

The New Testament Church  
*Last Things #7 – Birthing the Kingdom*  
 Pastor Paul Jehle – November 7, 2021

### I The Doctrine of Last Things – Eschatology

- A. Christ will return in bodily form; be prepared if He comes today or **occupy** until He returns
- B. The Return of Christ is not a rescue mission but a culmination of the **maturity** of the Church
- C. The “two stage return” is **first the Jew (70 AD); and then the Gentile (Last Day Judgment)**
- D. We’re marked as **Kings and Priests**, but the mark of the beast is tyranny in State and Church
- E. The Parousia (return) is a **face to face** encounter that coincides with us being in His image
- F. The Church increasingly **overcomes** the world, flesh and devil as it becomes a **bride and city**

### II Birth-pangs of Kingdom manifestation and the Return of Christ – Romans 8:18-23

- A. “... *the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory...*” – v. 18
  - 1. Suffering and glory are linked in Scripture – the glory (weight) of God is the goal
  - 2. The glory is the nature of Christ revealed in us – it can’t come out without some suffering!
- B. “... *for the earnest expectation of creation... awaits the revealing of the sons of God.*” – v. 19-21
  - 1. The Creation was subjected to the curse of sin, not willingly, but by disobedience
  - 2. When Christ returns, the full manifestation of the children of God will liberate nature!
- C. “... *for we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs.*” – v. 22-23
  - 1. The whole creation is going through birth-pangs – the “pain of squeezing”
  - 2. We either hear the call of God and volunteer, or at times we are squeezed and thrust into it

### III Nature and spheres of Suffering

- A. In general, sin is the cause of **suffering**, but *individual sin* may not be the cause of your suffering
- B. **Spiritual** suffering – Matthew 5:10-12
  - 1. Spiritual pressure; God delivers from suffering, in suffering or through suffering
    - a. Persecuted for *righteousness* sake; *falsely accused*
    - b. Martyrdom – *overcoming the enemy through death* – from it, in it, through it
  - 2. Burdens in the spirit – salvation for loved ones, those who stray, your own family
- C. **Mental** suffering – 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:12 – *all who desire to live godly will suffer persecution*
  - 1. Godliness comes at a cost – rational reasons to compromise
  - 2. Mental illness – struggle due to chemical imbalances (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:22-26)
- D. **Physical** suffering – Hebrews 11:35b; Revelation 12:11
  - 1. Long-term illness, handicaps, etc.
  - 2. Pain of all kinds, especially for the faith, “loving not their lives unto the death”

### IV God’s Purpose for Suffering

- A. Humility – James 4:6-10
  - 1. We all tend to think we are higher than we are
  - 2. Suffering allows us to realize our **limitations**
- B. Reveal His Glory – 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 10:31 – *do all for the glory of God* (His credit, His will)
  - 1. Part of His glory is to be **compassionate** – we can relate to others
  - 2. We separate priorities from those things not as important
- C. Birthing His Kingdom – the pains of child-birth – Romans 5:3-5 – to **persevere** individually
  - 1. Family – *cultivating community to care for one another in our suffering*
  - 2. Church – *a covenant community where relationships of caring and love are paramount*
  - 3. Community – *we help the helpless – true Christianity* – James 1:27
  - 4. The “birth-pangs” are in the Church with the purpose of manifesting Christ’s reign!

## SCRIPTURE VERSES

### **Matthew 5:10-12**

*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:12**

*Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*

### **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:22-26**

*No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.*

### **James 4:6-10**

*But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up.*

### **Romans 5:3-5**

*And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*