when looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of and shall cut him asunder..."

I Tim. 4:1 "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrine of devils."

II Tim. 4:2-4 "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn their ears from the truth..."

II Peter 3:3-4 "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lust, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the father fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

Luke 21:35 "For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the earth."

Closing: The Benefit of the Teaching of the Return of Christ for the Church of Today.

a. Comfort - **I Thessalonians 4:18** "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

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Romans 15:4 “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

b. Pruning and Purifying Effect on our Daily Walk-II Peter 3:11 “Seeing then that all of these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.”

Matt. 24: 13 “Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”

Matt. 24:42-44 “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doeth come. But know this, that if the Goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and not suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready...”

c. Warning to ALL to Watch and Be Alert About the Sudden Return of Christ

Matt. 25:1-13 Wise and Foolish Virgins.

Mark 13:36 “Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.”

LUKE 2—Example of the Church’s Watchfulness: Simeon and Anna who traveled to the temple daily looking for the 1st Coming of Christ.