



“And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.” 1 John 4: 21

Sunday – April 30, 2017

Heart to Heart...

The teaching of the Rapture fills many of the airwaves on radio and television. You may have seen bumper stickers stating: *“In case of Rapture this car will be unmanned.”* People speak of the coming of the antichrist and watching for him. Others speak of the mark of the beast tying all this to the Rapture teaching. There are those who refuse to use credit or debit cards because they believe they are linked to the antichrist. All these teachings are linked in one way or another to a doctrine called “Premillennialism.” The majority of denominations teach this doctrine.

In this doctrine of “Premillennialism” people tie together the present-day events of the Middle East as signs of the Rapture event. The Rapture teaching states that soon a secret event will soon occur on earth and all the faithful will be called away to the Lord taken from this world. The rest of the people will be left behind for a seven-year period during which the evil ruler of this world, the antichrist, will arise. During this time, those remaining on earth will endure the most intense suffering ever known to mankind called “The Great Tribulation.” At the end of the seven year period, the Lord will return to this earth to defeat the antichrist in what they call the Battle of Armageddon and set up a kingdom in Jerusalem where Jesus will reign for a thousand years.

Let’s put this up to Scripture. Being honest with God’s word is vital. There are verses taken from here and there and made into this doctrine. First, many antichrists had already appeared in the first century (I John 2:18)! The “Premillennialism” doctrine teaches people to look for the antichrist to come. Second, there is not going to be a ‘rapturing’ out of this present world with the faithful leaving the world full of sin and evil. When the Lord returns, He is going to take up the faithful with Him (I Thessalonians 4:14-18), but the Lord will never set foot on this earth again setting up an earthly rule (I Thessalonians 5:17). The kingdom of God already exists on this earth presently and upon His return, Jesus will hand over the kingdom already here back to God who gave it to Him (I Corinthians 15:23-24). What will happen to this present heaven and earth and the ungodly upon the return of Jesus? The present heaven and earth as we know it are being reserved for fire and the destruction of the ungodly (II Peter 3:5-7).

Many of these teachings come from the book of Revelation which is one of the most distorted books among religions. Revelation is completed except for one part: the return of Jesus to deal with the devil (Revelation 20:10-15). The rest is done and over (Revelation 1:1-3; 22:6-10). Just look carefully at the words 'soon' and 'the time is near.' That's not speaking 2000 years into the future! Revelation was written to the 7 churches in the first century. They would be in the middle of all the things "soon" to take place. Paul told the church at Ephesus: ***"As a result we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming."*** (Ephesians 4:14) Don't allow a verse here and there to make doctrinal stands. Look at the context and in your reading, seek and love the truth with all your heart. God will make certain you find it! Think about it!!!

Brent