

Called & Chosen & Faithful

FOT 2019

William P Goff

Need to speak in season... This is the Feast of Tabernacles, picturing the one-thousand-year reign of Christ and His Saints.

My focus for today's message is going to be on how we as members of God's church need to be ready for the return of our Lord & Savior, and ready to rule with Him. I also want to emphasize that there is urgency required here. He tells us numerous times that He comes quickly. In Revelation 22 alone, He tells us (3) times that He comes quickly. That quickly might be coming sooner than we realize.

So being ready is of the essence for the cog today. This is no time for us (the church) to be lackadaisical, especially now when it is the Laodicea attitude that seems to be dominating or prevailing in the church today. We usually see the finger being pointed at the other guy as the Laodiceans, But I ask, are we sure that we are not residing in the city of Laodicea ourselves?

Remember, Laodiceans are told that they think they are okay, and they think that everything is hunky-dory, but they find out it's just the opposite.

This is something that we all need to contemplate, because our Lord tells the Laodiceans being they are neither cold nor hot, that He's ready to spue (or vomit) them out of His mouth. Lukewarm is not acceptable to our Lord.

Now let's start by being mindful of something. When we watch the news now days, we constantly hear words like "unprecedented" and "Apocalyptic" being used concerning storms and different weather events. Or "this is the third 10,000 yr. storm we had in the past three years. When we see the fires in California and other States, and other countries, and calamities piling up, one on top of another, one can only conclude that something is up.

How about wars & rumors of wars? Do we realize how they are increasing? A couple of years ago I was reading on the Internet how out of the 200 plus countries around the world, there were 40 that were at war or major conflict. Now if you check, you will find that there are so many countries at war or major conflict around the world, that they now list the countries that are Not at war or major conflict. Adam Withnall of the Sentinel newspaper writes that there are only 11 countries in the world today that are actually free from war or major conflict.

Brethren, if the events that are happening around the world today were happening back in the 70ies or 80ies, the church would have been going berserk. But it's not. On the contrary, the cog today seems to be sleeping.

We are not living at the time when the church of God is on fire, we are living at the time when the church of God fits the parable of the slumbering & sleeping 10 virgins of Matthew 25. All the signs that our Lord warned would come, are here, and escalating at a rapid pace.

Yes, so many signs are here, and maybe the most important one pertains to an end time prophesy concerning Damascus the capitol of Syria that we need to be aware of. Isaiah 17:1 speaks of Damascus becoming a ruinous heap. The significance of Damascus is that it's the oldest inhabited city in the world. And Scriptures says it's going to be destroyed. The church has always believed that once that prophesy is fulfilled, all the others will follow like dominos.

Brethren. The signs are here, but the church in general, is sleeping. Why? Maybe there is an epidemic of "crying wolf syndrome" in the church these days?

Back in the 70ies & 80ies there were many sermons about end time, and how Christ was soon to return. I can remember the pulpits oftentimes stating that earthquakes were on the rise back then. But I checked up on that back then and found that it wasn't so. Earthquakes at that time were averaging the same each year in severity and frequency.

But found myself rechecking on that now, and found that for the past few years' earthquakes are on the increase. I also learned that every (not a few, not most, not many) but every super volcano around the world right now are expanding, which all scientists agree is a sure sign of eruption. Is it possible that maybe over the years we have heard "end time" messages so much, that we have become oblivious to the times and the signs in which we are living?

We need a reality check, because the time for us in God's church to be on fire, and ready for Christ's return is now! And in order to comprehend the urgency concerning this matter, I want to look at a number of important facts that pertain to Christ's return and the setting up of His Kingdom.

We are instructed by our Lord to pray "Thy Kingdom Come" And I am sure most of us do. I know it's always on the top of my prayer list. But, do we realize that the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom that we pray for to come, do we realize that that Kingdom hasn't even been set up or established yet? How could it, most of the people who will be placed in office, are still asleep in the grave, awaiting the resurrection.

Let's stop here and look at something that is very important for us to realize. It's in the book of Daniel. Daniel chapter 2 begins with King Nebuchadnezzar's dream of that big statue. We know God gave the interpretation to Daniel. The head of gold was King Nebuchadnezzar's (Babylon, the world's 1st world ruling empire.) Then the dream and the interpretation goes on telling that that empire would end and more empires would come in succession, one after the other.

Now there has been much talk, speculation and investigation concerning exactly who all these empires were. But for this message all of that is irrelevant because we are looking at the bigger picture here. What I want to point out (and I think most in God's church will agree on) is that we are down to the dawn of the last world ruling empire, represented by the statues 10 toes, the 10 Kings, which the Scriptures clearly says will give their power to the coming Beast power.

We know that Beast power is coming, and we know that Beast power will be ruling this world and will fight Christ as He returns to this earth. And we know that Christ will destroy that Beast power at His return. But there is another very important factor concerning the return of our Lord that I think we in God's church sometimes overlook, or have become oblivious to. In the past we used to see a very good artist description of Christ returning to this earth. That stone (the one that was cut out without hands spoken of in book of Daniel) coming down from heaven and striking the image on its feet and totally destroying it.

The stone does represent Christ. But there is something very important that we all need to realize! Let us not forget that our Lord is not returning to this earth alone, He will be returning to this earth with His Saints, His Called & Chosen & Faithful. (Revelation 17:12-14)

A lot has to transpire before our Lord touches down on the Mount of Olives. For one, His saints have to meet Him up in the clouds, and His Kingdom (the Kingdom that we have been praying for) has to be established.

Let's go to Daniel, and see when and where that Kingdom will be set up or established: Daniel 2:41-44 Remember God says He does nothing without revealing His secrets to His prophets, his servants. That's us brethren, His church.

The Greek for "set up" is defined as: appoint, establish, make, set up. Yes, during the reign of these 10 Kings, during the reign of the Beast power, our Lord is going to establish or set up His Kingdom. And He is going to do this up in heaven with His resurrected Saints.

This is nothing new to God's church, we all have read countless times that the dead in Christ will rise first, then we which are alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. We all know these verses, the question is do we believe what they say? Do we ever picture ourselves being up in the clouds? Do we ever contemplate about that, or is that just a metaphor to us? Or maybe trivial to us?

One of the churches began advertising recently how their planning a Feast site (for next year 2020) in the Netherlands. They listed a number of intriguing highlights, to try and peak peoples interest to want to attend there. They talk about touring Amsterdam & Holland. How exciting that will be, and visiting a world famous auto race track. I guess that's what all the various feast sites do to lure us into attending, right? I'm sure some in God's church will be very excited to say the least, anticipating visiting those sites, with much excitement even in planning and preparing for it.

Well how about being up on the "Sea of Glass" standing there before our Lord and Savior? Looking down on the inhabitants of the earth, as the Beast power continues its evil rule. How much anticipation do we give to that plan that our Heavenly Father and His Son have in store for His church? Do we realize that during the reign of the Beast power (which is soon to take charge over this entire earth) do we realize that Christ's church, His little flock will be up on the Sea of Glass while the Beast is still ruling this world?

(Revelation 15 please.) Verses 1&2 elaborates more on the time frame and the location where God's Kingdom will be established. It also clarifies exactly who will be there on that Sea of Glass with Christ, and who will not be there.

We have a High Calling brethren, but make no mistake about it, not everyone that has been called will be there. One has to qualify. One has to be Chosen. Let us not forget the sobering verse of Matthew 22:14 where it says "many are called but few are chosen." We just read in Revelation 15:2 that it is those who have overcome who will be standing there on the sea of Glass. Revelation 17:14 says that those who will be returning to this earth with Christ are: Called & Chosen & Faithful.

Yes, it is the Called, Chosen, and Faithful that will be up on that Sea of Glass; involved in a marriage ceremony, receiving rewards, and given positions of authority, as they prepare to return to this earth and usher in the 1,000-year reign of Christ. The time frame for qualifying to be there brethren, is now. And let us not forget, our Heavenly Father is looking for perfection in us, and He's looking for us to be Holy, as he is Holy.

Now don't let that word "perfect" found in Matthew 5:48 scare you. The Greek for perfection there only means complete in mental and moral character, fully mature. Now most pulpits in the church of God will tell you this perfection cannot be achieved on our own, by ourselves. They falsely believe and teach that we will become perfect, that we will acquire that Holy Righteous Character of the Father at our change, from flesh to spirit, as if there is some magic wand at the end of the day. Brethren, nothing could be further from the truth. There is no magic wand that will instantaneously change our character, our sinful natures into Holy Righteous character. It's a process, and a process that has to be completed now. O, it's true that we cannot accomplish this on our own, but we are not alone, we have been given the powerful Holy Spirit of the Father Himself at baptism and hands.

God always gives us the physical (which we humans understand quite well) to better understand the more important spiritual (Which we humans don't understand all that well) (1 Kings 6:7 please)

Notice that there is no "magic wand" in the tool shed, but there is an axe. Many in God's church today (Just as was predicted) like to hear smooth things. And many pulpits are preaching smooth things. Many seem to think we don't have to worry about our sins, that there is a magic wand at the end of the day. But that is not so, our sinful natures need to be changed now, while we are alive.

Brethren, I ask, is our High Calling on the front burner of our lives? Or have we lost sight of it?

We are not living at the time our Lord began to build His church (that was 2,000 yrs ago) we are living at the time when He is going to "complete" it. We are living at the time when we need to be ready. We are living at the time when we need to be Faithful. And we are living at the time that our Lord and Savior questioned 2,000 years ago whether He would even find faith on this earth at this time.

We are at the end of the age brethren, the time when the church of God is lukewarm, slumbering & sleeping. But not for long. There is a very Loud wakeup call coming, known as "The Midnight Cry."

Matthew 25:1-7 (Lets go there because there is something concerning that cry that I don't think we realized in the past.

Currently man has the cog divided into hundreds of separate groups. But let us Not be fooled by men. In God's eyes there are only 2 groups. Yes 2, the wise & the foolish - the sheep and the goats.

Brethren, when that midnight cry is sounded, the dividing wall that men "leaders" have erected between various cog groups, will disappear. The only division will be between the wise & foolish. The sheep & goats. And one of those groups will be quite happy at the sounding of the "Midnight Cry", but the other will be in a panic.

Please don't take this message as "Doom & Gloom" because it's just the opposite

The wise the ones who have been filling their lamps with oil will be quite happy at that midnight cry, because they know how offal this world is and how so many are suffering. And how wonderful it will be to know Christ is on His way back to stop all the suffering and heartache. Many of them will be accounted worthy to escape what's coming, and be protected during The Great Tribulation. Those brethren will be going into the Marriage of the Lamb.

But the foolish will not be happy, they will be tried in the great tribulation, and will be shut out of the marriage according to Matthew 25: 10-12.

It's often taught that the oil refers to God's Holy Spirit, but I don't think that is correct. Foolish are told to go buy for themselves, but you cannot buy God's Spirit, it's a free gift. What we can buy, and better be buying, (and still buying today) is Truth. If you study that parable, you will find that the oil represents Truth.

The Scripture says: Buy the Truth, sell it not. The Scripture says: The Truth is a lamp unto my feet. How do we buy Truth??? With our time (time is money) Buy truth by studying God's Word, proving all things. Rightly dividing the word of Truth.

Brethren, are we part of the Wise or part of the Foolish? The choice is 100 and 10 percent ours to make. And time is running out.

That midnight cry of Matthew 25 is soon to sound. And Revelation 10 helps us to comprehend the time frame of that Cry and the urgency concerning how we need to be ready now.

Revelation 10 that whole chapter speaks of Christ's return, and even identifies one of the two witnesses. And that angels "cry" spoken of in verse 3, is the same cry of Matthew 25. If you look at the Greek, you will see that the "midnight cry" of Matthew 25 comes from this Angels "cry" They are the same Cry.

Now some will call what I am saying here heresy. But heresy is not necessarily bad, it is damnable heresy that we need to be concerned about. The Apostle Paul was accused of preaching heresy, and he was proud of it. (Acts 24:14) And we are living at the time when one better be careful not to get their heresies mixed up, because we are living at the time when good is called bad, and bad is called good. We are living at the time when the word of truth is evil spoken of. Do we realize that brethren? Are we awake, or are we asleep?

2nd Thessalonians please.

We need to realize when Peter said the day was coming when the 'way of truth "shall be" evil spoken of. (That was around 2,000 years ago) We need to change the tense on that from future, to present, because the way of truth is being evil spoken of today.

Christ tells us that no one (except the Father) knows exactly when He will return. But let us be sober brethren, let us be those children of light, not of darkness.

In Lk. 21:34 We are told: "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."

Other translations state it like this: Take heed to yourselves that your hearts be not loaded down with self-indulgence, drunkenness and the worries of this life. Brethren, if we find ourselves worried about things, we need to use caution and examine if we truly believe God, because worrying come from a lack of faith. Our Heavenly Father promises every good thing to us, as long as we love Him. And according to Romans 8:28 loving God is a matter of keeping his commandments.

Verse 35 of Luke 21 says: For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-7 that the day of the Lord comes upon those who are in darkness as a thief in the night. But not upon those who are the children of light.

Brethren, where is our treasure located? Is it down here on this dying earth? Or is it up in Heaven?

Are we content down here on planet earth? Most on this planet are suffering many are suffering horrendously.

We need God's Kingdom to come to this earth and take charge of it, like this Feast of Tabernacles pictures. But let us not forget that before God's Kingdom can come to this earth, it has to be established first up on the Sea of Glass with His resurrected Saints, His Called, Chosen and Faithful.