

FACING THE FUTURE WITH FAITH

By Pastor Max Solbrekken D.D

“Finally, brethren, pray for us that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: ***And that we may be delivered from wicked and unreasonable men: For all men have not faith.*** But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.” (2 Thes. 3:1-3)

St. Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica: “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing: Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy.” (1 Thes. 2: 19, 20)

“Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.” (1 Thes.1:3).

They were converted through the awesome power of the Holy Spirit: “For our Gospel came not unto you in Word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word with much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.

“So that ye were examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the Word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak to any thing. For they themselves had turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; And to wait for His Son from Heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.” (1 Thes. 1:5-10)

CHRIST SHALL RETURN FOR HIS CHURCH!

St. Paul had earlier revealed to the Thessalonians the truth of Christ's return in the *Parousia*, the Rapture of the Church: “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others, which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

“For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and

remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” (1 Thes. 4: 13-17).

St. Paul commended them for their patience and faith during the difficult times they were going through in persecutions and tribulations. He revealed God’s judgments which will come upon unbelievers when Jesus Christ returns to judge those who have rejected His love and mercy:

“To you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, because our testimony among you was believed in that day.” (2 Thes. 1:7-10)

THE ANTICHRIST: MYSTERY OF INIQUITY!

The Word of God warns concerning the coming of the Antichrist who will deceive the entire world with his deception and lying wonders: “And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

“For the Mystery of Iniquity doth already work: only He who now letteth will let, until He be taken out of the way. And that Wicked shall be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming:

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

“And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” (2 Thes. 2: 6-10)

The Holy Bible is the final Word of God on all matters concerning the deception of Satan and the truth of God! There is no middle ground!

They who believe that Jesus Christ of Nazareth vicariously gave His life for us on Golgotha's Cross and arose from the dead for our justification, are *Saved!*

Those who reject the Word of God and Christ's offer of salvation and agree with Satan, the liar and deceiver, will be *Damned* forever. They will be deceived by the Antichrist and his lying supernatural wonders and are *Lost* for eternity. Period!

ALL KNOWLEDGE HID IN CHRIST!

St. Paul warned those in Colosse and Laodicea: “That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the ***Mystery of God***, and of the Father, and of Christ: In Whom are hid all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

“Beware lest any man should beguile you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. ***For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power:*** In Whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.

“Buried with Him in baptism, wherein ye also are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in you sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us,

and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” (Col.2: 8-15)

In the final analysis, when all the battles are over, the Body of Christ wins. We win because Christ spoiled all principalities and powers, making a public display of them before the hosts of Heaven, the demons of Hell and all of humanity! His vicarious death for us on Golgotha sealed Satan's doom, and His triumphant resurrection from the dead made JESUS CHRIST forever the Lord of lords and King of kings.

WORTHY IS THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAIN!

“And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ***Who is worthy to open the Book, and to loose the seven seals thereof?***

“And no man in Heaven, nor on earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders said unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

“And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of

the elders, stood a LAMB as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the Throne.

“And when He had taken the book, the four beasts and our and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of incense, which are the prayers of saints.

“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; tongue, and people, and nation;

“And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

“Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour and glory, and blessing.

“And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a LAMB as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the Throne.

“And when He had taken the book, the four beasts and our and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of incense, which are the prayers of saints.

“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

“And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angel's round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

“Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour and glory, and blessing.

“And every creature which is in Heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such

that are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying,

“Blessing and honour, and glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever.”
(Rev.5:1-14)

THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN IS ALIVE!

What an amazing and glorious truth. The Lamb that had been slain was alive and standing. He alone was worthy to take the book out of the Hand of Almighty God on the Throne in Heaven. Only Jesus Christ had the right to open the book, for He alone had paid the awesome price for our redemption!

His BLOOD alone purchased our eternal salvation. Pointing to Jesus of Nazareth, John the Baptist declared, **“Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.”** (John 1; 29).

Exalting the Name of the crucified and risen Jesus Christ, St. Peter stated: **“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”** (Acts 4: 12). Proclaiming the Gospel, St. Paul said: **“For there is One God and One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ**

Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” (1 Tim.2: 5,6)

The Bible states that Jesus Christ, **“by Himself purged our sins.”** (Heb.1: 3). He did it all by Himself. His vicarious death on the cross for us has sealed our eternal destiny. It is Christ alone; not Christ and the Church; not Christ and the Pope; not Christ and the Virgin Mary! The Bible teaches the **Christ alone Doctrine!**

JESUS CHRIST. GOD'S SON. SAVIOUR!

According to tradition, ancient Christians, during their persecution by the Roman Empire in the first few centuries after Christ, used the **fish symbol** to mark meeting places and tombs, or to distinguish friends from foes!

The Greek word for fish is **“ichthys.”** As early as the first century, Christians made an acrostic from this word: ***lesous Christos Theou Yios Soter, i.e. Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.***

ΙΧΘΥΣ (ichthys): .Iota (i) is the first letter of *lēsous* (Ιησοῦς), Greek for "Jesus" .Chi (ch) is the first letter of *Christos* (Χριστός), Greek for "anointed" (of the Lord) .Theta (th) is the first letter of *Theou* (Θεοῦ), Greek for "God's", the genitive case of Θεός .*Theos*, Greek for "God" .Upsilon (y) is the first letter of *(h)yios*[10] (Υιός), Greek for "Son" .Sigma (s) is the first letter of *sōtēr* (Σωτήρ), Greek for "Saviour" whose verses

are an acrostic of the generating sentence. The statement “Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour” affirmed the belief of early Christians in the two-fold nature of Jesus Christ being both fully human and fully divine.

PEACE THROUGH THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS

The Bible states: “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son: in Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” (Col. 1:13, 14)

“And having made PEACE through the blood of His cross, by Him, to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say to reconcile all things to Himself; by Him I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in Heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now has He reconciled.

“In the body of His flesh through Death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight: if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel...” (Col. 1: 20-23)

“Be careful (anxious) for nothing: but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4; 6,7)

FACING THE FUTURE WITH FAITH!

Faith is a gift to the searching heart, to the sincere seeker after God and His righteousness. Faith is believing that God's Word is true, in spite of what others say. Faith is believing that Jesus Christ is Whom He claimed to be, the Word of God made flesh, God incarnate!

That He is True God from eternity and True man by His Virgin birth! That He alone purchased our eternal life through shedding His pure and sinless blood on the cross, and that His blood is ALIVE today in the Holy of Holies in Heaven. And that Jesus Christ our Heavenly High Priest is interceding for us before His Father.

The Holy Bible declares: **“Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come to God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.”** (Heb. 7: 25, 26)

The greatest reason for believing that the Bible is true, is that Jesus Christ, the Living Word of God, believed the Holy Scriptures. He quoted and preached from them, lived by them. He died and arose from the dead, according to the Word God and by that same Word will return for us all who waiting, watching and working for Him! **Amen.**