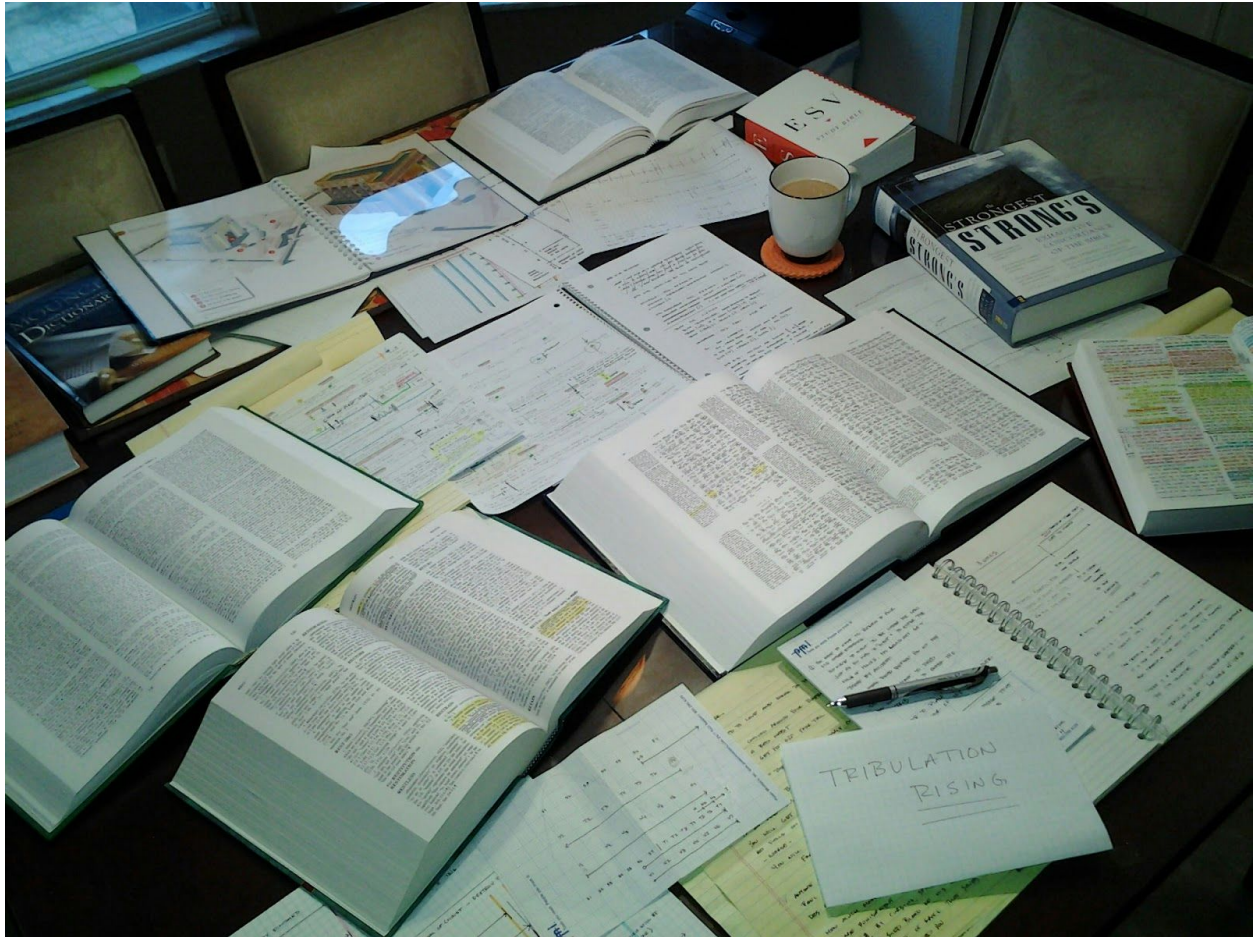


TRIBULATION RISING: THE SERIES



THE RAPTURE AND OVERCOMING - AM I READY AND WORTHY?

RICHARD KENDRICK JR.

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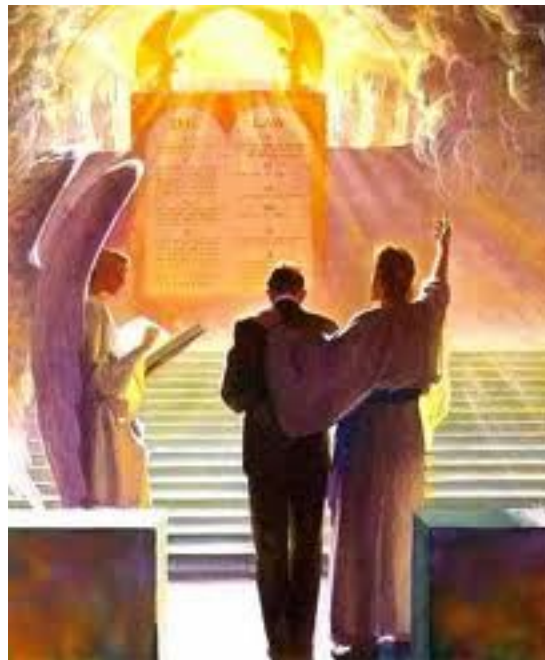
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Luke 21:34-36 KJV - And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

I was asked how a believer can know that they are worthy of the Rapture.



He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels - Revelation 3:5

There is a great deal of scripture that offers the answer. However, sometimes what we need is the simple, straight forward answer with which to gauge our lives and seek the will of God.

The following answer finds its basis in Daniel 12; Malachi 3 and 4; Revelation 2 and 3; Matthew 8, 22, 24 and 25; Philippians 4; Numbers 10; Leviticus 23; Job 14; Luke 13; Hebrews 10 and 2 Timothy 2 – just to name a few. Everything you will read in this list can be found in the scriptures that we just listed.

For those that seek a straightforward answer – absent the confusion that can so often accompany such lofty Biblical discussions - here are the requirements to be found worthy of the Rapture:

As with all things salvation must come first. Once you have salvation the real work begins.

1. You must fear God. The fear of God is the understanding that He is ALWAYS there. Every decision you make, every sunrise you see – every moment you open your eyes. The fear of God keeps us conscious that He sees and knows everything. The fear of God holds us accountable for each and every work of our hands.

2. You must pray to God. Through constant prayer we have a relationship with our creator. Indeed, we shall “know” Him for it – and He shall “know” us!

3. You must give of the tithes and offerings. This is the hardest of things it seems. Remember Cornelius the Centurion – it was his unceasing prayer and his giving of the tithes and offerings that made him a memorial – a remembrance – before God.

To fail to do so will see us cast out as the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness where there is weeping and wailing, and the gnashing of teeth.

Here is the link to the page that details tithing and what it means to overcoming:

<http://tribulationrising.com.fatcow.com/does-the-new-testament-require-tithing-from-the-church/>

4. You must seek and obey the will of Christ for your life. If you seek his will in your life and your heart truly desires His counsel He shall come! You will know his will for your life as surely as you need oxygen to breath.

5. You must be watchful and look to the promise of His coming – not the Second Coming, but rather to the promise of the Rapture of the saints. All believers hold fast the Second Coming – it requires little faith as there will be an entire seven years of Tribulation to announce His return upon the Day of Atonement. The Second Coming of Christ is not a mystery. It requires no faith to believe as the Tribulation will make it obvious.

Those that do not believe in the rapture shall have no part in it. Understand that the rapture is not a reward for salvation – it is a reward for faithfulness. It is a reward for overcoming the constant specter of doubt and scoffers that mock you at every turn. When doubt creeps into your mind and invades your heart, an overcoming faith will keep you looking to the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ for the overcoming saints.

Also, belief in the mid-tribulation rapture or the post-tribulation rapture (the U-turn) is the same as no belief in the rapture! Half a faith is the same as no faith. **It is the same as saying "I believe in Christ, but. . . "**

Those that have believed upon the name of Christ Jesus for salvation, yet have not believed in His rapture, or promised return are in danger of being lost. Should they miss the rapture and somehow survive, they shall have their part among the martyrs where they shall stand as a judicial witness for the majesty of Christ - if they confess the sin of

unbelief and seek the salvation of Christ once more. This is as it was in the first century of the church. More came to salvation through the witness of the execution of spirit filled believers than by any other testimony.

The word martyr is from a root that means “judicial witness”. It is a statement of the true power and strength that came upon the soon to be murdered believers in the first century church. The Holy Spirit came upon them and they knew a supernatural faith that allowed them to stand with a strength that mankind had never known before.

They were filled with joy and peace as their deaths approached. For all that looked upon them could not mistake what they had witnessed. These “followers of Christ” had something that was beyond words. The way that they faced death was an irrefutable witness to the power and majesty of a risen Lord that sits at the right hand of God the Father.

They were a witness that could stand before the very courts of heaven!

If you are diligent and seek these things you shall have your part in the Book of Remembrance. You will be a memorial before God as an overcomer and have a part in the blessing for those that overcome.

These are the things that shall give you a part in the gathering of the overcomers, the Great Assembly or the Rapture of the believing saints.

Now, I want to share some insight on overcoming - it helps to lay out the true meaning of the overcomer. The New Testament speaks often of the overcomer, and the letters to the seven churches in Asia emphasize the importance of not just salvation – but to overcome as well.

“To him that overcomes” is the refrain uttered by Jesus Christ to John on the Isle of Patmos in the book of Revelation.

Still, many wonder what this means to them? Hopefully this will help to answer that very question that so many have in the back of their minds.

What separates the body of the church is the requirement that we overcome. Many folks get confused as to what that means. Simply stated - overcome the world, the flesh and the devil. Those that overcome are those that have the desire to live for Christ and seek Him every day. They pray for His will in their lives, they look to the promise of his coming (when Peter said that in the last days there would come scoffers, he said it was the promise of His coming that they would deny). They will strive in the tithes and offerings, and they are willing to change everything in their lives at the word of the Lord.

What gets most people is that they think faithfulness requires perfection in their efforts. It does not. For instance, the Lord may be reaching to somebody to pay their tithes. Now, the Lord can clearly provide any needed resource for the church. However, the tithe was about more than money. It was about the faithfulness to trust that the Lord can provide all that he promises. It is the faith to set aside an appointed portion to the Lord first and foremost. 10 percent is the number we garner from the requirement of the Old Testament, yet if someone has not been used to giving the tithes then perhaps it starts with just a dollar or two. The faithfulness comes in when you make it a point that no matter what, you will give this single dollar - even if it means a bill goes unpaid. From there the Lord will build you to a greater giving according to His will. That is the heart of faithful tithing.

Remember the widow that gave her last two mites? As Jesus said, she gave more than all the wealthy combined. It was her heart and faithfulness that matter.

Perhaps the Lord places a burden of prayer on you for somebody else. One night while asleep, the Lord awakens you in the fourth watch to pray. Do you roll over and go back to sleep - placing your comfort above the calling of the Lord? Or do you spend the next 3 hours in prayer for him that the Lord has brought before you. That too is the heart of faithfulness and overcoming.

However, overcoming is about the voices inside you that tell you that you are too tired to pray, or that you will be mocked if you speak, or that your efforts will be worthless. It is the greatest enemy to the believer. It is that force within that always seems to throw up a roadblock to the work of Christ. How many times have we dreaded getting on Facebook for the fear that somebody that is fighting you at every turn will be waiting to pounce. How about that wonderful share of the Lord that brings out the worst in every non-believer? You saw the words of the post and it was truth with a clarity rarely seen. You shared it expecting that people would see what came naturally to you.

Instead, it openly challenged the false fronts that people were hiding behind and now they are fighting for their spiritual lives of sin as they cannot escape the truth you saw in the post. You will know the ones I speak of - it is the post that continues to draw attacks from the enemy three days later.

That is where true overcoming occurs. We can escape many things in this life - this voice inside us is not one of them. It is always there and it never surrenders. He whispers to you, convinces you - "you can miss prayer just once, you can take just one drink, you can talk to her - after all, talking isn't cheating is it?"

As the addict knows all too well - all it takes is once.

That is overcoming. That is faithfulness. The rapture is not the reward for salvation (salvation is the reward for salvation) - it is the blessing for those that overcome. Those that had no reason whatsoever to serve Christ. Their finances

were strong, they had jobs – serving Christ just wasn't fun, yet still they served. They sacrificed their own desires for the will of Christ and the cause of salvation.

It is serving Him when you don't have to. It is not about getting it right all the time. In fact, it's not even about getting it right the first time.

It's not about perfection and being perfect with every step.

It is simply desiring the will of Christ in your life to be better for Him today than you were yesterday. To seek His perfection - never attaining it in this life - that you may be better for him tomorrow than you are today.

Overcoming is not a matter of having much to give of yourself for Christ - it is a matter of giving all of the little that you do possess, willingly, gratefully and thankfully.

Ever thankful that you had something for the Lord.

That something may be little in your eyes. I promise that when the Lord himself personally forges a victor's crown with His own two nail pierced hands and places it upon your head you shall know one thing for all eternity...

That one small overcoming sacrifice was more than all the oceans of the world, the sands of the sea and there exists no level of gratitude than can ever supplant the true and amazing gratitude of a Savior that looks upon the ripple effect of souls saved.

And every last one will be traced for eternity to your one insignificant offering.

That, my friends, is the nature of the overcomer.

That said, there is one more thing that bears mentioning - the fruit of those that do not overcome. Here is an excerpt from the page on the Last Trump:

What does circular reasoning look like? I had a gentleman recently use the term multiple times on a response I wrote to something he was teaching. He would list the points he disagreed with, and declare them to be circular reasoning. However, he never could demonstrate how exactly my words were circular reasoning. He simply decided to take the argument off the table, as it had been used against him in the past - with good reason.

In the case of the question of the last trump, it looks like this:

“The Bible tells us that the dead will be raised and the living caught up at the last trump.”

“The seventh angel in Revelation 11:15 sounds the seventh trumpet.”

“The seventh trumpet is the last trumpet in the Bible”.

“The trumpet blown by the seventh angel is therefore the last trump.”

Looks like a lock, right? It’s called circular reasoning because you go in a “circle” to arrive at a conclusion.

Here is the thing. How you respond next will be the most accurate indicator of your walk with the Lord, and whether or not you are seeking His knowledge for His purposes - or yours.

Are you seeking His knowledge for His glory, or are you seeking confirmations to the things that you want to believe? Here is what I mean. When you made the connection with circular reasoning, did it stop the process of searching - or did it

take your search further? This will be the very best indicator of false doctrine and man's efforts as well. Here is why:

If you are reading the scriptures in an effort to find the answers that you want to find, to find confirmations to what you want to believe - then the answer provided by circular reasoning will stop your search. In other words, you will make the connection with circular reasoning and declare that you have "found the truth", and that "no other answer is possible!"

This is a critical error. It is critical as we have already spoken on the continuous nature of the revelations of the Lord to us. The learning never stops. It does not matter how much we think an issue is settled. The Lord will always increase our understanding if we allow Him to do so. Once you declare a matter settled and close your heart to further possibilities, you cut off the Lord from giving you more information.

This is why so many believers seem "stuck" on the same three or four false arguments for any given doctrine. They were looking for answers to confirm what they wanted to believe, not what the Lord wanted them to know. Circular reasoning is the process by which the flesh justifies the answers it wants to embrace.

However, for the believer that is seeking the understanding of the Lord for His purposes, circular logic brings a different response.

"OK - I see how that looks like the answer, and it may well be. Are there any other obvious connections that I do not know about. After all, the Bible is a large source of information.

Does the Bible address this very thing any where else?"

From there, the believer seeking the Lord's answers will begin to question the conclusion and submit what they know to the Lord for His guidance. They will then adjust the "picture in their head" based on what the Lord shows them. In fact, their "picture" becomes subject to the understanding of the Lord, changing as the Lord provides fresh insight and understanding.

For the believer that seeks to justify their own understanding, the picture that circular logic confirmed now becomes the standard by which all scripture is judged. Scripture must now fit "that picture in their heads", as that picture cannot possibly be wrong.

Bear in mind that in this discussion, we are not concerned with the Last Trump, but with the thought processes that occur with circular reasoning and the effects of false doctrine.

Why is this excerpt critical to any discussion on overcoming? The answer is simple and straightforward - it is the single greatest indicator of overcoming, and of those in false doctrines. Here is what I mean.

As we covered above, when you have the truth of the Lord, it sparks a hunger to learn more, and to grow more. Each piece of revelation knowledge you receive drives a hunger for more. However, the key piece to this is that you will not fear what you may learn tomorrow. You are willing to hear something that requires you to adjust the picture in your head. When you have the core truth of the Lord - when you are an overcomer - you understand at the deepest level that even when it appears that you have a contradiction, it is only an appearance. You understand that the Lord will provide the understanding necessary at the right time.

However, if you are in false doctrine it will be the exact opposite. You will search out a few scriptures and pieces - just enough to satisfy your flesh. After that you will shut

down the inquiry process. You will do so as inquiry comes with a terrible risk that you will find out that the answers you WANT to believe are false.

This will be followed by a long and disturbing process of justifying every reason under the sun why the answers found by another cannot possibly be right. You will accept an ever growing amount of absurdity in your quest to maintain the picture you have built in your head.

Remember, those that overcome and are not in false doctrine will adjust the picture in their head to accept additional scripture. They will understand that no scripture lies. Rather, all scripture taken together is where the truth can be found. They will understand something in their very souls that the Bible tells us:

Proverbs 25:2-3 KJV - It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.

The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.

The overcomer understands that only a fool can imagine that one scripture is "more the right" than another scripture. The overcomer understands that only the fool will discard a scripture that appears to contradict what they hold as truth.

It is the overcomer that says "I know what I hold as truth - yet I see where this scripture seems to say otherwise. Let me go before the Lord and find out the truth of the matter, that what I hold as truth may reflect BOTH scriptures".

The overcomer will be overjoyed at the prospect of new learning and understanding. They will welcome the insights of the Lord.

In the scriptures above, we see something interesting that no overcomer should miss. Consider again what the scripture says:

"but the honour of kings is to search out a matter."

Here is the question - exactly who is the Bible speaking about on this?

Exodus 19:5-6 ESV - Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

1 Peter 2:9 ESV - But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Revelation 1:6 ESV - John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ⁶ and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 11:15 ESV - Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

Revelation 5:9-10 KJV - 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.

As we have spoken of on a number of occasions, the Old Testament once again shows us a picture of the things to come. In the passage above there are several things worth noting, as Proverbs gives a prophetic picture of the times to come, and of the coming Great Assembly.

Ecclesiastes 1:9-10, 15 KJV - The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.

Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.

What all of these scriptures reveal is a prophetic look at the overcomer. It is the overcomer alone that is called to the Kingdom of Priests. It is the overcomer alone that is a King before the Lord God. Only an overcomer can be a King, or is ever called a King beyond the days of Ancient Israel.

This tells us that the direct and most visible fruit of the overcomer is the willingness to search out the mysteries of God. I cannot emphasize this enough. I see so many debates, literal "one up" scripture wars where believers absolutely baseball bat each

other to prove that they alone possess the truth in the debate - and will do so by calling other scriptures a lie.

Let me be perfectly clear on this:

When you are confronted by scripture that clearly indicates that you are in the wrong - yet you declare that other scripture proves you correct - you are calling God a liar!

I have said it many times, and will continue to do so. If you have two scriptures that seem to contradict each other, it simply means that you are missing the third scripture. You will either heed the Holy Spirit and search out the mystery before you - or you will declare that the scripture that contradicts you cannot be right.

"It is a mis-translation."

"The other person is understanding it wrong."

"It means something different".

"They are taking it out of context".

We can all encounter genuine examples of these things. The issue becomes where the person goes from here. Perhaps you are the one that is right, and one of these things is indeed the issue. If you are an overcomer you will want to search this out - and you WILL NOT fear discovering that you are the one that is wrong.

Not only this, but the overcomer understands that many times the Lord will use such an opportunity to truly open up a mystery. I have found myself in prayer more times than I can count asking "Father, did I really get this so wrong?"

Yet the Lord then reveals something I never saw coming. No, I wasn't wrong - I simply did not have all the pieces yet. When the Lord completed the picture it was beyond what I could have imagined!

No, the overcomer does not fear the unknown truths of the Bible. They embrace the search for the mysteries of God. Only those that have something to fear will resist the search.

That is the single greatest indicator of those that do not overcome. That is the single greatest indicator of those that are in false doctrine.

Let us examine one last block of scripture in closing:

Matthew 7:15-23 KJV - Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

There is a reason why the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ speaks of false teachers, bad fruit and those that are not called to the Great Assembly in a single conversation. As it is with everything Christ taught - all of it is linked DIRECTLY back to overcoming and His soon return.

There is one more thing that needs to be covered. We are to take all things to the Lord in prayer. In fact, the more right we think we are, the more we need to take the issue back to the Lord.

Even those things He reveals to us.

Satan will tell you that you are guilty of doubt if you do this. He will attempt to convince you that to do this will displease God. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Philippians 4:4-7 ESV - Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Many believers never come to understand the full implication of what these scriptures are saying. We see the word "requests" and we key in on our very limited understanding of the word. However, in the original Greek, "request" is not simply asking God for something. It literally means "petition". In other words, it means to take all inquiries and issues before the Lord.

The most daunting petitions we have are those to understand the will of the Lord for our lives. Also, to understand the deeper mysteries of the faith in Christ Jesus. What we see in the scriptures above is a simple, straight forward command:

"Without fear or worry, take every issue and concern before the Lord."

This gives us another piece of the overcomer puzzle. It tells us that we are to seek the Lord in all things. Yet, Satan will seek to prevent this very thing. He will whisper to you, **"you already know the answer - why do you need to pray? You will make God mad for your lack of faith!"**

Sometimes, he will play on your pride.

"The only reason they are saying to pray about this is to create doubt. You are smarter than them, and already have the answer.

There is no need whatsoever to pray about this!"

Unfortunately, I have seen this more times than I care to. So many of those that refuse to even consider the growing body of evidence for the soon return of the Lord. Every attempt to share with them becomes an exercise in excuse making. When they are

asked to simply pray, and be willing to hear the Lord's voice on this, they literally become offended.

It is almost a "HOW DARE YOU QUESTION ME!" moment.

Anything beyond the few scriptures that they cling to cannot possibly be right. So, Satan sweeps in and strikes. **Any call to prayer is rejected, and done so as though it is a sin to pray!**

Unfortunately, a hardening heart is the net effect of a refusal to pray and seek God on an issue. It is also a clear indicator of false doctrine.

Remember this - none of us enter eternity perfect. That means we will enter the presence of the Lord having walked a path in which we never reached the finish line. We can never know all of the mysteries of God. In fact, we can never even know but a fraction of them.

This tells us that we will be learning from the Lord until the very day we pass into eternity - if we are willing.

The Bible tells us that if all of the miracles of Jesus were written, the whole world could not hold the books. That is just the miracles. What does this say for the actual knowledge of God? It is simply not possible for imperfect humans to possess but the smallest portion.

This is why we are to take everything before the Lord - even the things He gives us. The revelations and voice of the Lord are perfect. Our hearing is not however. We can misunderstand. We can forget. We can miss key pieces. We can add assumptions.

However, there is another part to this. The Lord has a plan for all of our lives, and that includes the things He deems necessary for us to learn. If He simply "dumped" the

body of required knowledge into us at once, we would never survive the process. We cannot even stand in the presence of God. How much more would we fall if all of His wisdom and understanding was suddenly and instantaneously downloaded into our heads and hearts?

The Lord walks us down a learning path that is designed based on His calling for our lives, and how He has built us. In other words, He knows exactly what to give us, when to give it - and how much. So, He trains and teaches us a piece at a time. One by one, He introduces the mysteries to us based on His plan for us.

That is why we must be willing to seek Him, and learn regardless of what it means for the knowledge we already have. Every day is yet one more chance to learn something new that will shake our very foundations and reveal a mystery of God we never even imagined.

However, none of this can happen if we shut out the Lord. By the way, that is also willful sin. We go into great detail on willful sin in "The Devil's Body Count".

When we refuse to pray; when we refuse to consider something new; when we refuse to consider that it is even possible that we may be the one that is wrong - we are NOT and overcomer, and may well be on our way to destruction!

So that there is NO misunderstanding, I will say it once more:

If you believe that you hold the entire truth on the matters of the Lord - ESPECIALLY those that are required to overcome - and you do not believe that it is even possible that you are wrong:

And you not even willing to pray about it. . .

You are NOT an overcomer!

However, if you know the truth beyond all doubt - yet you know the Lord can provide even greater revelations tomorrow. . .

And you are willing to learn what the Lord will show and adjust the picture in your head.

. .

If you desire to look beyond what you want to believe, ready to find the narrative that fits EVERY scripture. . .

And you are willing to pray with NO fear that you might find out that you are wrong. . .

You ARE on your way to overcoming!

It does not get any more clear than this.

In the name of the Most Blessed Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Every effort has been made to document each source that was reviewed, consulted and quoted in the production of Tribulation Rising. However, the research for this project extends back for more than 20 years.

It is simply not possible to document every source that contributed to this material.

The bibliographical information presented here represents our best effort to compile as many of the sources as possible. This was an effort that began in earnest once the direction for this project was made known by the Lord.

There are more contributors represented in this material than we have the ability to thank individually. To that end, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all of the faithful scholars that have heard the voice of the Lord, and completed the task He placed before them.

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