**Faith and The Second Coming**

*For the Son of Man will come with his angels in glory of His Father and will judge people according to their deeds. Matthew 16:27* NLT.

How often do you think about the second coming of Jesus? I remember as a young teenager riding my horse around sunset looking up and seeing the pink and purple clouds--and wondering if He was going to come back...and would I be ready. Those days are long gone and my thoughts about the second coming have evolved.

As I read through our textbook for the Basic Doctrine class I teach, I have learned a lot. Did you know that the doctrine of the second coming is mentioned 318 times in 216 chapters of the New Testament? Wow, it was very important to the New Testament authors. Taking time to really focus on these scriptures is not only enlightening and encouraging, but also stimulating and sobering, at least for me.

Our life here on earth really is short. But it matters. Our Savior, Jesus spoke those words at the beginning of this writing. He declared He will come back, and for a purpose. That purpose is actually the ending for his first coming. For the unbelievers, there is a Great White throne of judgement that determines their eternity. *Then I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. Revelation 20:11-12. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:15* NLT. For believers, there is a judgement of Christ, but it is based on our deeds. *For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body. Because we understand our fearful responsibility to the Lord, we work hard to persuade others. 2 Corinthians 5: 10:11.* When it's over, it is over. There are no do overs. I want to hear, well, done, my good and faithful servant. But I do not serve Him for the rewards, I serve Him because of my love for Him and my appreciation for what He did for me.

Did you realize every time you partake of the Lord's supper you "show for the Lord's death, until he comes?" 1 Corinthians 11:26. Jesus is looking forward to coming back. *Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me.* *There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going. John 14:1-4* NLT. These are much more comforting words that the thoughts about judgement! But both are true, and we need to understand that.

What we do here matters. It really does. The good news is that as we follow Him, we will be prepared for anything He asks us to do. As a teacher, I want my students prepared and successful. The Holy Spirit is an excellent teacher. He wants us to succeed, so as we listen to Him, we will! I don't understand everything about the "last days". To be honest, I don't know if I am pre-tribulation, mid-tribulation or post tribulation. I know if I lean in to Him, I will be ok, and so will you, and for that I am thankful. I encourage you. What you are going through right now will end. Whether it is with the greatest interruption of all times (the second coming) or the end of your life, He has a plan, and it is good.

*Father, I thank you for preparing a place for us. I thank you that you are coming again at a set time and it will be the right time. Please help us use our time wisely while we are here on earth. Teach us to number our days. In Jesus' Name, amen.*