

Christ in Prophecy

Thanksgiving 1: “Spiritual Blessings”

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For a video of this show, please visit <http://www.lamblion.com>.

Opening

Dr. Reagan: During this Thanksgiving season are you counting your blessings? I hope so, we all need to be doing that. Let me ask you another question: What do you consider to be your greatest blessing? Is it your health, your job, your family? What about spiritual blessings? Are you counting them? If so what are they? In a moment we're going to consider 2 of the greatest spiritual blessings that we should be thankful for. Stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus our blessed hope and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. I want to take this opportunity to wish all of you a very blessed season of Thanksgiving. You know Thanksgiving is one of my favorite times of the year, a time of family, fellowship, and good food. I have many wonderful memories of family gatherings at Thanksgiving and I am sure you do too. Personally I believe that for a Christian everyday of the year should be a day of thanksgiving. I have found over the years that a heart filled of thanksgiving is one of the best medicines for emotional and physical health. I make it a point at least once a month if not more frequently to sit down and make a list of things in my prayer journal that I am thankful for. I sometimes spend as much as 30-45 minutes working on the list. And in the process I try to think about things that we tend to take for granted. Things like pure water, electricity, air conditioning, a house to live in and a car to drive. Did you know that 80% of all sickness in the world is attributable to unsafe drinking water? Did you know that if you keep food in a refrigerator, clothes in a closet, and sleep in a bed with a roof over your head, you are richer than 75% of the entire population of the world. Did you know that out of every 100 people in this world 18 struggle to live on less than 1 dollar a day and 53 struggle to live on 2 dollars a day? We have so much to be thankful for in this country, and we tend to

be so unthankful. We fret over the fact that we don't have a color TV set in every room, when most of the world lives without access to electricity. It's one of the reasons that I believe that every American teenager should be sent to live a couple of weeks in a third world country like Mexico. Just to see how most people in the world are involved in a daily struggle to merely survive. All of us in the United States should be living with an attitude of gratitude.

One of my favorite passages of Scripture is Psalm 100 which is labeled with a superscription that says, "A Psalm of Thanksgiving"; it is the only Psalm that bears such a label. And it says in part, "Shout joyfully to the Lord all the Earth, serve the Lord with gladness. Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise." That is the attitude we should live with, even in tough times when things are not going smoothly for us. Of course the thing we should be most grateful for is the salvation that Jesus provided for us through His sacrifice on the cross for our sins. What a glorious gift. And it is precisely that, a gift. The Bible teaches very clearly that the forgiveness of our sins is something that can not be earned, it is a free gift of God through faith in Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Have you ever thought about the fact that salvation by grace through faith is one of the things that sets Christianity apart from all other religions? Every other religion in the world teaches the satanic concept of salvation through good works. Christianity alone teaches that one can not be saved by good works. That our only hope is the righteousness of Jesus which is applied to us when we put our faith in Him. Pastor Robert Jeffress of First Baptist Church in Dallas has a wonderful way of putting it. He says, "Every religion in the world except Christianity is spelled, D-O only Christianity is spelled D-O-N-E." In other words, Jesus did it all for us by sacrificing His perfect life for our sins. A few years ago I ran across a short video that vividly demonstrates this point and in the process it shows how thankful we should be to Jesus. The video was produced by a very creative Christian artist named Justin Jackson, who is on the staff of Central Christian Church in Las Vegas, Nevada. He has giving us special permission to show it to you.

Video Good-O-Meter Video

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: The second spiritual blessing I want to thank God for is one that is yet to take place. It is based upon a promise of God that can be found in John 14, 1 Corinthians 15, and 1 Thessalonians 4, it is called the Rapture of the Church. The apostle Paul describes the Rapture in detail in 1 Thessalonians 4, beginning with verse 13, and when he finishes his explanation of it, he writes in verse 18, "Comfort one another with these words." So the promise of the Rapture is supposed to be a source of great comfort to those of us who are believers. But the sad thing is that the average Christian seems to have little or no knowledge about this important promise. I know that from personal experience.

I was born into a Christian family, I was raised in the church. I went to church for 30 years every time the door was open and never once did I ever hear about the Rapture. In fact, after all those years in the church, if you had asked me to define the Rapture, I probably would have said, "It's a sensation you feel when your girlfriend kisses you." In 2002 when we broadcast our very first television program, we devoted it to the promised blessing of the Rapture, and we attempted to demonstrate the kind of ignorance that exists in the Church concerning the Rapture. We did it through a series of simulated interviews. Let's take a look at them.

Park Interview

Dr. Reagan: Excuse me sir, are you a Christian.

Person in Park: Well, yes I am as a matter of fact.

Dr. Reagan: Well I thought so from that tie you are wearing there. Let me ask you just a quick question okay.

Person in Park: Yeah, speed it up make it quick.

Dr. Reagan: Alright, what is the Rapture?

Person in Park: The Rapture? Well now let's see. The Rapture, the Rapture, um, don't help me, don't help me, just give me another moment to think here. The Rapture.

Dr. Reagan: Excuse me sir, can I ask you a quick question?

Person in Park: Sure.

Dr. Reagan: Are you are Christian?

Person in Park: Yes I am.

Dr. Reagan: Then let me ask you a question: What is the Rapture?

Person in Park: Could you give me a clue?

Dr. Reagan: It's in the Bible.

Person in Park: It must be in the Old Testament, I have never heard of it. You see I am a New Testament Christian. The Rapture, the Rapture, come on, come on, I know this term, I know it. Um, don't help me, just give me a little more time to think here. The Rapture, the Rapture.

Dr. Reagan: Hey guys, can I ask you all a quick question?

Person in Park: Are we going to be on TV?

Dr. Reagan: Well maybe.

Person in Park: Cool, yeah, fire away.

Dr. Reagan: Are you Christians?

Person in Park: Yeah.

Dr. Reagan: I thought so from those shirts you are wearing. Well my question is this: What is the Rapture?

Person in Park: The what?

Dr. Reagan: The Rapture?

Person in Park: I don't know, just a minute.

Dr. Reagan: I think they are having some sort of pow-wow here, I don't know for sure what we are going to get out of this. Oh, okay, okay, you got it?

Person in Park: Is it some type of Rap music?

Dr. Reagan: Excuse me, are you folks Christians?

Person in Park: Well yes we are.

Dr. Reagan: Do you mind if I ask you a Biblical question.

Person in Park: Well we are in church every Sunday go ahead. What's the question?

Dr. Reagan: What is the Rapture?

Person in Park: The Rapture, I tell you what, my wife is the real Bible expert and I think I am going to let her answer this.

Person in the Park: Okay. Um, just give me a minute, I know I have heard that term before, um, oh I think I know, isn't that when Jesus went up on the mountain and revealed His coming glory to His disciples? You know, the Transfiguration, isn't that also called the Rapture? The Rapture, the Rapture, the Rapture.

Dr. Reagan: Excuse me Ma'am could I ask you a questions?

Person in Park: Sure.

Dr. Reagan: Are you a Christian?

Person in Park: Yes I am.

Dr. Reagan: I would like to ask you a Biblical question.

Person in Park: Alright.

Dr. Reagan: What is the Rapture?

Person in Park: The Rapture, the Rapture is the promise of Jesus, that one day very soon He is going to appear in the heavens to take His Church out of this world.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: I've invited our Web Minister and fellow Evangelist, Nathan Jones, to join me. He not only designed our website, but is on that site 8 hours a day answering Bible questions and sharing the Gospel with people all over the world. Nathan, I'd like to discuss with you two questions concerning the Rapture. The first is how do we know that the Rapture is an event that is going to occur separate and apart from the Second Coming? And that is a question that we often have. Then the second question concerns the timing of the Rapture. Why do you believe for example that the Rapture is most likely to occur before the Tribulation begins? So, let's begin with the first question. Is the Second Coming an event separate and apart from the Rapture, or is it all one event where we simply going to go up and immediately come right back down?

Nathan Jones: When you look at the Bible verses on the Second Coming, you look at say for instance John 14:1-14, and 1 Corinthians 15:13-18, and 1 Thessalonians. And then you look at other verses that supposedly talk about the Second Coming you know like Zechariah 14 and Jesus' account in Matthew 24, and the same in Mark 13, and Luke

21, and Revelation 19, all those that talk about the Second Coming. But the first 3 I mentioned, especially 1 Thessalonians, and 1 Corinthians they almost tell a different story, it's like it is supposed to be all about the Second Coming but there is a vast difference between the 2 that it sounds like there is...

Dr. Reagan: What type of differences for example?

Nathan Jones: Well for instance if you look at the verses particularly about the Rapture it seems like when Jesus comes, He comes in the air.

Dr. Reagan: Alright.

Nathan Jones: And the believers are brought from the ground up into the air. But for Second Coming verses it has it the other way, Jesus is coming down, and He actually lands on Earth. So Jesus is up in the air, the Second Coming verses Jesus is on the ground. Or take for instance the Mount of Olives. In the Rapture verses Jesus, we are brought up into the air, and Jesus is waiting. But in those verses Jesus comes down and when He lands, especially in Zechariah 14 explains this, the Mount of Olives splits, there is a new valley formed on the East side of Jerusalem and there is no mention of that in the Rapture verses. So it is almost like 2 stories. The location of the believers, the believers are brought up to Heaven, but when Jesus comes back there are believers on the Earth. So, if Jesus brought all the believers up at the Rapture, why are there believers on the Earth in the Second Coming? So it has to be 2 separate events.

Dr. Reagan: Well I would say so. I think that when you read like 1 Thessalonians 4 and you compare it to Revelation 19 they don't have anything in common except they both focus upon Jesus Christ.

Nathan Jones: Oh yeah.

Dr. Reagan: One He appears in the heavens, but the other He comes down to Earth. In one He appears for His believers and the other He returns with His believers. And even the nature of His return in one He is appearing as a Deliverer as a Bridegroom for His Bride, but in the other He is coming back to Earth for the purpose of pouring out the

wrath of God upon those who have rejected the grace, mercy and love of God and He comes with His believers, and He comes to be a King. So, they have to be 2 different events.

Nathan Jones: Yeah, the stories don't line up.

Dr. Reagan: So basically what you are saying is that the Second Coming of Jesus is going to be in 2 stages. First the Rapture for the Church and second the return to the Earth with His Church to reign.

Nathan Jones: The Bible the verses, they tell that story, 2 separate stages.

Dr. Reagan: Okay. Well, you know it solves another problem too and that is the Bible tells us that we can not know anything about the timing of the Lord's return. And yet you go over to the book of Revelation and it says once the Antichrist signs the treaty you can count exactly 7 years and Jesus returns. Daniel 9, and then you've got Revelation 11.

Nathan Jones: It gives us the exact amount of time that God is going to pour out His wrath on this Earth, 84 months. So when it speaks about not knowing it has to be referring to the Rapture. Well look at Jesus, even Jesus doesn't know when He is supposed to come back to the Earth. If the Antichrist signed a peace treaty or then 3 ½ years later desecrated the temple, Jesus would say, "Okay, I got this amount of days I am going to show up." Yeah. Again the 2 stories don't relate.

Dr. Reagan: Well, okay. Alright now this brings us to the second question, and that is the question of the timing of the Rapture. Why do you believe it is most likely to occur before the Tribulation as opposed to the middle of the Tribulation or the end of the Tribulation?

Nathan Jones: Well you know this confuses a lot of people and there is a lot of good theories out there. For me the best thing I did with all of these ideas: Is it before the Tribulation? Is it in the middle of the Tribulation? And is it the end Tribulation? Was to sit down and write it all out and try to get it organized in my mind and look at the different proofs that each of the views have. And I ended up writing a blog series: "Why I Believe

in a Pre-Trib Rapture” to help my mind get around it. And overwhelmingly I believe the Bible says it is a Pre-Trib Rapture. There is, I ended up with 11 different arguments why it makes more sense.

Dr. Reagan: Well what is the most important argument that you think you could offer?

Nathan Jones: There are 2, number 1 and I think you share this one, is the immanency of Christ’s Return. There is nothing that has to happen before the Rapture to occur. But for the Second Coming there are all sorts of things, world devastation, and Antichrist, and one world government, and everything before the Second Coming. So the immanency of the Rapture that nothing has to happen before it, to me tells that it is a separate event and it has to happen before the Tribulation.

Dr. Reagan: Okay.

Nathan Jones: Another strong thing for me, and you hear a lot of different views like the Mid-Trib who believe it has to be trumpets. It is almost like you divide the suffering that goes on, the judgment that goes on during the Tribulation. Got the seals and the trumpets are the first half and the bowls, and you get to the end and there is a Post-Trib. But when Jesus Returns, if Jesus took up the believers, did a cash for clunkers type exchange, changed our bodies from unglorified bodies to the bodies we are going to live in for ever and return to Earth, who lives on into the Millennial Kingdom if all the believers has glorified bodies. Now the glorified bodies are like Angels bodies, they will never reproduce. So for me the Post-Trib Rapture view doesn’t make sense. Or the idea of the Mid-Trib Rapture, that it happens at the last trumpet judgment. But it is Jesus who opened up the first seal that started the judgments so if Jesus started all 7 years of judgments then it can’t be a Mid-Trib Rapture. And then the Pre-Wrath Rapture the idea that it happens, the Rapture at the last quarter, that to me doesn’t make sense either. The bowls it says, that God’s wrath ends with the bowl judgment. It doesn’t begin but ends with the bowl judgments, which means all the judgments that happened before there had to have happened before that. So again, a Pre-Trib Rapture.

Dr. Reagan: Well one verse that comes to mind from what you are talking about there is in 1 Thessalonians 1:10 that says, “We are waiting for His Son from Heaven, whom

He raised from the dead that is Jesus who will delivers us from the wrath that is to come.” We are promised that we are going to be delivered from the wrath that is to come. And the Tribulation is the pouring out of God’s wrath upon this Earth, so why should we even be around then? We should be taken out to be saved from that wrath.

Nathan Jones: The strongest argument I hear from people is constantly Christians have been suffering for 2,000 years. They were thrown into the lions in Caesars time. I mean we have news reports now in Pakistan and India they are burning their houses and burning the people alive. Why aren’t we going to suffer as well? But the difference in this time is like the flood, God’s wrath on Earth is a different time then the regular suffering.

Dr. Reagan: Well were not promised that we will be free of tribulation, I mean the ways things are going in this nation Christians are going to come under increasing persecution. But there is a difference in tribulation and the Great Tribulation when 1/2 of humanity is going to die in the first 3 1/2 years.

Nathan Jones: Oh yeah. I mean it is going to be a tribulation like the world has never seen before.

Dr. Reagan: One final question, very quickly, and that is quite often people who believe in a Pre-Tribulation Rapture are immediately labeled as escapist, you’re just an escapist, you’re not willing to suffer for the Lord. You just want to be taken out of here, now what about it, are you an escapist?

Nathan Jones: I say, “Amen Brother!” Yes I am, I am definitely an escapist. You know it is one thing to suffer under the hand of man, and it is another thing to suffer under the hand of Satan. But to suffer under the hand of the living God, that is a terrifying concept, who will survive? So yes, I am definitely an escapist because like you said, the verses you said, the Bible tells us. I will give you another one, Ephesians 5:6 “Let no one deceive you with empty words for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those that are disobedient.” The Church has been cleaned, they are no longer disobedient. Romans 5:9, “Since we have now been justified by His blood how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through Him.”

Dr. Reagan: Yeah.

Nathan Jones: The Bible teaches a Pre-Trib Rapture.

Dr. Reagan: Well the thing I always respond when people, and they do it all the time, they say, "Well you are just an escapist." I say, "Well Noah was an escapist, Lot was an escapist, and Jesus Himself said in Luke 21:36, 'Pray that you may escape all these things that will take place.'" Well if Jesus told me to pray to escape them, I am going to pray to escape them. I am not anxious to be around here when the Antichrist is here.

Nathan Jones: No.

Dr. Reagan: Should I be willing to die for Jesus Christ? Yes. But that doesn't mean that I have to go through the Great Tribulation.

Nathan Jones: Exactly.

Dr. Reagan: Well thank you Nathan, I appreciate the way every point you made was based on Scripture. A couple of years ago a church in Australia produced a short video about the impact of the Rapture, it was placed on YouTube on the internet and I am telling you it caused a world wide sensation. The church, the Potter's House in Perth, Australia has given us permission to show the video on this program. Let's take a look at it.

Video

Part 4

Dr. Reagan: Now that's what I call a powerful video. Nathan I understand that you and our media crew have just finished making a video of your own concerning the Rapture tell us about it.

Nathan Jones: Well in three words, left behind video. We wanted to leave a message behind for those after the Tribulation. The main ministry of Lamb and Lion is to proclaim the soon return of Jesus Christ and we can do that now and through the internet and video we can do it after the Rapture. So this was our message to help people come to the Lord during the Tribulation and also kind of how to survive it.

Dr. Reagan: Well I tell you what that sounds fascinating. Why don't you come back next week and show that video to us.

Nathan Jones: I would be happy to.

Dr. Reagan: Alright. And now as we bring our program to a close I want to share with you a powerful song about the Rapture called, *11:59*. Here is a production of it by our great media staff as song by Jack Hollingsworth of Acts 29 Ministries.

End of Program