

Sunday May 5th 2013
One Taken, One Left
Part One

1). 1Co 15:1 ¶ *Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you--unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,*

a). In teaching the church in Corinth Paul began where we all began with the gospel of grace – ‘Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures’. And once those in Corinth had received the good news of eternal salvation he then preached to them the gospel, ‘by which also you are saved’ – this is the good news concerning what God has made possible through the resurrection of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, which is encompassed in the scriptural concept of the salvation of the soul, inextricably linked to the Millennial Kingdom.

b). It is the good news concerning the salvation of the soul, the ‘so great salvation’ of Hebrews Chapter 2, the salvation which angels desire to look into, that those in Corinth stand. And it is through this good news that they will be saved if they ‘hold fast’ the word that was preached to them and have not believed in vain - Heb 2:1 ¶ *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation,*

c). And as we know, from the very first chapter of the Book of Genesis onwards the whole focus of scripture is upon that Day when Man will hold the scepter of rulership over a restored earth – It is for that Day, the 7th Day, the Millennial Kingdom of Christ that Man was created and Man has been saved and Christ was begotten – Ge 1:26 ¶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion*

Tit 3:4 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the

Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of age lasting life.

Heb 2:5 ¶ For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. 6 But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him? 7 You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. 8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.

d). Clearly from our scripture 'all things' have been put 'in subjection under his feet' – and although this is an irrevocable truth we do not yet see this truth in fulfillment – all things are not in subjection under us yet. But, they will be in that Day under the many sons that Christ will bring to glory – Heb 2:10 ¶ *For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

e). In fact the 7th Day, the Millennial Kingdom of Christ is the focal point for God's dealings with all 3 segments on Mankind – Jew, Christian and Gentile. The clear teaching of scripture is that the Jews have been set aside for the 2000 years of this dispensation while the Lord deals exclusively with Christians. When His dealings with Christians is complete He will then turn His attention once again to Israel for the final 7 years of Daniel's 70th week – the tribulation. And when this is complete He will then turn His attention to the Gentiles at the sheep and goat Judgment. All then is with a view to the 7th Day and rulership over the earth in that Day.

2). In this present time then, throughout the 2000 years of this dispensation when God is dealing with His Church, God is bringing to completion, through sufferings, those who will make up the 'many sons' to be brought to glory, who will become joint heirs of the Kingdom with Christ - Ro 8:16 *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 ¶ and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for*

the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

a). God deals with Christians on the basis of 'sons' because He has set out an unchangeable principle in the scriptures that only firstborn sons can rule in the age to come – Christ is the 'only begotten' firstborn Son, the nation of Israel was adopted as a firstborn son whilst still in Egypt and the adoption of Christians as firstborn sons awaits the outcome of our appearance at Christ's Judgment Seat with regards to the salvation of our souls.

b). As well as sons, God also deals with Christians on the basis of becoming the Bride of Christ after the type set out in Genesis Chapter 24 – Ge 24:4 *"but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac."*

c). And it must be so as God set in place in the first Chapter of Genesis that a Man and a Woman must rule over the restored earth together – another unchangeable principle - God the Father and Israel, God the Son and His Bride taken from the body of Christ, Christians.

d). To be adopted as a firstborn son is to be part of the Bride of Christ and all is determined at Christ's Judgment Seat.

e). No Christian is excluded from the offer to participate in the Kingdom rule and no Christian will avoid the Judgment in respect of this offer – in fact we have been delivered from God's Judgment upon those on the earth during the Tribulation in order to appear in Judgment before Christ - 2Co 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

f). 1Co 3:11 ¶ *For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

g). Our appearance at Christ's Judgment Seat is absolutely certain, the only uncertainty that remains is whether we will choose to do that which is necessary in order to be found worthy there – whether we will choose to live

by having faith to the saving of the soul while we still have opportunity to do so.

h). This said, the scriptures tell us that we must choose to live in a manner which exemplifies our 'high calling'. This is no small thing and no mean thing – the God of the universe has called us to a regal position of rulership, a privilege that no created being has ever received before and we need to live in a manner demonstrating that we are worthy of it –

Eph 4:1 ¶ *I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,*

1Th 2:12 *that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.*

3). Mt 24:37 *"But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.*

a). Things concerning 'the days of Noah' in our verses here primarily have to do with the nation of Israel as Noah typifies the nation's experience during the tribulation. However, 'the coming of the Son of Man' begins with the resurrection/rapture of the Church and there is therefore an overlap in what we see here, certainly with regards to 'eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage' – a picture of continuing in the things of everyday life as normal as if nothing is about to happen.

b). 2Pe 2:5 *and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;*

c). Noah was 'a preacher of righteousness' and certainly righteousness is preached from this podium, but the preaching of righteousness alone is not enough. We must conclude that those of Noah's day heard his preaching, but still chose to ignore it and we have just finished with the Book of Hebrews that gave us a progressive 5 part warning that makes very clear that we could choose to do exactly the same.

d). We would see Noah then living by faith and commended for doing so in Hebrews Chapter 11, being representative of those who would walk worthy of their high calling - 1Pe 1:3 ¶ *Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the*

revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

And of course we also see those who didn't walk worthy, those who did not take the word of righteousness seriously.

e). And for those who would not walk worthy of their high calling, drawing from the picture in our scripture, we see that, 'the flood came and took them all away'.

4). And from our own perspective that which is pictured in the flood coming and taking them all away leaving only Noah and his family is exactly what we find in the verses that follow in Matthew Chapter 24 - 40 *"Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 "Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.*

a). Those seen in this parable are Christians and provide the foundation for that which is taught in the parables that are to follow.

b). We have 2 men and 2 women – 2 is the number of division and the number of witness and as such these are representative of all Christians.

c). We see that they are 'in the field' and 'grinding at the mill' again being representative of any occupation within any walk of life at any location, with obvious echoes of Cain and Abel and Ruth and Orpah.

d). And with regards to both pairs we see that one is taken and one is left.

e). Unfortunately these verses are sadly misinterpreted by some who teach that at the Lord's return some Christians will be taken [into heaven] and some will be left on the earth, presumably to go through the tribulation. But this is clearly not the case.

f). We have already seen from the scriptures that God deals with all Christians at the same time at His Judgment Seat with regards to their being received as a firstborn son or not. Christians are not judged on the earth and nor does scripture teach anywhere that a separation takes place with regards to who is raptured and who isn't - 1Th 4:16 *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

g). In the phrase 'one will be taken', the word 'taken' is the translation of the Greek word – *'paralambano'* which means to take alongside or to take to oneself, in the sense of taking an associate or a companion and is used in an intimate sense. In other words then the one who is 'taken' is not just 'taken away', but taken alongside another as an intimate companion.

h). Similarly, the word translated 'left' in the phrase 'and the other left' is the Greek word *'aphiemi'* which is to be seen in antithesis to the word translated 'taken' – and would probably best be understood as 'turned away'.

i). In other words then, one will be taken alongside as an intimate companion of another and the other will be turned away from a position of intimacy – a position that could have been theirs.

j). And as the context for these verses is 'the coming of the Son of Man' we are looking at Christians who will be 'taken' alongside Christ as His intimate companion [adopted as a firstborn son / becoming part of the Bride of Christ] and Christians who will be 'left' who will be turned away from such a position because of the choices they had made, all with a view to the Millennial Kingdom.

k). So to take this back to where we were previously, those who are taken alongside Christ as an intimate companion would be those who have walked worthy of their high calling, who have structured their lives in this way because of having believed that which the scriptures say God is about to do.

l). Those who are turned away on the other hand would be those who chose not to walk worthy of their calling, who carry on their lives as if nothing is about to change, who demonstrate unbelief.

m). These verses are then followed by the admonition - 42 *"Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.*

n). We are to 'watch' [literally 'to keep awake', 'be vigilant'], not for the purpose of seeing the Lord's coming, for that we know to be certain even if we cannot know the hour of it, but to watch, to be vigilant that we don't stop walking worthy of our high calling; to watch that we don't sink into the complacency of tomorrow will be just like today and this year as next, to watch that we are not overcome by the world, the flesh and the devil, to watch that we don't fall away into unbelief.

o). A parallel verse from the Book of Luke will make this very clear for us - Lu 21:34 *"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you*

unexpectedly. 35 "For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

p). Again we must go to the Greek language so as not to misunderstand what is said here – and we must do this with regards to v36 in particular. The words ‘counted worthy’ should more correctly be understood as ‘being strong in order to gain the victory over’; to have strength then to be victorious – the word ‘escape’ is literally ‘escape out of’ and the ‘all these things that will come to pass’ grammatically take us back to the carousing, drunkenness and cares of this life in v34 – a picture of being conformed to this world.

q). We are then to watch and to pray with a view to being strengthened so that we might have deliverance out of involvement in the ways and practices of the world - Eph 6:17 *And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—*

r). The words ‘watch and pray’ are in the present tense showing a continuous, on-going action. We are then to be continually watching [always alert and on guard] and continually praying for the strength necessary to escape out of the ways and practices of the world which are under the orchestration of the god of this world, ways and practices that constitute Satanic temptation and Satanic deception to bring about our destruction.

s). ‘Escape out of’ is in a verb tense that shows it to be eventual, something that comes about ‘eventually’ as a result of our continuing to watch and pray and it is not a one-time deliverance such as we would see with the rapture, but a repeated deliverance that occurs on different occasions and at different times in response to our continual prayer.

t). And we can connect all of this to verses we looked at in past weeks from the events at Christ’s Judgment Seat recorded in the Revelation – Re 3:8 *"I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.....10 "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.*

u). And as we see from our original verse in Luke, the end result of this process is that we would have the privilege ‘to stand before the Son of Man’ –

exactly the same thought as being taken alongside as an intimate companion, the same as the promise given in - Re 3:21 *"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne..*

5). This theme is then continued in the next verses - Mt 24:43 *"But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44 "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*

a). The subject of these verses again is being prepared at all times [watching and praying] as the Son of Man's coming is 'at an hour you do not expect' and is likened to a thief who comes unannounced.

b). The end of v43 is more correctly translated, 'not allowed his house to be broken up.' – And this takes us back to the verses that precede these. The two in the field and the two grinding at the mill represent the whole house, the household of God in this dispensation, all Christians. When one is taken and one is left then the house, the household, is broken up.

c). And the teaching from our verse is that had those in the field and at the mill who were left continually watched and prayed after the fashion we have seen in both Matthew and Luke then they would not have been 'left' and the house would not have been broken up.

d). The application for us is as clear as day – watch and pray or be turned away.

e). And what is implicit here is that should we realize that we have not been walking worthy of our calling, if we have instead allowed ourselves to be conformed to the things of this world, then if we would now 'know' that the Son of Man is coming, with all that implies, there is every opportunity to turn this around so that we may be amongst those taken as an intimate companion.

f). And please notice the wording from our verses – 'if the **master** of the house' this speaks to our calling that is to be realized yet future; we are called even now to be 'master', a ruler in the Lord's House, the word 'master' itself demonstrating that which could be ours yet future – but if we fail to watch and pray in order to be delivered then that high calling will be lost – how far we will have fallen from the great heights the Lord has set before us – from the mountain top of Zion to the valley of the son of Hinnom, from standing in the presence of the Lord to shame and ignominy – Re 2:4 *"Nevertheless I have this*

against you, that you have left your first love. 5 "Remember therefore from where you have fallen;

6). All of these verses from Matthew Chapter 24 that we have studied today now lead us into the next parable which itself will give us more information and commentary on the verses we have looked at - Mt 24:45 *"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 "Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 "Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48 "But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' 49 "and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50 "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, 51 "and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

a). The opening words of this parable 'Who then is a faithful and wise servant.....?' reflect back on the verse that have gone before to give us further commentary on the details we have already seen –

b). Who is the faithful servant with respect to the one who is 'taken'?

c). Who is the faithful servant with respect to the one who watches and prays?

d). Who is the faithful servant who is ready for the Lord's return?

7). Well these questions, along with the rest of this parable and those that follow will have to wait until next time – if the Lord is willing.