

## HOLDING FAST THE FAITHFUL WORD

The scriptures are a marvelous document. They claim to provide “all things pertaining to life and godliness” and really are God’s love letter to the world. Maturing men and women of faith will embark upon a journey to understand and hold to the teaching of the faithful Word. Jesus Himself told us that if we “continued in His Word, we were truly be His followers - and that we would know the truth - and that His truth would set us free.

A person who “holds fast the faithful Word” is one who is stable in faith and not hypocritical by teaching one thing and living another. It seems that one who is "able to teach" will be able to exhort and refute life-styles which are inconsistent with the faithful Word. An example of those who did not hold fast the faithful Word were the Scribes and Pharisees about whom Jesus said, “Therefore, all that they tell you do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds, for they say things and do not do them” (Matthew 23:3).

Another dimension of this quality is reflected in the adverse circumstances described in 2 Timothy 2:24 where one who is “able to teach” refuses, refutes, and provides gentle correction based upon the Word of God. He or she appears to be able to encourage someone to pursue godliness as well as provoke someone to forsake ungodliness. The ability to instruct as well as correct is key. Holding fast means to “adhere to and to care for” in all personal and relational circumstances. What do these three passages from Paul’s letter to Timothy reveal about holding fast the faithful Word?

2 Timothy 1:13

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1 Timothy 1:19

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1 Timothy 3:9

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This kind of person has benefitted from the instruction of others who are able to teach - whether those in the inspired scriptures (such as Jesus or Paul) - or solid, mature people from our own life. It appears that one must be “teachable” in order to be someone who teaches this way. Becoming solid in the Word is a noble goal for someone who wishes to be God’s man or God’s woman in the 21st century church.

What are the associated characteristics of a man or woman of God who holds to the trustworthy (faithful) Word which reflects sound doctrine?

1 Timothy 1:10

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2 Timothy 1:13

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2 Timothy 4:3

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Titus 1:9

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Such a person seems to be able to help another to a mature understanding and conclusion through instructive encouragement as well as giving correction along the way. He does so by exhorting (calling near, inviting...2 Timothy 4:2) as well as convincing, admonishing, or refuting those who contradict. These people (contradictors) are those who repeatedly vibrate, agitate, excite, and stir up people.

How can I discern my ability to hold fast the faithful Word?

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In what ways (in public and in secret) am I a hypocrite?

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How is my lifestyle consistent (or inconsistent) with authentic standards?

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How familiar am I with Christ's and the apostles' standards? Are they part of my life?

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How do I measure up in faith and love for God and His saints?

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Do I have a good (clear) conscience?

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Am I holding to the mystery of the faith? Do I know what it is?

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Am I able to discern "fictitious teaching"?

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Is my speech consistent with what the Scriptures teach?

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Am I able to confront those who speak myths?

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In what ways do I encourage other believers to pursue lives consistent with sound teaching?

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## BECOMING A MAN OR WOMAN OF GOD WHO “HOLDS FAST THE FAITHFUL WORD”

How can you be sure you are on the road to becoming a man or woman of God who knows how to “hold fast the faithful Word?” The answer is simple: engage the scriptures with your whole heart. The bible - and your soul - are the two most precious resources God has placed in the world!

By giving attention to the passages listed in the following ten major areas of the bible’s teaching on “sound doctrine” you can make great strides in building your foundation of faith.

There are nine areas of enquiry before you in this section:

ALMIGHTY FATHER

THE GOD STORY

THE REALM OF ANGELS

MAN, CREATION’S CROWN

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

GOD’S SAVING GRACE

THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE CHURCH

FUTURE THINGS

## ALMIGHTY FATHER

God is the Father Almighty (1), Creator of all that exists (2). I believe by faith in the authority of His absolute Word (3), that as we are all created by Him, we are all responsible and accountable to Him (4).

He is in all aspects perfect (5), and has revealed that perfection in His attributes (6), names (7), and decrees (8). There is sufficient revelation in nature (9) to hold us accountable to God. There is sufficient revelation in Scripture (10) to produce faith and provide salvation (11) and insure eternal death (12) for those who reject the truth.

He is three in Person (13); Father, Son, and Holy spirit, yet One in essence (14). All three are One, having the same nature, attributes, and perfections and are worthy of precisely the same reverence, confidence, and obedience.

Because He has no beginning or end (15), Lord God reigns infinitely majestic above all (16) that man can perceive or accomplish. He is Eternal King of Kings and Lord of Lords! (17)

I believe and bow before and worship You Lord God!

1...Genesis 1:1	7...Exodus 3:13-15	13...Matthew 28:19
2...Genesis 1:1; Acts 17:24	8...Isaiah 40:13,14; Romans 11:33-36	14...Deuteronomy 6:4
3...Hebrews 11:3	9...Romans 1:20	15...Psalm 90:1,2
4...Romans 3:19	10...2 Timothy 3:16,17	16...Isaiah 40:21-26
5...Leviticus 11:44	11...Romans 9:8-17	17...Philippians 2:9-11
6...Romans 3:20		

## THE GOD STORY

God has specifically, historically, and infallibly revealed Himself through the Creation (1), the Living Word (2), and the Written Word (3). We as sons of the first Adam are accountable to these writings (4), and as sons of the Second Adam (5) carry even greater responsibility for all that God has spoken (6).

God has faithfully inspired (7) all that we need to come to faith (8), and through His preserving hand delivered infallible words in the original manuscripts (9). His Word is the absolute, mediated authority (10) to be searched, interpreted (11), and obeyed through the illumination of the Holy Spirit (12).

We have searched (13) and are confident (14) that the sixty-six books of the so-called Old and New Testaments are in this manner the very Breath of God (15), and believe Lord God that You have delivered a written Word without error (16), just as you have provided a Living Word, the Lord Christ, without sin (17).

I search O Lord and desire to be set free by the Words of Truth! (18)

1...Romans 1:20

2...Hebrews 1:2,3

3...Hebrews 1:1

4...Romans 3:19,20

5...1 Corinthians 15:45

6...2 Timothy 2:15

7...2 Timothy 3:16

8...1 Peter 1:3,4

9...Jude 1:3

10...John 10:35; Luke 21:33; Hebrews 4:12,13

11...2 Peter 1:20; Acts 20:27

12...1 Corinthians 2:10-13

13...John 5:39; Acts 17:11

14...Romans 15:4

15...2 Timothy 3:16

16...2 Peter 1:19-21

17...Hebrews 7:15

18...John 8:31, 32

## THE ANGELIC REALM

God has created the angelic realm (1) and man's existence is deeply related to that of the angels (2). The host of angels is unimaginable vast and sinless. They are represented by archangels of which three are named: Lucifer, Michael, and Gabriel. These are apparently distinct from the Angel of the Lord who has a special place in communicating with man (3).

Lucifer, "son of the morning", was the most glorious of God's angelic creation (4). His sin of pride caused him to become Satan and a great company of angels followed him in this rebellion and moral fall (5). These now reside as demons in the kingdom of Satan and the abyss to do his will and share his fate (6).

Satan is the originator of sin (7) and under the permission of God tempted Adam and Eve into transgression (8) and continues to tempt their offspring (9). He appears deceptively as an angel of light (10) counterfeiting the works of God to tempt and accuse man (11). He is immensely powerful and is subjected completely only to the power of God. (12) He was judged at the cross (13), his sentence to be executed at a time yet future when he will be bound, loosed, and then cast into the lake of fire for eternity (14).

Those angels who kept their holy estate and did not follow Satan's rebellion remain eternally before the throne of God where they protect and proclaim Your holiness (15). Others go out as ministering spirits to minister to those who will be heirs of salvation. (16)

We believe that man was created lower than the angels; and that in the incarnation, Christ subjected Himself to this lower place that He might lift us with Himself above the angels (17).

We believe, O Lord, that though "his craft and power are great" Satan's power is subjected in every way to the will of his Creator, so that we may live wisely (18) and without fear (19).

I search, O Lord, and desire to reject the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the boastful pride of life (20) and join with the heavenly host in placing you above all rule and authority, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords! (21)

1...Psalm 148

2...Ephesians 6:12; 1 Peter 1:12

3...Genesis 22:11

4...Ezekiel 28:11-15

5...Isaiah 14:13-17

6...1 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6

7...Ezekiel 28:15

8...Genesis 3:1-19; Job 1,2

9...1 Corinthians 7:5

10...2 Corinthians 11:14

11...Revelation 12:9, 10

12...Jude 1:8-10

13...Colossians 2:15

14...Revelation 20;1-3, 10

15...Ezekiel 1:4-21

16...Hebrews 1:14

17...Hebrews 2:9; 1:4

18...2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 6:11

19...Luke 22:31

20...1 John 2:15-17

21...Colossians 1:16-18; Isaiah 14:13,14

## MAN, CREATION'S CROWN

Mankind was created in the image of God (1) as the crown of God's earthly creating activity. He was created to please God and enjoy Him forever (2).

I believe according to the authority of the Scriptures and the consistent testimony of history that man is fallen as a race (3) and headed down the path of destruction (4). This spiritual death and alienation spread to all men through the sin of Adam and Eve (5) who as agents of the human race reflected in every way the nature and responsibility of all men.

As a result we have become sons of the devil (6) apart from the regenerating work of God through belief in the Lord Jesus Christ (7). We grope until such a time as those who believe come to faith (8) and find hope in the resurrection from the dead and immortality through the Gospel (9).

Every "child of Adam" is born into the world with a nature devoid of divine life and is essentially and unchangeably evil apart from the work of divine grace (10).

I cling to you, O Lord, knowing that I am truly lost and spiritually dead in my sins apart from your redeeming grace in the Lord Jesus Christ (11)!

1...Genesis 1:24-31

2...Matthew 22:34-40; Revelation 22:1-5

3...Romans 3:9-23

4...Revelation 20:11-15

5...Romans 5:18,19; 1 Corinthians 15:22

7...Romans 5:6-11

8...Acts 17:22-28

9...1 Corinthians 15:50-58

10...Psalm 51:5

11...Ephesians 2:1-10

## THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Lord Jesus Christ is incomparably the pre-eminent Person of history. He is fully God (1), fully man (2), fully Proven (3), fully Sinless (4), and fully Lord (5) of all God has created (6)!

In His merciful lovingkindness (7) and eternal purpose (8), God gave his only Son (9) to be a mediator and bring man back to Himself (10). The Lord Jesus Christ is prophet (11), priest (12) and king (13) over the whole earth. He is Head and Savior of the Church (14), the Heir of all things (15), and the great righteous Judge of the whole world (16). From eternity God ordained a people to be His children (17), and, in time, these children are being redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified (18).

Christ was born incarnate by his own will (19) for the express purpose of saving his children (20), and took upon Himself the nature of man (21), yet He, himself, was without sin (22). He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary (23), and so was the prophesied seed of Abraham and David (24) according to the Scriptures. Because He appeared as both God and man He has become the only qualified mediator between God and man (25).

The Lord Jesus Christ took upon Himself the requirement of the law on our behalf and fulfilled it (26) taking our personal punishment upon Himself (27). He endured grief and pain that we cannot imagine (28) and was crucified (29), died (30), was buried (31), remained in the grave three days (32), rose from the dead (33), ascended into heaven (34), and sits at the right hand of God the Father making intercession (35). He shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world (36)!

In His great grace and perfect sacrifice, He satisfied the requirements of the just character of God (37), insured our reconciliation (38), and everlasting inheritance in heaven for all whom the Father had given Him (39).

I give thanks to you, O Lord, and embrace the "good news" of your Gospel with a peaceful and hopeful heart of praise (40)!

1...John 8:58; Colossians 2:9

2...Hebrews 5:7-9

3...1 Corinthians 15:16

4...Hebrews 4:15

5...Revelation 5:5

6...Philippians 2:9-11

7...1 Peter 1:3; Ps. 103:6-14

8...Hebrews 13:20; John 17:5,24

9...John 3:16

10...Hebrews 5:9

11...Acts 3:22

12...Hebrews 5:5,6

13...Psalm 2:6; Luke 1:32,33

14...Colossians 1:16-20

15...Hebrews 1:2

16...Acts 17:31

17...1 Peter 2:9, 10

18...Romans 8:30

19...John 1:1-18

20...Luke 19:10

21...Romans 8:3; Hebrews 2:14-17

22...Hebrews 4:15

23...Galatians 4:4; Matthew 1:18-25

24...Matthew 1:22,23; Luke 1:27-35

25...1 Timothy 2:5

26...Romans 8:1-4

27...Isaiah 53:4-6

28...Hebrews 5:7-9; Luke 22:39-46

29...John 19:16-22

30...John 19:30-37

31...Matthew 27:57-66

32...John 2:19-22

33...John 20:1-18

34...Acts 1:9-11

35...Hebrews 10:12

36...Revelation 19:11-21

37...Colossians 2:13, 14

38...Romans 5:11

39...John 17:9; Ephesians 1:3-14

40...Romans 8:31-39



## GOD'S SAVING GRACE

The offer of salvation is extended to all of Adam's offspring with a call to place faith in the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (1). We have only to embrace our need (2), consider the Person and Work of Christ (3), confess our sin (4), and believe to find eternal life (5)!

### WE HAVE BEEN MADE RIGHT BY GOD

Though created innocent and free to choose good and evil (6) mankind sinned (7) and lost all ability to will to do any spiritual good regarding salvation (8). As we are dead in our sin (9) we are unable by our own strength or will or human status to convert ourselves (10). When we come to Christ, we are freed from the bondage of sin (11) and once again freely choose to honor God through our new nature (12).

God in His great mercy chooses to redeem His elect (13) and calls us by His eternal power and grace (14). The number justified by His grace (15) will be the exact number glorified in Heaven (16). He pardons our sin (17) not on the basis of personal merit (18) but His great grace in fulfilling the requirement of the Law through Christ (19).

God decreed eternally to justify (pardon) all of His chosen ones (20), and paid the greatest possible price imaginable to ransom our souls: HIS OWN DEAR SON (21). This salvation is effected at such a time as we place faith in the forgiving and resurrecting authority of Christ (22). We are adopted as God's dear sons and enjoy the full liberties, privileges, and responsibilities of children of God (23).

### WE ARE BEING SET APART BY GOD'S WORK IN OUR LIVES

By His Word (24) and His Holy Spirit (25) dwelling within us, the dominion of sin in our lives is broken (26) and we enter into open conflict with the pleasures of sin (27). Our choices not to sin (28) and to obey Christ result in honor to God and the blessings of obedience to us (29). It is God's expectation in light of His great gift that we should joyfully engage in this conflict (30), trusting in God's Holy Spirit to lead us in all of our ways (31).

No one is brought into or kept in the salvation of God through the working of good works. The one who loves God finds his assurance in obedience to the truth (32) and without that obedience is guaranteed no such assurance (33). Our salvation was not bought on the basis of our works nor is it kept by them either (34). God forbid that grace should abound through our sin (35), but the one who loves God will serve God (36). Nothing can snatch a justified one from the hand of God (37).

### WE WILL BE DELIVERED INTO ETERNAL LIFE BY THE POWER OF GOD

I thank you, O God, for Your great salvation revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ (38)! I cling to You and long for the day I will be with You forever (39)! I believe by faith in the authority of the Living and written Word that I shall worship you forever and ever, Amen! (40)

1...John 3:16; Acts 17:21-31  
2...Romans 3:9,23  
3...John 1:14-18  
4...1 John 1:9  
5...Acts 2:37-41  
6...Genesis 2:15-17  
7...Romans 5:12,15, 17  
8...Romans 1:18-23; 3:9-18  
9...Ephesians 2:1,5  
10..John 1:12,13  
11..Romans 8:1,2  
12...2 Corinthians 5:17  
13...Romans 8:28-30  
14...John 6:44; 1 Peter 1:20

15...Romans 8:30  
16...1 Peter 2:4,5  
17...Colossians 2:13  
18...Romans 2:11-16  
    Ephesians 2:8-10  
19...Romans 8:3,4  
20...Ephesians 1:4  
21...John 3:16; 1 Pe 1:19  
22...Romans 10:8-10  
23...Romans 8:15-17  
24...John 17:17  
25...John 16:13-16  
26...Romans 6:12;  
    Colossians 2:13,14  
27...Romans 7:19-23

28...1 John 2:15-17  
29...1 Corinthians 3:10-15  
30...Hebrews 12:1,2  
31...John 14:26  
32...1 Peter 1:22  
33...1 John 3:18-22  
34...Ephesians 2:8-10  
35...Romans 6:1,2  
36...1 John 3:7-10  
37...Luke 22:31  
38...Romans 8:31-39  
39...1 Thessalonians 4:17  
40...Revelation 22:1-5

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the divine third person of the true godhead (1). He is eternal (2), possesses and imparts life (3), and can be called the truth (4). His divinity is demonstrated by his universal presence (5), mighty power (6), and infinite knowledge (7).

The Holy Spirit has been present in the world since the very beginning (8). His ministry has been, among other things, to reveal sin (9), to fill (10), come upon (11), guide (12), speak through (13), provide leaders (14), empower (15), and strive with men (16).

His present-day ministry in the life of the Christian believer involves regeneration (17), indwelling (18), baptizing (19), sealing (20), filling (21), giving gifts (22), and producing fruit (23). His presence is the trademark of the genuinely authentic Christian (24) whose faith rests on the power of God (25).

His present-day objective regarding the unregenerate world is to convict it of sin, righteousness, and judgment (25). He does not work according to His own initiative but discloses Jesus (27).

In the future He will signify the beginning of the tribulation by being removed in order that the Anti-christ may be revealed (28).

In the life of the church, the Holy Spirit empowers and fills it (29), appoints church leaders, and makes them overseers of the flock (30). The Spirit sends out missionaries (31), directs and comforts (31), and sets believers apart for God's purposes (32).

Lord, may your Spirit reveal the depths of the Father's heart toward me that we might fully receive the things you have freely given me (37)!

1...Acts 5:3-4

2...Hebrews 9:14

3...Romans 8:2; John 6:63

4...John 16:13; 1 John 5:7

5...Psalms 139:7-13

6...Luke 1:35

7...1 Corinthians 2:10-11

8...Genesis 1:2

9...John 16:8; Micah 6:8

10..Exodus 31:3; Acts 2:4

11..1 Samuel 16:13; Acts 11:15-18

12..Nehemiah 9:20; Acts 15:28

13..2 Samuel 23:2; Acts 16:6,7

14..Numbers 11:16-30; Acts 20:28

15..Ezekiel 7:12; Acts 1:8

16..Isaiah 6:9; Acts 28:25

17..Titus 3:5; 2 Thessalonians 2:13

18..John 14:16-17; Psalms 51:10-13

19...1 Corinthians 12:13

20...2 Corinthians 1:22

21...Ephesians 5:18

22...1 Corinthians 12-14

23...Galatians 5:22-23

24...Romans 8:9

25...1 Corinthians 2:1-5

26...John 16:8-11

27...John 16:13-14

28...2 Thessalonians 2:3-8

29...Acts 2:4

30...Acts 20:17, 28

31...Acts 8:29; 9:31

32...Romans 15:16

33...1 Corinthians 2:10-16

## THE CHURCH

The living instrument through which the living Lord Jesus Christ is represented on earth is called His Church (1). It consists of all those who have placed their faith in God the Son alone for salvation from sin, death, and hell (2). Each member has been placed by the Holy Spirit into the church which is also called the body of Christ. Christ being its head (3). Her purpose is to know God (4), make disciples (5), and become mature in Christ (6) which is practically manifested by increasing faith in God (7), hope in the future of God's ultimate redemption (8), and a love for all the saints (9). She is a living organism empowered by divine initiative (10).

The church is also an organization with leaders to whom God has given charge over local gatherings of believers (11). These men are called elders and shepherds over God's flock (12) and must give an account to God for the souls that are placed in their care (13). Added to these men are deacons who tend to the physical needs of the flock while providing support to the elders (14).

The church observes two ordinances; one which is initiatory, called baptism (15), and another which is commemorative called communion (16). These rites initiate one into the Christian life (14) and help to maintain the foundation on which the church was originally established (17).

Truth, both written and living, is a primary trademark of the church (18). She was established on the truth (19) and is also its pillar and support (20). She is opposed to darkness and evil in any form and of any kind, both in the lives of its members as well as in the world where she is called to be salt (21) and light (22).

I thank you Lord God for giving me connected life and identity as a living stone as a part of Your Son's Bride (23).

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Ephesians 3:1-3                      | 13. Hebrews 13:17                    |
| 2. 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:3-6 | 14. 1 Timothy 3:8-13; Acts 6         |
| 3. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Exodus 20:3  | 15. Acts 2:37-42                     |
| 4. Philippians 3:8-10                   | 16. 1 Corinthians 11:20-34           |
| 5. Matthew 28:28-30                     | 17. Matthew 28:28-30                 |
| 6. Ephesians 4:11-16                    | 18. Colossians 1:19-20               |
| 7. Ephesians 1:15                       | 19. John 17:17-19                    |
| 8. Colossians 1:3-5                     | 20. Matthew 16:13-20; John 14:6      |
| 9. 2 Thessalonians 1:3                  | 21. 1 Timothy 3:15; Matthew 5:13-16  |
| 10. Acts 1:6-11                         | 22. 1 John 1:5-10                    |
| 11. 1 Timothy 3:1-11; Titus 1           | 23. 1 Peter 2:4,4; Revelation 19:7,8 |
| 12. 1 Peter 5:1-4                       |                                      |

## THE FUTURE

In the final days prior to the coming of God's Kingdom (1) men will undergo punishment for rejecting God's provision of salvation in and through the Lord Jesus Christ (2). This period is known as the great tribulation (3) and shall be a time when all nations will be judged (4). The time leading up to the great tribulation will be characterized by a total disregard and general unawareness of Christ's return (5), sudden destruction of life (6), a falling away from the true faith (7), seducing spirits (8), and unbridled depravity (9). At the conclusion of the tribulation period Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, will return from heaven (10) to set up an earthly, thousand-year reign (11).

At the beginning of Christ's earthly reign Satan and his hosts shall be bound and cast into the bottomless pit for the duration of the millennial period (12). With the completion of the millennial reign Satan will be released for a short period of time to deceive the nations one last time (13). After this, he will be judged and cast into the lake of fire and brimstone to be tormented day and night forever (14). Following this unbelievers from all ages of time, circumstance, and position will appear before the Great White Throne to receive the penalty described by their unbelief (15). A new heaven and earth shall appear and a new Jerusalem will arrive as the Father makes all things new (16).

As believers who have escaped the wrath to come (17), we are to consider our lives in light of the imminent return of the Lord (18), and be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless (19).

Come Lord Jesus! I wait for the privilege of living forever through faith in Your Name!

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|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. 1 Corinthians 15:20-28     | 11. Revelation 20:4-6  |
| 2. Matthew 24:21-22; Daniel 9 | 12. Revelation 20:1-3  |
| 3. Matthew 24:29-35           | 13. Revelation 20:7-9  |
| 4. Isaiah 26:21,27            | 14. Revelation 20:10   |
| 5. Luke 17:26-30              | 15. Revelation 20:11   |
| 6. 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3      | 16. Revelation 21:1-9  |
| 7. 1 Timothy 4:1              | 17. Revelation 3:10-13 |
| 8. 2 Timothy 3:1-5            | 18. Revelation 22:20   |
| 9. Revelation 19:11-16        | 19. 2 Peter 3:9-14     |
| 10. Acts 1:11                 |                        |