

DISCOVER PROPHECY



Beyond the Terror

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Living in Terror

So many today are worried about what may or may not take place in the new millennium. They think of all the possible things that can happen.

Daily it seems we hear about natural disasters escalating and causing turmoil to millions. Earthquakes and the “Big One” is just ahead. Volcanoes erupting throughout the world. Floods, Hurricanes and more.

The stock market seems to be running a roller coaster and many wonder if it will crash in the future bringing economic turmoil.

Countries throughout the world are struggling with economics, political instability, arsenal storage and fear. Many fear that a country with no hope may attempt an invasion.

Children abducted from homes, random shootings, war in Iraq, possible war with Iran, threat of terrorism, poor health and financial uncertainty worry us.

If Jesus doesn’t come before long, how is it that we can make it beyond the next few years with a peace and hope within us? Knowing that we have salvation and peace with God provides that assurance.

God’s Law the Standard

How do we get to heaven or experience salvation? We know that salvation is available, but what is the measure of salvation? What must I do to be saved? First, let’s look at the standard of salvation.

“And I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the level” Isaiah 28:17. The Bible says that righteousness is the standard by which we shall be measured. “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all...So speak and so act, as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty” James 2:10,12.

If God’s law is the measure of righteousness and yet breaking just one of these laws is as if we broke them all, this makes us wonder whether God’s law is indeed a law of liberty or a law of restriction.

“The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good” Romans 7:12. “The law of the Lord is perfect” Psalm 19:7.

God’s standard of righteousness is perfection. The law that God has set up is also perfect. If we want

salvation, we must be perfect. In order to be perfect to receive that salvation, we must faithfully keep the law of God.

“Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” Matthew 5:48. “He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him” Ephesians 1:4.

In order to receive salvation, one must be perfect and righteous. God’s standard of righteousness is the ability to keep His law. So, those who are perfect, faithfully keeping his law without breaking it, will inherit eternal life.

“But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does” James 1:25. “Nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall come into it [Heaven]” Revelation 21:27.

So heaven is a perfect place for perfect people. How many of us then will be able to get there? It doesn’t sound like too many of us does it? Well, there is another way. A better way. You can get to heaven by perfection, but chances are, you won’t make it that way.

All Imperfect

“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me” Psalm 51:5. Right from the start, then, we are all destined to failure in righteousness. At birth, the cards are stacked up against us, we won’t be able to achieve that perfection required for salvation.

The Bible says that it was because of the sin of Adam that we are destined to a sinful failure. “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned” Romans 5:12. Because of the fall of Adam and Eve, sin entered within the genetic code of mankind, making each of our destinies to end in a sinful failure.

“The things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, slanders” Matthew 15:18-19.

If then Adam caused a sinful heart to be developed within mankind and all of us have that heart that is naturally drawn to sin, how many of us will make it to

heaven by our keeping the law of God?

“There is none righteous, not even one...all have turned aside, together they have become useless, there is none who does good, there is not even one” Romans 3:10,12. No one, not even one of us can attain righteousness by keeping the law of God. Though the law of God IS the standard and measuring rod by which righteousness is noted, none of us can measure up. Even if we attempt to keep God’s law, there has been a great deal of sin in our past. And the manner by which we keep His law today, doesn’t measure up either. “For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like filthy garments” Isaiah 61:6.

Well then, that excludes pretty much all of us now, doesn’t it? If God wants us in heaven, He’s going to have to provide another plan to get us there.

A Plan of Salvation

Praise the Lord, there is a plan of salvation. A plan that is attainable. That will actually allow each and every one of us to receive salvation. Does God then change the law or change His measure of righteousness? Does He say that the law is not so good or maybe too good and say that its no longer important?

Shortly after Adam’s sin, a plan was put into place. There in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were given the freedom of choice. God had instructed them that they may eat fruit from any tree in the garden, but of one specific tree they may not eat. Using their power of choice, Adam and Eve ate from the tree, thus causing a separation from God. Thus putting us all into the same deprived state of being we call sinfulness.

Shortly after that, God instituted the plan of salvation. The first biblical record of this is found in Genesis 3:15, “And I will put enmity,” God said to the serpent, “between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise Him on the heel.” Here God spoke of the first coming of Jesus. Jesus would come in the form of man by coming from the seed of Eve. This Savior would be wounded in the heel, but he would crush the plans of the serpent, we know as Satan, with a blow to the head.

Just as predicted, years later, Jesus came to a small town called Bethlehem as a baby in a manger. Jesus came and lived the holy life that we can’t live so that He would pay the debt that we can’t pay so that we could have the life that He deserved.

Peter says it this way, “Since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His

steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth” 1 Peter 2:21,22.

We know that the standard of righteousness is keeping the law of God. God, knowing full well that we all fall short of that standard, sent His son, Jesus Christ to keep that law as an example. Jesus kept that law. He showed in His life how to keep the law of God. Thus, deserving eternal life. “I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.” John 15:10

The Old Testament Sanctuary

Now before we move on, let me explain to you briefly the testimony of salvation offered in the Old Testament.

The plan of salvation was displayed through the sanctuary services. When an individual sinned, he would come to the sanctuary with a lamb. Once there, he would confess his sin over the lamb and kill the lamb. That lamb would then be offered in flames after its blood was sprinkled within the sanctuary walls.

The person would be then considered righteous once again. Since the wages of sin is death, one had to pay the price for sin. “The wages of sin is death” Romans 6:23. The guiltless lamb paid the price and by faith, the person was considered righteous before God once again.

Jesus Christ is that lamb. Being guiltless, He paid the price of sin in our behalf. “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” 2 Corinthians 5:21. We too, then can receive forgiveness and be considered righteous before God. Complete. As if we had never sinned. “And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ” Colossians 1:28.

Praise the Lord, where once we were considered lost and hopeless because we couldn’t reach the standard of righteousness, we can now be considered righteous and when we are present before God, we are as complete, without any condemnation what-so-ever. “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” Romans 8:1. The question is how do we receive it?

Steps to Christ

When we start talking about people receiving Christ and experiencing salvation, people often ask me, “Pastor Tim, can I really know if I have received salvation?” What they are asking is two things: Can we have assurance of salvation and what is the means

of salvation?

To answer the first, yes, we can know without a doubt that we have salvation. The Bible tells us plainly that it is God's desire for us to know we are saved. "These things have been written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life" 1 John 5:13. Yes, friends, we can know. If we follow the Bible's simple steps to Christ, we can have assurance of salvation.

Step One: Accept Jesus. "He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son does not have the life" 1 John 5:12. The first step in receiving Christ and experiencing the assurance of salvation is to accept Jesus Christ. Accept Him as Savior, accept Him as Lord in your life. Accept Him as your best friend. This step is tough for some, but quite necessary.

Step two: Believe in Jesus. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, you and your household" Acts 16:31. This is to believe not only that Jesus was a man alive that lived 2000 years ago, but more importantly that He is the Son of God. That He came to die on Calvary's cross to take your place of death. That He is alive in Heaven seeking to do whatever is necessary to get you there.

Step Three: Confess to Jesus. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" 1 John 1:9. Just as a man would have to confess his sins over the lamb before the sanctuary in order to receive forgiveness, so we must also confess our sins before the presence of God. When we do this, whatever sins they might be, our Heavenly Father will forgive us our sins.

Step Four: Decision for Jesus. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him and he with Me" Revelation 3:20. We must then make the choice, will we open the door of our heart and let Him in or not. He is knocking at our heart's door. He's knocking at your heart's door. Will you open up to Him?

God is trying to reach you. He has been trying for a long time now. I think it's no mistake that you came to this series. God has brought you here. Will you receive Him?

