

Tuesday, May 12, 2020

Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

**"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven,
and the power of the heavens will be shaken.**

**Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man,
and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming
on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**

**And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call,
and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."**

(Matthew 24: 29-31)

You may remember the story of the boy who saved his town from flooding by putting his finger in a hole in the dike. I seem to remember an embellishment of that story having to do with what would happen if another hole appeared ... and another ... and another. This embellishment is a metaphor for the scenario that no sooner do we resolve one issue, that another issue pops up. Before we know it, there are many holes in the dike! It is our natural inclination to try to fill in the holes of the "dike of life." "Fix this problem ... now fix this one ... now that one."

I don't know if you have noticed or not, but there is really no limit to the number of holes that can appear in the "dike of life." One war ends, another begins. One disease is eradicated, another one appears. Will we ever come to the conclusion that we need to replace the dike? We need to stop putting duct tape on the problems of life. I don't want to be the bearer of disappointing news, but it is just a matter of time before the dike falls apart altogether. In the reading above, Jesus is telling us that "we ain't seen nothin' yet!" Even the sun and moon and stars will break down! No amount of duct tape will fix that.

As Christians you and I know that we live in a fallen world. Life in this world will continue to fall apart. Sorry, that's just the way it is. But there is good news!! The good news is that God plans to replace the dike with one that is indestructible. It's called a "New Heaven and a New Earth." What this means is that, as believers in Jesus, we don't need to fret about the condition of the current dike. We don't need to obsess about every hole that develops in the present dike. The holes will continue to come.

A vaccine for COVID-19 may be developed one day. But another mysterious virus is sure to come along. One social or global issue or threat may be averted, but another issue is sure to come. What all of this means is that we are getting closer to the Day of Jesus' return. The last and biggest issue that will be unfixable by us will be when the sun, moon, and stars fall apart. But right on the heels of that catastrophe, JESUS WILL APPEAR IN GREAT GLORY!! And He will call all believers to Himself. That will be the Day when we can throw away our duct tape, close up vaccine-creating laboratories, shut down hospitals, and even call an end to the Church Militant! The Church will, from that Day on, be referred to as the Church Triumphant!

So, we don't need to obsess about every hole that appears in the "dike of life." You can count on more showing up. But the more holes that appear, the closer we are coming to the Day of its replacement. As it says in the Book of Revelation: "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

God's peace!
Pastor Jim