

# DAILY DOSE OF DOCTRINE

September 22-26, 2008



(This concludes the 2007-2008 first edition of Daily Dose of Doctrine which has been produced in a weekly, 5-day format. I hope to begin sharing the 2008-2009 edition in an expanded monthly format in the near future. – Don McCallum)

Sept. 22, 2008

## Before his Coming

*“The man of lawlessness will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God.”<sup>1</sup>*

### 4. *The Antichrist*

In the last days a pseudo-christ will arise. Performing signs and wonders, he will oppose the Kingdom of God and will attempt to supplant allegiance to Christ. Many who fall away will support him and his persecution of God’s people during the Tribulation period. Aided by his ‘Prophet’, he will even appear to die and rise again. For a season, the Antichrist will lead all who are opposed to the righteousness and the rule of God. While some interpret ‘antichrist’ to refer to political systems or principles of evil, the Bible speaks of the antichrist also in personal terms

### 5. *Signs and Wonders*

Finally, the coming of Christ will be preceded by an intense period of supernatural events including...

- wars and rumours of wars, famines, earthquakes
- false prophets and false messiahs, performing miracles and leading many astray
- frightening portents involving the sun, moon and stars<sup>2</sup>.

*“Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door’.”<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Thessalonians 2:4 (TNIV)

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 24:29-30; Mark 13:24-25; Luke 21:25-26

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 24:33 (TNIV)

Sept. 23, 2008

## The Second Coming

*"At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the peoples of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory."<sup>1</sup>*

While the aforementioned events precede the return of Christ and the end of this world, no one knows exactly when that will be.<sup>2</sup> We should be wary of any system of teaching that tries to nail down the nature or timing of these events. Whenever it occurs, the return of our Lord will be...<sup>3</sup>

- **Personal** – We are not talking simply about Jesus ‘influence’ gaining strength in the world. As Christ ascended personally into heaven, so will he return.<sup>4</sup>
- **Physical** – We are not talking about his ‘spiritual’ presence in the Church. As the risen Christ ascended physically into heaven, so he will return.
- **Visible** – A variety of sects have taught that Jesus returned ‘secretly’ on specific dates when their prophecies for the end of the world did not come about. Numerous Bible passages state that the entire world will know that Christ has returned.
- **Sudden** – He will return when no one expects, like a thief in the night. We should reject any teaching which implies the timing could not be even today!
- **Glorious and Triumphant** – This is not the return of the suffering servant, but of the glorious Messianic King<sup>5</sup>. Angelic hosts will be his vanguard and the risen saints his retinue. He is returning to judge the world, put an end to evil, suffering and death and to establish a new heaven and earth for all eternity.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 24:30 (TNIV)

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 24:3, 36

<sup>3</sup> L. Berkhof, Systematic Theology, pp. 705-706.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 1:11

<sup>5</sup> Hebrews 9:28

Sept. 24, 2008      **Resurrection!**

*“So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;<sup>44</sup> it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body....For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”<sup>1</sup>*

When the dead are raised on the last day it will be a physical resurrection, not simply a ‘spiritual’ one. We do not know exactly what this will be like, but our resurrection bodies will be both similar and different from our present ones.

First, the word resurrection implies that this is not a wholly new creation. Our risen bodies will be in some ways identical with the original. Jesus was recognized by those who knew him and we may be confident of recognizing those we love.

On the hand, Paul makes it clear that there will be a significant transformation in our new existence. As the seed that is planted differs from the fruit that rises from the soil, so our new resurrection bodies will be gloriously changed. They will be fit for eternity, free from the effects of infirmity or disease. They will be ‘spiritual’ bodies, in comparison with our present ‘natural’ ones. Whatever this might mean it implies a vast improvement over the original and a suitability to dwell in a new existence in heaven.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 52b (TNIV)

<sup>2</sup> In this treatment of the last days, mention has not been made of various views on the Millennium – the thousand year reign of Christ on earth. Time/space has not permitted an appropriate examination of this topic and other matters surrounding the events of the End Times. I hope to deal with these events more fully in the second, expanded edition of Daily Dose of Doctrine in the coming year – unless the Lord returns in the meantime ☺.

Sept. 25, 2008

## The Judgement

*“And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.”<sup>1</sup>*

While the teaching of Scripture focuses almost exclusively on the resurrection and final destiny of the ‘righteous’, it also intimates that the ‘wicked’ will be raised to life at the return of Christ. At that point all the human race will appear before the judgement seat of God and each person will be judged according to what they have done.

There, the primary question will be, ‘where do you stand in relationship to Jesus Christ?’ While many may wish to argue for acquittal on the basis of having been basically ‘good’ people, the gospel indicates that all of us are sinners, deserving death. None of us can earn eternal life by our own efforts. We must receive it as the free gift of God, offered to us by Christ.

At the same time, God reserves the right to judge according to the light each person had. Those who have had no opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel will be judged on the basis of whether they lived according to their conscience – that inner conviction of right and wrong which all possess.<sup>2</sup>

While we may have fears or concerns about the Judgement, we are called to trust in the perfect righteousness of God. At the end of the day every possible objection will be satisfied and all will concur that the Judge of the Earth has done what is right.

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 20:12 (TNIV)

<sup>2</sup> Romans 2:12-16

*“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.’”<sup>1</sup>*

The Judgement will divide the human race into two groups. The ‘wicked’, whose names are not found in the book of life, will be consigned to the ‘lake of fire’, which is the ‘second death’.<sup>2</sup> Traditionally, this has been interpreted to mean that the unsaved will be consigned to the torments of hell, there to suffer physical, emotional and spiritual torment for all time. While in recent centuries, some have reduced this to the ‘spiritual’ pain of eternal separation from God, the concept of the immortality of the soul affirms that punishment is never-ending. Those who believe in annihilation would argue that the wicked simply cease to exist in the second death, but this is admittedly a minority view.<sup>3</sup>

The emphasis of the gospel is on the glorious nature of the life to come for those who do ally themselves with Jesus Christ. He has gone to prepare a place in heaven for us that will be exactly suited to who we are. We will see God face to face and we will be reunited for all time with our loved ones in Christ. Evil, suffering and death will be no more. Life will go on forever in the presence of God as he originally designed it to be. While the details are hidden, the final word is one of encouragement and invitation. God is making all things new and to all who hear, “the Spirit and the Bride (the Church) say ‘Come!’<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 21:3 (TNIV)

<sup>2</sup> Revelation 20:14-15

<sup>3</sup> More on these teachings in the 2008-9 edition of Daily Dose.

<sup>4</sup> Revelation 22:17