

"Part LXIV: Revelation, Section 3 - ('The Things Which Shall Be Hereafter') Realigning Our Lives In View Of God's Future Works"

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Current events in life are often tragically unfair and difficult, and the future uncertain. Consider the following facts:

(1) This last week, in our area, a man called the police to complain about his wife. They escorted him home to get the woman's view: they discovered that when she had failed to carry in firewood, the man had pressed his wife's forearms to the hot wood stove, searing her flesh, so she had locked him out! The husband was arrested!

In a day when a 39-year-old husband in OUR area commits such an atrocity against his WIFE, how can our daughters who are anticipating decent futures to be sure to marry caring HUSBANDS?!

(2) Sometimes dealings with professionals we trust can backfire: The December 4, 1994 issue of the Rocky Mountain News reports on a lawsuit filed against psychotherapist, Lynda Robinson. She had prescribed "treatment" of Lisa Roth for depression by telling Lisa to sleep with her and her husband, Mr. Robinson. After a lot of consequent emotional pain, Lisa sued Lynda Robinson.

But the tragedy extended into the trial itself: Lynda Robinson's defense was that she failed to recall anything about psychotherapy or the bedroom incidents with Lisa; she claimed that her silicone breast implants had leaked, causing brain toxicity and memory loss!

In an era where one can be abused by trusting the credibility of trained counselors, where will needy people TURN?!

(3) Just this last week, the 44 year old head of the Warner Theater, upon walking out of a meeting in Hartford, told his friends that he wasn't feeling well, then collapsed! He died of a heart attack!

In a day when YOUNGER, DECENT men suddenly die, how are they, how are their families able to prepare for the future?! WHERE do people GO when they die, and WHY?!

(4) In the August 12, '85 issue of Time, a 28-year-old AIDS victim was quoted, saying: "I'm very scared to die such a young man. I'd like a little more time. I lived in the fast lane. If only God will give me a break."

CAN a youth dying of AIDS prepare for a decent future?!

(We turn to the "Need" section of the message . . .)

***Need:* "Life is sometimes tragically UNFAIR and SHORT, and times are becoming more difficult! I want to prepare for the future -- even for what's BEYOND this life -- but HOW?! Any ideas?!"**

- I. **We learned 2 lessons ago that Revelation 4-22 foretells what will occur after Church History which is predicted in Revelation 2-3.**
- II. **Rev. 4:1-3 then predicts the Pretribulation Rapture of the Church:**
 - A. The scene **after** Rev. 4:1-3 introduces the **glorified** Church in **heaven**:
 1. The number **24** of Rev. 4:4 is used in Scripture of the **24** orders of **priests** and soldiers organized by king David, 1 Chr. 24:4; 27:1.
 2. Also, the white clothes seen in v. 4 picture **priests**, Ex. 28:42-43.
 3. As these Rev. 4:4 **priests** also have **crowns**, and the **ONLY royal priesthood** in Scripture is the **Church** (Rv. 1:6), these **24** crowned elders in white around God's throne are **Christians in heaven!**
 - B. So, using 1 Cor. 15:51-57, we see Rev. 4:1-3 picturing the **Rapture**.
 - C. As this Church then **stays in heaven during** the **Tribulation Period** that **follows** Rev. 4:4 (11:16ff; 19:4), the Rapture is **Pretribulation!**
- III. **Now, following the Pretribulation Rapture, God's "ties up history's loose ends" with the Tribulation Period to usher in His Kingdom:**
 - A. Though God created the world and set man up as His earthly deputy, sin deposed him and Satan became earth's ruler, Gn. 1-5; 2 Cor. 4:4. Thus, the **raptured** Church will glorify its **Creator**, and anticipate Christ's acting as world Judge of **INDIVIDUAL** sinful unbelievers!
 1. Revelation 4:4-11 shows the Church honoring God, man's Creator as being **separate** from the sin of the world's individuals.
 2. Similarly, Revelation 5:1-14 reveals Christ, the sinless and hence only worthy divine-human earthly deputy of the Father preparing to Judge the world and claim God's kingdom back from Adam's fall.
 3. Thus, the seal judgments picture God's wrath against **individuals** for **rejecting Christ**, and the 7th seal, holding the seven trumpet judgments, is His wrath against man's **replacing** God with **idols**, 6:1-17; 8:1-21 (cf. Zeph. 1:3 with judgments like the trumpet ones)
 4. God will use the 144,000 to witness to **INDIVIDUALS**, 7:1-17.
 - B. **However**, man's **GROUPS** have **magnified** man's sin through history:
 1. Our synthesis study has traced how Israel and the Church were infiltrated and wed to governments under world Nimrodian error.

2. Thus, God plans to judge Nimrod's evil **in** these **defiled GROUPS!**
 - a. The scroll John must eat in Rev. 10:10 mimics Ezekiel's experience in Ez. 2:1-10 where God judges **apostate** Hebrews.
 - b. Thus, God will judge **apostates** who have **rejected** God's true salvation in **groups** in history where the godly once testified.
 - c. Rev. 10:11 tells us that God takes John through the Tribulation a **SECOND** time to view God's judging **apostates in GROUPS!**
 3. Revelation 11:1-22:5 explains God's dealing with such **GROUPS!**
 - a. As He did in Zech. 4:1-14, in the Tribulation Period, God will set up Israel's **religious** high priest and **political** ruler to witness His truth to apostate **religio-politico** **GROUPS**, Rev. 11:1-14.
 - b. Then the 7th trumpet sounds, which judgment contains the 7 bowl judgments against these world **GROUPS**, Rev. 11:15-18.
 - c. These **GROUPS** are identified as follows: (a) recalling Joseph's Gen. 37:6-9 dream and God's Jer. 33:20-22 pledge that the Abrahamic Covenant would be **fulfilled**, the woman of 12:1-2 is Israel who produced Messiah, Jesus. (b) The dragon of 12:3 is Satan, and he will rule via antichrist's revived Roman Empire, 12:3; 17:9. (c) Since Satan had failed to destroy God's rule at Christ's first coming, he will **then** try to destroy all Jews to thwart God's **fulfilling** His Abrahamic Covenant, Rev. 12:4-13. (d) God will rescue Israel (12:14-17) and pour out the bowl judgments, chs. 13-16. This includes God causing the antichrist to destroy Nimrod's **WORLD religio-politico** apostasy centered in Rome (ch. 17 = **religious** judgment; ch. 18 = commercial and **political** judgment). (f) Next, Christ returns to set up His reign, 19:1-21. (Israel then comes to faith in Christ, Zech. 12:10.)
 - d. Next comes Christ's 1,000 year Millennial reign on earth, 20:1-6.
 - e. Then, there is a final rebellion that is put down, and **all unsaved people** are **judged** and sent to the **eternal lake of fire**, 20:7-15.
 - f. **Believers of all time** will end up in the eternal state with a new heavens and earth, a place where God brings **heaven** down to a purged earth to be united forever with **purified men**, 21:1-22:5.
- C. In view of these Revelation predictions, Rev. 22:6-21 is a call for **US** to prepare to give an account of **ourselves** to **Christ** at His coming!

IV. Revelation 4:1-22:21 crowns the "thread of redemption," showing that Christ will THOROUGHLY deal with SIN and its EFFECTS!

Application: *In view of the EXTREME contrast in the FINAL destiny of a human being based solely on HOW he has responded to CHRIST, (I) believe NOW on Christ for eternal life and blessing, John 3:16; Rev. 4:1-22:5! (2) Then LIVE for Him in Christ's power, and do His will of discipling the nations, Rev. 22:6-21!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the lesson . . .)

A girl in the church youth group I once attended whose name is Sherry and who is about my age we always knew lived the life of a wild party girl. She had a reputation of being very immoral even though her parents were our youth leaders.

When Sherry finally married, her husband turned out to be bisexual, and had affairs with other men to the heartbreak of Sherry and her parents, and Sherry's marriage finally ended up on the rocks. She got the children, but her wild lifestyle had taken its toll.

Sherry came to her senses one day while walking in the woods of Alaska at a Christian camp. She realized that she had only one life, and that to make anything of it, she had to get right with God Whom she knew from her Sunday School days she would meet at the end of this life. Weeping, Sherry submitted to the Lord's will at that point, immorality, drugs, alcohol and ruined emotions and reputation and all.

Probably because of her former lifestyle, Sherry experienced a severe stroke that partially paralyzed her at age 47. Today Sherry looks like she is in her seventies although she is not yet 50 years old. She talks slowly and walks stooped, a bare shell of the wild party girl we all once knew.

But, due to her rededication to Christ, Sherry has done her best.

She joined a church and recently headed up its follow up program for an evangelistic presentation by way of a play. The play, entitled "Heaven's Gates or Hell's Doors" closes with various people facing Christ at the end of their lives, and though it isn't entirely theologically correct, they either get ushered out to the Lake of Fire or enter Heaven. In one powerful scene, a woman is taken out to the Lake of Fire while Christ holds the infant she aborted at an abortion clinic, refusing to give it back to her!

This play has moved 400 hundred people in the Church come to Christ. In fact, its presentation was extended 4 nights, and police were called out to direct the highway traffic jam as people from all over the area flocked into the Church moved by stories of profound conversions.

The point is this: if Sherry with her very defeated former lifestyle can become head of follow-up for such an effective evangelistic outreach as this at Neighborhood Church in Chico, there is always HOPE of repentance in view of Christ's coming! Get ready to meet the Lord, and do it NOW while there's time!