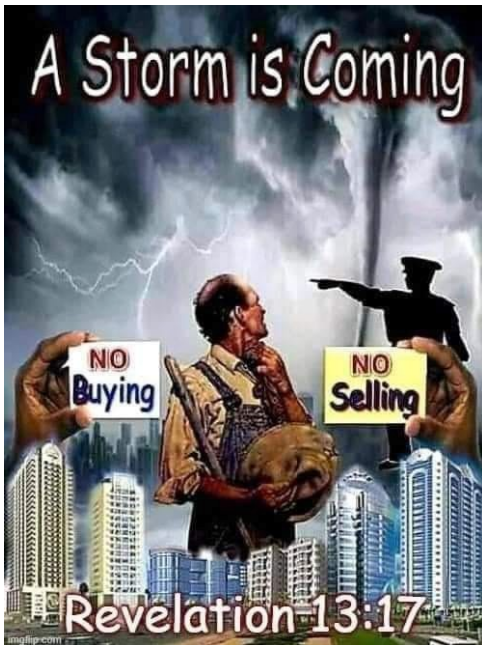


GROW IN GRACE NEWSLETTER

Volume 46, No. 11, March 16, 2021 / Southside Baptist Church / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / **The Grow in Grace Newsletter is a WEEKLY Bible Study**, plus local church news notes— designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church; and is sent forth with the desire to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide), in the experience of 2 Peter 3:18. ***"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD JESUS CHRIST!"***

'STORMS' of Persecution / Tribulation / Martyrdom HAVE BEEN, ARE, and ARE COMING! [Part 2]



THE REALITY is that in our 'fallen' world— **[1]** 'Storms' have been here since the historical moment when Adam and Eve sinned (Genesis 3)! **[2]** 'Storms' have continued and are with us today! **[3]** ULTIMATELY, THE 'STORMS' will come to a climatic end!

IN THE MIDST OF IT ALL: WHAT ABOUT THE ANTI-CHRIST and the MARK OF THE BEAST? (Revelation 13:16-17)

"AND HE [The anti-Christ] causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

Over the last 54 years of gospel ministry, I have noticed (at least for the last 50 of those years) that ALMOST every

time there is a serious **CRISIS** in the world— the prophecy preachers and those who live by their books, will commence a new wave of **ALARMS** and promises of **ESCAPE: *THEY SAY THINGS LIKE:***

“In view of these events, the RETURN OF CHRST MUST BE SOON! LOOK AT ALL THE BAD THINGS THAT ARE HAPPENING! BUT DON’T WORRY, CHRISTIAN, you will be raptured out before the doom days of the ANTI-CHRIST take place!”

OF COURSE, along with these pontifications there comes the latest crop of surefire identifications of the ANTICHRIST; and the identifying of just what is the MARK OF THE BEAST! [Among the present contenders would be people like Bill Gates or some political leftist; and then, the actual mark, SOME are suggesting, JUST MIGHT BE taking a Covid 19 vaccine shot!]

GEE... I have already lived through COUNTLESS claims of the sure identity of the Anti-Christ— ONE was Ronald (6) Wilson (6) Reagan (6)... BOOM, 666! [Please understand: I am not mocking or making fun. I AM SIMPLY REPORTING. BUT REST ASSURED— the matters at hand are SERIOUS.

BUT WOW: MOST ALL OF THE MANY FOLK who, since about 1969, have assured me, again and again, that the Pre-tribulation Rapture could not be more than 6-10 years away— (OR closer because, they said... it could take place at any moment!) — WELL, MOST OF THEM MISSED THE PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE! They died too soon!

INDEED: ALL THE CHRISTIANS of the first twenty centuries have also MISSED the pre-tribulation rapture. [Remember, the precious saints who teach this doctrine... also teach that the

rapture is always IMMINENT... so, it could have taken place ... it may take place at any moment!]

[To a great extent, it was the SCOIFIELD BIBLE NOTES that helped to make the pre-tribulation doctrine wide-spread and popular.] — THUS, since those days, multitudes of Christians were given hope of escape! HOWEVER, DURING THAT SAME PERIOD OF TIME, multitudes were mercilessly tortured and martyred. NOT A FEW SUCH ONES and their families and fellow believers FELT betrayed.

MOREOVER, CONSIDER THIS:

THE MILLIONS of Christians who have SUFFERED, and WERE PERSECUTED, and/or were MARTYRED UP TO THIS VERY DAY— THIS was all ACCOMPLISHED by the same ‘ANTI-CHRIST’ SYSTEM spoken of in Revelation 13— just an earlier version!

THE LONG STANDING ‘ANTI-CHRIST SYSTEM: Professing Christians, *be they those who were deceived by some of the many anti-christs in the Epistle of First John era; or multitudes deceived by or yielded to anti-christ forces since then— **THEY WERE ALL FIRST MARKED IN THE SECRETS OF THEIR HEARTS before they took outward actions which exposed them. Those spoken of in Revelation will FIRST BE ‘MARKED’ IN their hearts before being marked on their hands or foreheads!***

GREAT, DEADLY TRAGEDY:

Many are curious and interested in various end time prophecy theories; and in speculations about NON REVEALED details about the end time Anti-Christ and the end time Mark of the Beast— while at the same time they are carelessly, blindly BEING MARKED DEEP IN THEIR SOULS WITH PORNOGRAPHY, OR gluttony, OR hate/bitterness, etc.

AND CONSIDER THIS: THE VERY LAST generation of SAINTS IN CHRIST, [Whose NAMES ARE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE OF THE LAMB, Rev. 13:8], MANY OF WHOM WILL BE martyred at the hands of the final expression of the anti-Christ system— **what these saints WILL suffer is not revealed to be any different than that which SAINTS IN CHRIST have often suffered from Able at the hands of Cain to this very hour.**

MOREOVER, THE ULTIMATE ENDTIME EXPRESSION OF THE ANTICHRIST and his crowd **ARE NOT THE FIRST to prohibit Christians from buying and selling; or of marking them in some way; and/or torturing and mercilessly killing masses of Christians!**

REST ASSURED: WHEN THE ULTIMATE days of Revelation 13 come, the False Prophet will cause everyone, regardless of social or economic status, to choose whether to receive a mark on the right hand and on the forehead:

1. **Revelation 14:9-11 reveals that** those who accept this mark are identifying themselves with Satan, and rejecting God.
2. Revelation 20:4, in contrast, explains that true believers are those who have refused this mark, and many will be martyred as a result. They refuse the mark of the beast because they are **MARKED** by the indwelling Holy Spirit... the voice of a false 'shepherd' they will not follow!

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE EXACT NATURE OF THE MARK OF THE BEAST?

IN ONE SENSE, THE BIBLE itself gives very little detail about the nature of the mark of the beast... **THUS, we will not speculate. Don't waste your time with those who do speculate. RATHER FOCUS ON NOT being MARKED DEEP IN YOUR**

SOULS with the works of the flesh, Galatians 5:19-21; but instead, be overflowing with the fruit of the Holy Spirit, Galatians 5:22-25!

MOREOVER, we can be sure that,

1. The Mark of the Beast will NOT BE DISGUISED.

2. NO ONE whose name is in the LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE, REDEEMED BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS— NONE OF THESE WILL TAKE THE MARK OF THE BEAST BY ACCIDENT!

3. BECAUSE, OTHER verses make it clear that the act of taking the mark of the beast is intimately connected to offering worship and loyalty to the Antichrist.

4. AND THOSE whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life LOVE JESUS, because HE FIRST LOVED THEM; and they will NOT DENY THEIR LORD and SAVIOUR!

REMEMBER... TODAY AS ALWAYS:

THE ULTIMATE ISSUE IS— WHO do I worship? THOSE REDEEMED BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB, FOLLOW THE LAMB; AND HE LOSES NONE OF HIS SHEEP! ***CHEER UP YE SAINTS OF GOD! STAY CLOSE TO THE LAMB AND WORRY ABOUT NOTHING!***

AND, REMEMBER: Revelation 13 is not the last chapter!

YES, FOR THE LAST 2000 YEARS CHRISTIANS HAVE EXPERIENCED, PERSECUTION, TRIBULATION, and MARTYRDOM. ***I expect that many of them FELT LIKE they were living in the climatic fulfillment of Revelation 13...*** HOWEVER, AS THOSE WHO first read the REVELATION... and multitudes of suffering saints who

have read it since discovered: **Revelation 14 and 15 finishes what Revelation 13 stated!!**

1. Revelation 13— suffering, hated, persecuted, martyred saints of the last 2000 years have looked utterly FOOLISH... EVEN AS future ones will! HOWEVER,

2. Revelation 14 and 15 reveal that those who looked so smart and wise as they took the MARK of the beast AND got their stomachs filled— they are now being TORMENTED AS they 'drink of the wine of the wrath of God; and are tormented in fire and brimstone, in the presence of the LAMB— forever, and forever!

3. AND AT THE SAME TIME, THOSE WHO FOLLOWED JESUS... EVEN TO DEATH— are for eternity WITH THE LORD... worshiping... serving... having NO REGRETS!

A HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION: WRITTEN IN 1974:

Most CHRISTIANS IN AMERICA have little knowledge of what is already going on across the world. I have been in countries where the saints are already suffering terrible persecution. In China, the Christians were told, "Don't worry, before the tribulation comes you will be translated - raptured." Then came a terrible persecution. **Millions of Christians were tortured to death.** Later I heard a Bishop from China say, sadly,

"We have failed. We should have made the people strong for persecution rather than telling them Jesus would come first. Tell the people how to be strong in times of persecution, how to stand when the tribulation comes - to stand and not faint."

In America, the churches sing, "Let the congregation escape tribulation!", but This last year alone (1973) **more than two hundred thousand Christians were martyred in Africa.**

Several years ago I was in Africa in a nation where a new government had come into power. **The first night** I was there some of the Christians were commanded to come to the police station to register. When they arrived they were arrested and that same night they were executed. **The next day** the same thing happened with other Christians. **The third day** it was the same. All the Christians in the district were being systematically murdered.

The fourth day I was to speak in a little church. The people came, but they were filled with fear and tension. All during the service they were looking at each other, their eyes asking, "**Will this one I am sitting beside be the next one killed? Will I be the next one?**" The room was hot and stuffy with insects that came through the screenless windows and swirled around the naked bulbs over the bare wooden benches.

I told them a story out of my childhood. "**When I was a little girl, I said, I went to my father and said,** "Daddy, I am afraid that I will never be strong enough to be a martyr for Jesus Christ." "Tell me," said Father, "When you take a train trip to Amsterdam, when do I give you the money for the ticket? Three weeks before?" "No, Daddy, you give me the money for the ticket just before we get on the train."

"That is right," my father said, "and so it is with God's strength. Our Father in Heaven knows when you will need the strength to be a martyr for Jesus Christ. **JESUS will supply all you need - just in time!**"

My African friends were nodding and smiling. Suddenly a spirit of joy descended upon that church and the people began singing, ***"In the sweet, by and by, we shall meet on that beautiful shore."***

Later that week, half the congregation of that church was executed. I heard later that the other half was killed some months ago.

But I must tell you something. I was so happy that the Lord used me to encourage these people, for unlike many of their leaders, I had the word of God. ***I had been to the Bible and discovered that Jesus said He had not only overcome the world, but to all those who remained faithful to the end, He would give a crown of life— Revelation 2:10!***

For seventy-six years I have known the Lord Jesus and not once has He ever left me, or let me down. Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him, for ***I know that to all who overcome, He shall give the crown of life! Hallelujah!*** - (Edited from Corrie Ten Boom, 1974)

FINAL WORD: **IF YOU** ARE NOT YET IN CHRIST... **IF YOU** HAVE NEVER FACED YOUR SIN and THE JUST WRATH OF GOD; **IF YOU HAVE NEVER FACED** YOUR NEED OF JESUS AS LORD AND SAVIOUR— FLEE TO CHRIST! **(Please click on the following....**

<https://www.monergism.com/coming-faith-christ>

May grace abound to one and all!

James Bell / www.southsidegallatin.org

NEWS NOTES:

EVERY Saturday, * 8:00am — Men’s Bible Study: *THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS, Chapter 11!*** (*Doors open by 7:30am... coffee, juice, donuts, and Hardee’s Biscuits are available!*)

***** NEXT Ladies Bible Study— Tuesday, March 23, 11:00am: Women of the Bible!**

[Study- First Kings 17:8-24: “An Unnamed Widow!]

SUNDAY, MARCH 21, 28

***** Sunday School at 9:30am:** Nursery, Children’s, Youth, and Adult classes.

***** WORSHIP SERVICE at 10:45am!**

Additional Sunday Events

1. March 21, LORD’S SUPPER, at end of Morning Worship; and HOME GROUPS, in the evening.

2. March 28, 5:00pm - **6:00pm- Church Wide DISCIPLESHIP... Dealing with Difficult Problems, videos by R.C. Sproul**

TUESDAYS: WEEKLY Youth Group Meeting, ages 12 and up ... Tuesdays a 7:15pm... at Jaden and Rhi’s home...

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS @ SOUTHSIDE: 6:30pm— Come in by the back ‘double doors’ under the Drive Thru awning! * Adult Prayer Service ** Young FAMILIES Prayer Service

***** HEALTH REMINDERS as to CHURCH SERVICES**

1. IF YOU ARE SICK... [OR if you are presently in a state of high immune deficiency **or if** (at home or work) you are caring for one

who is sick; **or if** you have • **Fever;** • Coughing; • • Chills; • Headache; • Sore throat; etc.], **please stay home!]**

2. IF YOU ARE HEALTHY and well... **you may or may not choose to wear a mask... or gloves... WE do not require; we WILL NOT provide such. WE CONTINUE to encourage FREEDOM... as to ‘social distancing’—** give sensitivity and respect one to another.

NOTE: In addition to carefulness, good hydration, good nutrition, and sleep— ALSO: so as to SEEK TO HAVE A STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM... I PERSONALLY TAKE ELDERBERRY, VITAMIN C, ZINC, GINGER, VITIMIN D, Quercetin, and a good multi-vitamin that includes fiber.

LET each of us DO OUR PART IN personal hygiene. ***IF you use the restrooms— please wash your hands with SOAP; and use nearby SANITIZER.***

***** FOR THOSE AT HOME: TO RECEIVE LIVE STREAMING FOR MARCH 21 OR to connect with our YouTube page,**

GO TO: www.southsidegallatin.org

******LOVE OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD BY MAIL or ONLINE GIVING: SUCH funds, (if checks), make out to Southside Baptist) —**

MAIL TO: Southside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1594, Gallatin, TN 37066

OR, you may choose to GIVE, via ONLINE GIVING:

<https://southsidebaptist.breezechms.com/give/online>

IT IS A MATTER OF SAFETY for all: NO UNSUPERVISED CHILDREN ANY WHERE IN THE CHURCH BUILDING!