

NEWSLETTER

February - 2024

Sunday Bible Study: 9:45 a.m.

Sunday Service: 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study:
7:00 p.m.

SPEAKERS

February 4: Ken Storm, *Holy Communion*

February 11: Charles Korhonen

February 18: Ivan Niemela

February 25: Ken Storm, *Potluck meal following the service*

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TAPIOLA APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH

False Prophets

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

The disciples of Jesus once asked Him, "...*what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*" to which He answered, "*Take heed that no man deceive you*" (Matt 24:3-4). Although there will be wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes among other distresses in the latter days, He said not to let them distract you from spending time in God's Word as these things must first come to pass. Instead, while we should be alert to the signs of the end of the world as they occur, we must be ever vigilant against spiritual deceit because "... *there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect*" (Matthew 24:24). Therefore, stay ready to meet Jesus in the clouds with your lamp of faith burning.

The tribulation in the last hours of time will absolutely capture the attention of the entire world. Deception becomes so dire in those days that many will abandon their God-given faith to seek protection from someone or something offering safe harbor from the spiritual and physical storms ravaging the world. In return for this 'protection', Revelation 13: 14-15 speaks of a beast that will cause those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast and to kill all others who will not worship that image. Those who make and worship the image are those who have taken their eyes off Jesus in response to the violent storms surrounding them. Peter did a similar thing when he tried to walk on stormy water: "*But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord save me*" (Matt 14:30). Thus, we must keep our eyes fixed upon Jesus and not become overly troubled by the storm-tossed seas encircling us; otherwise, we too shall sink.

If Satan can effectively distract us with his world-wide catastrophes, he will be able to slip in his insidious false teachings into our churches, families and minds. He will focus his deceit wherever the truth yet endures, as he will already have the rest of the world in his snare. His end-time false prophets will present Bible truths familiar to all believers, but with a twist. They will foster a believable worship environment so agreeable to the flesh that the absence of the soul-cleansing blood of Jesus will not be missed, indeed, it will no longer be needed: "*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry*" (2 Timothy 4:3-5). It appears that we are in those days now.

The world faces more and more challenges every day and in face of all this noise its people are worriedly searching for ways to return to normal. But while these things continually happen, we are to look to Jesus, as the greatest threat to our undying soul comes not from the tribulations we see and experience, no matter how severe they become, but from Satan's stealthy attack on our faith. Interestingly, our subject text says that the false prophets of the end times will

come to you where you worship. No longer will they just be elsewhere; they will be within our church, let alone within our own families because “*A man’s foes shall be they of his own household*” (Matt 10:36). Satan’s counterfeit doctrine with all its subtle twists will present each believer with a decision to make: either follow some good and plausible sounding words or trust in the completed work of Jesus described in the Bible. Let’s pray for discernment to recognize false doctrine to avoid being led down a pathway that God did not intend for us: “*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world*” (1 John 4:1).

Fortunately, no one has to fall victim to Satan’s trickery if we will trust in the efficacy of Jesus’ blood shed at Calvary for the sins of the entire world. It is this blood which can be used to wash away our sins, thus reconciling us with God. Although we are all sinners in need of this blood, we cannot use this blood on ourselves but, rather, it is to be used by a servant of God to proclaim the gospel message of forgiveness to a repentant heart: “*Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee*” (Matt 9:2). Therefore, it is vital that we fervently pray God to search our hearts to see if there be any wicked way in us and, if so, to lead us to the mercy seat where sin can be openly confessed and proclaimed forgiven in the name of Jesus. Finally, because all believers possess the keys of the kingdom of heaven to proclaim the forgiveness of sins, there is where the mercy seat can be found.

God’s Peace,

Charles Korhonen