

CHAT WITH THE CHAPLAIN

“ Great Expectations “ is a novel written by Charles Dickens and published around 1860. It’s story line includes love and rejection, wealth and poverty, and the triumph of good over evil. Interestingly enough, the Bible does as well, but with much, much more. To pick out one of the list, the Bible speaks about poverty, but it also speaks on prayer, promises, persistence and prophesy. Here we could run down all sorts of rabbit trails, but I think we’ll focus on promises, and more specifically, on promises made to the “Body of Believers”, or the Church of Christ. Now, I’m not talking about that building down there on N. 4th Street, but those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. “ Promises” could elbow their way in to “Prophesy”, but I’d like to try to focus on promises and how they might relate to expectations. Where promises are made, if we have belief in, and have faith in the “promiser”, then the result should be expectations. Now, we have 3 brothers hanging together --- promises, faith, and expectations. To turn all this inside out for a moment, one man has said that “ Faith without expectation is dead”, and the Bible says Faith without works is dead. By all rights, any Born Again believer should have great expectations for their future because they have faith in the promises made by the “Promiser” (God Himself). This is no small thing. For instance, we might say that we believe in the Rapture of the Church, and because we know (and have faith in) the Promiser, then we look forward to it with great expectations. As a side note, you may want to take a peak at 2nd Corinthians 15: 50 –55, and 1st Thessalonians 4:15-17. Thessalonians says, “For this we say to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep (died). For the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. 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”. We could sure run in another direction with this one. By the way, the word Rapture doesn’t appear anywhere in the Bible, but comes from the Latin word Raptus, which means a ‘carrying off’. The words ‘caught up’ here , in the Greek word Harpazo means to ‘seize’ or ‘snatch away’. This paints a pretty good picture I think. We know that it will take place, we just aren’t told when, and it’s just one of so many Great Expectations we can have as Christians.

Our Great Expectations include that of Heaven, which I am sure that no one this side of Glory can get their brains wrapped around. And, in Revelation 21:4,5 it says, "He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away. And He who sits on the Throne said, " Behold, I am making all things new".

A few thoughts from a 20th century Pastor and teacher A.W. Tozer :

----To pray without expectation is to misunderstand the whole concept of prayer and relationship with God.

----With a sacred expectation, I look for God in all the circumstances of the day.

----Always God's goodness is the ground of our expectation.

----Come to the Word with a spirit of longing with devotion and humble expectation. Be determined to know God.

WANTED!! More bikers in Heaven!!

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