

Waiting in Hope Causes Confusion

Introduction and Review

- Last week we considered the tension of waiting for Jesus Christ to return.
- Because He has promised to return, believers desire to know when (Jn. 14:1-3; Mt. 24:3, 36-46) – TENSION.
- God knows a believer's desire to know/understand more (Deut. 29:29; Dan. 12:8-9; Jn. 21:20-22).
- The desire to know more about the future has caused great CONFUSION [When/What]!

I. Major Areas of Confusion

A. Views regarding time

- *Dispensationalism* – there are specific eras or dispensations where God deals with people in a distinct way [Israel/Church].
- *Futurist* – most of book of Revelation & NT prophecies are yet to be fulfilled.
- *Preterist* – biblical prophecies (including book of Revelation) have already been fulfilled [primarily in 1st century AD].
- *Historicist* – the book of Revelation describes literal & chronological events in church/Christian history.

B. Views regarding the rapture of believers

Rapture – the ascension of saints at the resurrection (1Th. 4:16-17). The great tribulation is a period of unprecedented punishment from God on unbelievers (Mt. 24:21-30).

- *Pretribulation* – the church will be raptured and taken up to heaven before the great tribulation (1Th. 1:10; Rev. 3:10).
- *Midtribulation* – the church will be raptured and taken up to heaven in the middle of the great tribulation (Dan. 7:25; 9:24-27).
- *Posttribulation* – the church will go through the great tribulation (like Israel in Egypt) & then be raptured up to heaven (1Th. 4:15; Mt. 24:22).

C. Views regarding the Millennium

Millennium – 1,000 year period ONLY mentioned in Rev. 20:1-6.

- *Amillennialism* – there is no literal 1,000 year reign of Christ following His second coming (1,000 is allegorical – Ps. 50:10; 2Pe. 3:8).
- *Postmillennialism* – the present age will gradually change into the millennial age as the majority of unbelievers are converted (Rom. 11:25-26).
- *Historic Premillennialism* – a posttribulational view that is followed by a literal millennium period.
- *Dispensational Premillennialism* – rapture of church, great tribulation, Christ return & literal millennium.

Desiring to better understand eschatology, believers caused great CONFUSION.

II. Major Areas of Confidence

A. God is truthful

God is not the source or cause of any confusion for the believer (1Co. 14:33). God is the source of truth & every word that He speaks/reveals is true (Ps.

119:160). The Father is the “God of truth” (Is. 65:16), Jesus is “the way, and the truth, and the life” (Jn. 14:6), and the Holy Spirit is the “Spirit of truth” (Jn. 14:16-17). Every prophecy & promise is true (Heb. 6:18).

B. God is faithful

The bible is replete in revealing that God is faithful (Deut. 7:9; 32:4; Is. 49:7; 1Co. 1:9; 10:13; 2Co. 1:18; 1Th. 5:24; 2Th. 3:3; 1Jn. 1:9). Faithful means absolutely reliable, dependable & trustworthy. God is absolutely reliable, dependable & trustworthy to fulfill every prophecy & promise that He has made whether we understand it before hand or not.

God’s truthfulness & faithfulness to the believer causes great CONFIDENCE.