

June 6, 2021
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
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Text: *1 Thess. 4: 13-18*

“Our Blessed Hope: Part 1”

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Questions and Points for Self-Study and Discussion:

1. Considering the text Titus 3:11-14, discuss the place and benefit of holding an anticipation of Christ’s return in one’s walk of faith in this present age.
2. Assess the familiar saying, “Some persons are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good”. How might Titus 3:11-14 be used to speak to such a statement, especially in light of the command in Titus 3:15?
3. Where might one find the concept of the rapture (the translation of persons of faith from earth to glory) first revealed in Scripture.
4. “Therefore comfort one another with these words” (I Thess. 5:18). How does knowledge of prophecy in general, and teaching concerning eschatology, relate to personal “comfort” (i.e, a settled peace amidst the varied experiences encountered in life)? This is one of the “one another” statements. How have you found this “one another” active in your experience in our fellowship?
5. Compare the texts of Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, & 39 with that of I Thess. 4:15. In particular, the word “coming” (i.e., the Greek “parousia”, nominally meaning “presence”) appears in both passages. When the contexts of these texts are compared, can both in fact be speaking of the same “coming”? Or, must we allow for different senses (nuances) of “parousia” depending on context, and allow context plus correlative texts to properly discern a Biblically coherent and consistent understanding of eschatology?

Note: To this point, the doctrinal position of TBBF is that Scripture teaches distinct and separated “comings” of Christ, even as different linguistic senses to “parousia” arise in different texts.

6. Compare II Tim. 4:1 with I Thess. 4:15. Can these texts be speaking of the same eschatological event? The word “appearing” in II Tim. 4:1 is “epiphaneia” (meaning manifestation or appearing), but it clearly speaks in this text of an “appearing” involving a “coming” (presence). However, does this word difference (“epiphaneia” instead of “parousia”) require an essential distinction from “coming” as used in I Thess. 4:15? We can note that Titus 2:13 also uses the word “epiphaneia”. However, is there necessarily a distinction of merit between the events associated with these two texts, Titus 3:15 and I Thess. 4:15?

Point: Both word meanings and context must be considered, along with interpretive consistency, when analyzing texts and forming a coherent Biblical doctrine of the full revelatory scope of the coming of our Lord.

End Note: For those interested in pursuing further study of “Our Blessed Hope”, access the Resources page on the TBBF web site and download the booklet titled: “Outline Study Notes on Eschatology, with particular focus on The Blessed Hope of the Saints”.