Christian Life December 18

Waiting on the Lord

 We, Christians have been waiting centuries for Christ second return, Paul was quite sure that he or at least some of those he was teaching would still be alive – we who are still alive on the date the Lord comes... 1 Thessalonians 4:15b. But Paul goes on to say it doesn't matter, if you're alive or dead on his return – Those who had died believing in Christ will rise to life first; then we who are living at that time will be gathered up along with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. 1 Thessalonians 4:16c, 17a.

 We have been waiting a long time, but this is no time to give up – because we can trust God to keep his promise. Hebrews 10:23b. That is the promise that he will return also – Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage one another all the more, that you see the Day of the Lord is coming nearer. Hebrews 10:25.

 As we wait on the Lord, we must not sin purposely – For there is no longer any sacrifice will take away sins if we purposely go on sinning after the truth has been made known to us. Hebrews 10:26. Instead of sinning – Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good. Hebrews 10:24.

 The wait has been long, but it will be worth it, to see the Lord face to face and to live eternally with him in heaven, don’t become discouraged but encouraged through God's love and strength.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Instead, all that is left is to wait in fear for the coming Judgment and the fierce fire which will destroy those who oppose God! Hebrews 10:27.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to wait patiently, in these last days, for your promised return.

Christian Life December 19

Be Prepared

 Our lives are made up of becoming prepared, we send our children to school to prepare them for secular life, we prepare meals, worksheets, briefs but many times are unprepared for what we know is going to take place, the weekly garbage pickup or some deliveries, even though we know they're going to take place.

 We know the Lord is coming again – “….There are many rooms in my Father's house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so. 3And after I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that you will be where I am…” John 14:2, 3.

 The Lord at this very moment is preparing a place for us; we need to be in constant preparation of our soul when he comes to collect his own we will be among those that he will take with him.

 The best way to prepare ourselves for the Lord's coming is to study the manual for preparation the Bible!

 The Jewish people in Christ they had a Day of Preparation – It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath) Mark 15:42b. TODAY is our preparation day in this life, a sobering thought!

VERSE FOR TODAY: It is at night that people sleep; it is at night that they get drunk. But we belong to the day, and we should be sober. We must wear faith and love as a breastplate, and our hope of salvation as a helmet.1 Thessalonians 5:7, 8.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to prepare and be prepared so that I will be ready to stand before you as pure and blameless as humanly possible.

Christian Life December 20

Tribulation

 In recent years the teaching has been that the Church will be raptured before the Tribulation and that is good because the Tribulation is a step beyond ordinary suffering – “…For the trouble at that time will be far more terrible than any there has ever been, from the beginning of the world to this very day. Nor will there ever be anything like it again...” Matthew 24:21.

 Tribulation of such a terrible degree will be a sign of the end of times –  “Soon after the trouble of those days, the sun will grow dark, the moon will no longer shine, the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers in space will be driven from their courses. 30Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky;…”Matthew 24:29, 30a.

 A wonderful promise of the Lord for the end times was given to the prophet Habakkuk – And this is the message: ‘Those who are evil will not survive, but those who are righteous will live because they are faithful to God.’ ”Habakkuk 2:4.

 When tribulation comes, depend on the Lord as a steadfast in your faith even unto death because it will be rewarded – He said to me, “These are the people who have come safely through the terrible persecution. They have washed their robes and made them white with the blood of the Lamb…” Revelation 7:14b.

 If we are washed in the blood of the Lamb and have remain steadfast in our faith we will be saved in spite of the tribulation. Pray and be strong during these end times.

VERSE FOR TODAY: In view of this, what can we say? If God is for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31.

PRAYER THOUGHT: If not raptured, help me to endure the tribulation and remain faithful to you O Lord.

False Prophets December 21

We will Know it's Jesus!

 Our world is full of cults and religions that profess other than Jesus or others besides Jesus or even ones that think they are Jesus.

 Peter, Paul and John taught about false teachers – Paul tells Timothy – The Spirit says clearly that some people will abandon the faith and later times; they will obey lying spirits and follow teachings of demons. 1Timothy 4:1

Peter says – False prophets appeared in the past among the people, and in the same way false teachers will appear among you. They will bring in destructive, untrue doctrines, and will deny the Master who redeemed them, and so they will bring upon themselves sudden destruction. 2 Peter 2:1.

 John relates – My children, the end is near! You were told that the Enemy of Christ would come; and now many enemies of Christ have already appeared, and so we know that the end is near. 1 John 2:18.

 We have false prophets, and demon worshipers, we must be careful not to be taken in, sometimes that is hard, Jimmy Jones started out as a regular preacher, got a taste of power and went off the deep end, killing and finally killing himself and for what?

 There will be no mistake when the Lord appears – There will be the shout of command, the archangel's voice, the sound of God's trumpet, and the Lord himself will come down from heaven. 1 Thessalonians 4:16a.

VERSE FOR TODAY: “….Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky;…”

 Matthew 24:30a.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me never to stray from the faith and to wait upon your return and not to be taken in by false teachers were teachings.

Salvation December 22

The Final Judgment

 When Christ does return there will be a final judgment –“… and the people of all the nations will be gathered before him. Then he will divide them into two groups, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.  He will put the righteous people on his right and the others on his left…. These, then, will be sent off to eternal punishment, but the righteous will go to eternal life.” Matthew 25:32, 33, 46.

 It seems quite awesome to think about a judgment of all the people on the earth, just counting those that are alive at this time, which went over 7 billion people in 2011. This would be quite a gathering but that shows the finite mind of man, and infinite possibilities with God. We don't know exactly what God's plan is, how judgment will be programmed, but rest assured God does.

 We do know that we will stand judgment – All of us will stand before God to be judged by him. Every one of us, then, will have to give account of himself to God. Romans 14:10c, 12.

 In recent years there's been a new view of this judgment, for those who are Christians it is not a matter of heaven or hell but of placement in the heavenly realm, but for those who are not Christians will be sorted out and will face eternal damnation it is scary. If you love the Lord, seek forgiveness for sins and are faithful, we needn't worry about judgment – pray!

VERSE FOR TODAY: For he has fixed a day in which he will judge the whole world with justice by means of a man he has chosen. Acts 17:31a.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I live my life, ever mindful, that I will have to be accountable to God for my thoughts, words and deeds, help me to live accordingly.

Salvation December 23

Old World/New World

 Jesus second coming will be the end of the world as we know it now – But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. On that day the heavens will disappear with a shrill noise, and the heavenly bodies will burn up and be destroyed, and the earth and everything in it will vanish. 2 Peter 3:10.

 But those of us who believe have something to look forward to – But we wait for what God has promised: new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness will be at home. 2 Peter 3:13. Wouldn't it be wonderful to live in a world where righteousness was at home instead of evil and sinfulness?

 As we have said before we can depend on the promises that God makes – Then the one who sits on the throne said, "And now I make all things new!" He also said to me, "Write this, because these words are true and can be trusted." Revelation 21:5.

 Righteous Children of God, we have many wonderful things to look forward to, do not give up hope remain steadfast in your hope that all things God has promised will come true. God always keeps his promises. If we are raptured as we believe we will be, then we will return with Jesus when he returns – The armies of heaven followed him, riding on white horses and dressed in clean white linen. Revelation 19:14. There is reason to believe that these armies will be the raptured Christians.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth disappeared, and the sea vanished. Revelation 21:1.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May my faith in your promises keep the patient for the day of your return and the establishment of a new heaven and earth.

New Life – Knowing December 24

We ARE Saved

 The question is; How do I know I have eternal life? In the first letter that John wrote, he gives us the answer – I am writing this to you so that you may know you have eternal life – you that believe in the Son of God. The testimony is this: God has given us eternal life, and this life and its source in his Son. Whoever has the Son has this life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. 1 John 5:13, 11, 12. If you believe in Jesus with your heart, not just head knowledge but also heart knowledge, you can KNOW you have eternal life.

 With this knowledge – We have courage in God's presence, because we are sure that he hears us if we ask you for anything that is according to his will. 1John 5:14.

 These verses, for a Christian, should be very reassuring and bring peace, to know we have eternal life and that we can come into the presence of God in prayer and ask for anything and he will answer according to his will. He knows what is best for us we should rely upon his direction.

VERSE FOR TODAY: We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we know the true God. We live in union with the true God – in union with his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and this is eternal life. 1 John 5:20.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Praise you, O Lord, for giving me this knowledge of salvation. Thank you, O Lord for always being there.

Christmas December 25

Happy Birthday Jesus

 What we need to strive for today is Christmas with the true spirit intended, Jesus was born to bring peace, love and hope into the world, not just an excuse to buy roller skates, dolls and other expensive gifts. We need to remember it is Jesus birthday and give our gifts to one another in the true spirit intended, for – remembering the words that the Lord Jesus himself said, ‘There is more happiness in giving than in receiving.’ ” Acts 20:35b.

 It is hard today to get into the spirit of Christmas, with all the commercialization of Christmas. Everything is bought, years ago when popcorn, paper and cranberry chains were made to decorate the tree. Family spent many hours together preparing to decorate.

 Remember God gave us his Son, his ONLY Son, Christ, our gifts to one another can never match that and are never expected to, all God wants us to do is to remember the reason for Christmas, to celebrate the birth of Jesus, to spread joy and love in our little corner of the world.

 There had to be a Christmas, a birth, in order for there to be an Easter, a death, a sacrifice for our sins and the resurrection to eternal life.

 This Christmas put your hands and money but most of all put your heart into Christmas.

FIRST FOR TODAY: This very day in David's town your Savior was born Christ the Lord! Luke 2:11.

PRAYER THOUGHT: O Lord, help this Christmas to be the best yet because my heart is in the right spirit of care and love.