

***Romans 3:21-26***

*But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*

**GREAT AND TERRIBLE DAYS TO COME**

All have been stunned at the devastation caused by the earthquakes, hurricanes, and tsunami's throughout the world. It's difficult to imagine the pain and suffering, the loss and deprivation that the complete annihilation of towns and cities brings. As the world aids in picking up the pieces, I can't help but imagine the greater destruction that is coming to this world as prophetically outlined in Scripture.

The Bible pointedly declares that God will judge mankind for its blasphemies and unrepentedness: "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great" (Revelation 16:18). These prophecies are as sure as sunrise, whether believed or not.

To this end God's servants have pleaded for men and women to: "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation" (Acts 2:40 NIV). Deliverance is found in Christ alone: "Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12 NIV). This salvation comes through simple faith in accepting Christ's death, burial and resurrection as God's loving, substitutional sacrifice for sin.

For the believer in Christ, Scripture points to a different destiny than judgement: "For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him" (1 Thess. 5:9-11). The Christian awaits a special call into the presence of God: "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" (1 Thessalonians 4).

To this end believers are urged to live with clear purpose. In expectation of that "imminent call," they are to live in purity: "So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled" (1 Thess. 5:6). Christians are to be equipped with God's spiritual armour for daily victory over temptation and meaningful ministry: "But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet" (1 Thess. 5:8). And finally, in light of the world's overwhelming disregard and disrespect for God, believers are to be encouragers of one another: "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

There are two great days coming, the great day of gathering when God's own children, saved by grace, are called into His presence forever and, the great day of the Lord in which the world will be judged in the fierceness of God's wrath. To which day is your life oriented?

***What is my response:***

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