

Assignment, Daybreak Gathering 2/8/24

This is an early version of the article that will be published on Rapture Ready. You will eventually receive this again through my Updates email.

## Gather Up Courage

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9)

If there’s ever been a time when we need to know our prepositional God, that He is *with* us and *for* us, it’s now (Joshua 1:9, Psalm 118:6). We need to know that He is *behind* and *before* us, and that His hand is *upon* us in these final darkening days (Psalm 139:5). One of my teachers taught prepositions using a tree: *in* a tree, *beside* a tree, *with* a tree, *above* a tree, etc. Over the years, God has used His preposition, where He has always been and will always be in relation to us as believers, as a way of assuring me we’re never alone in our suffering or pain or desperation. While we as rapture watchers are waiting for Him to come, we can find courage in knowing that He’s already here. He is Immanuel, God *with* us (Matthew 1:23). That never changes, even and especially when we see this world spinning out of control.

I think most of us would say that we thought He would have come *for* us long before now. The fact that the rapture hasn’t yet happened may have many of us reeling and feeling a little stunned to be seeing the rise of evil and the fall of our nation. Make no mistake; no candidate or party will or can save us. There is only one Savior, the One who is tarrying for perfect reasons that adhere to His perfect plan. We can trust that. We can trust in Him (Isaiah 26:3).

Recently, while reading in Mark 15, I came to Joseph of Aramathea’s role in the post-crucifixion story, how he went in before Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Verse 43 says, “Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.” One phrase in this NASB translation captured my attention, how Joseph “gathered up courage.” I’m here to suggest that we do the same, gather up courage in the waiting as we recognize the despicable intentions of a closing-in-on-us global government and the fast-approaching time of Jacob’s trouble.

This is no time to shrink back, but rather to stand firm in what we believe and to have faith in the One who is *with* us. What comes natural to our flesh is to cling to the idea that we won’t see anything worse than what we’ve already seen. My 2020 self never dreamed she would see this 2024 nation. Truthfully, I know my flesh can be found guilty of burying its head in an attempt to alleviate my fears of what might come. That’s not courage. Courage insists that I be prepared for whatever may come, even those things I thought I would never see. If we’re here another day, month, or year, I must have what it takes to stand firm and be effective for the kingdom every moment I’m here. Every moment matters.

Let’s consider 2 Timothy 4:3 and how we most often interpret it. “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires.” Many times we see this passage only applying to “woke” churches or prosperity-gospel pastors. But have you ever considered how it

might apply to some rapture watchers? (I'm not saying this is you or me. Surely we wouldn't do that.)

I distinctly recall reading comments on a video that Pastor Tom Hughes did with Lee Brainard. People were outraged that the two men suggested we may have a year or two, or maybe even more, before the rapture. Can I toss out a little red-faced honesty here? I skipped that video simply because I didn't want to hear them say it. I was in a weakened state of waiting and couldn't bear it. So now you know I've been that person, one who doesn't want our trusted pastors or teachers telling me we may be looking at a year or two more. I wanted them to tickle my ears and tell me it's soon, like, tomorrow soon, and that everything we're seeing now is proof that it can't be much longer.

Fact is, the rapture is soon, but soon happens to be a Biblical concept that doesn't mean what I want it to mean. If it did, I would be talking to you now at a glorious wedding rather than writing here on Rapture Ready.

I have to wonder: Is this prickling rather than tickling your ears? We don't like what-if questions, like "What if Jesus tarries a little longer?". Just the fact that I'm bringing this up, will you stop reading this article? Or will you gather up courage and decide to be prepared to live out God's plan for your life and ministry on earth whether that includes one more day or a few more years? God has purpose *for* you. You don't see what you see in this world just because you're the smartest one in the room. You've been given discernment *by* the Spirit in order to do more with what you see and what you know than merely sky gazing. If you're not looking around the room at the people who need Jesus and truth, whether it be the lost or the found, then you're wasting this gift of time the Lord has given you.

In [\*Embrace the Wait\*](#), I asked, "What if those we are praying for now come to salvation due to harder times—like massively hard times—ahead? Can't we endure, through the power of the Holy Spirit, God with us, the harder times with them?" If Jesus tarries, harder times are coming for the lost and for the found. And as my questions above suggest, harder times will allow us greater opportunities for reaching the lost and helping to grow the undiscerning found. That's what is expected of a disciple, one who is in Christ. We are to be courageous, battle-ready, grown-up believers who can stand and withstand, not merely ones who are sky gazing as we wait.

Pastor JD Farag warns us not to be so heavenly minded that we're no earthly good. If we're only watching the clouds, waiting for our blessed hope, then we're in danger of being no earthly good. I won't arrive in heaven as a sky gazer. I just can't allow myself that luxury. I do watch. I do hope. I do wait, but all the while I want to be about the Father's business He's assigned to me. I want to arrive and stand before my Blessed Hope as one who has answered my last-days call, to the best of my ability, even down to the last pre-rapture second. I want to continue to grow up in Jesus and grow out in reaching and teaching others.

Speaking of our blessed hope, go read this favorite verse of many of us rapture watchers in context with the verses *before* and *after* it. (See what I did there, slipping in some prepositions?)

"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ

Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.” (Titus 2:11-14)

We tend to extract the “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing...” verse without considering the overall meaning of the passage. Below is a not-so-subtle list of points from these verses we must consider:

- All men (and women) need Jesus!
- God, even now in the present age and here in the last hours, is instructing us and growing us up in our faith and calling us to live in obedience.
- We are called to let go of this world.
- The blessed hope deserves a rightful place in our walk, but it mustn't be our sole focus.
- A purified people is often a refined people.
- A people zealous (ardently active, devoted, or diligent) for good deeds: There's no better deed than to actively, devotedly, and diligently share the Jesus you know with others and make disciples.

And there's no more receptive people to the Gospel than desperate people who are living in hopeless times. Beloved, if we're here during harder-than-now times, we will have opportunities to share hope with the hopeless and the path to eternal life with the lost. As for the weakened and undiscerning “found,” you will have occasions to help grow them up in their faith and their understanding of how God's prophetic Word promises a rescue.

A verse I shared in *Embrace the Wait* was Hebrews 12:2, how for the joy set before Him, Jesus endured the cross, and how we as believers often want the joy without the cross. Enduring harder times for the sake of the lost may be a cross we all bear prior to the rapture. If Jesus tarries even a week or a month more, we will have crosses to bear. Only Scripture-strengthened arms can bear a God-given cross. I need to ensure that I am doing more heavy lifting (in God's Word) than sky gazing. This will keep me from being caught off guard by and ill prepared for a refining that may come in the waiting.

What if 2024 is a year of refining? Will you cower in a corner, discouraged that the rapture hasn't yet happened, or will you gather up courage to face whatever God allows our nation to experience? Daily headlines suggest the potential for war on three fronts, terror attacks by immigrants, economic collapse, Disease X, cyberattacks, or even civil war. What if 2024 makes the past three and a half years look like a beach vacation? I'm not asking this to scare you. I'm asking you so that you can ask yourself if you're prepared to endure harder times. I don't mean have you stocked up on groceries. I'm asking if you've stocked up on Jesus, your Bread of Life. Not just are you right with Him, but are you full of Him, so full that you can overflow into the lives of desperate others? They will need what you have, but will you have what they need?

Our final hours, days, months, or even years will be exciting and scary and filled with opportunities. Since Bible times, believers have longed to see the rapture, to meet Christ in the air without ever tasting physical death. Yet I don't believe most have counted the cost of that blessing, comprehending that to whom much is given much is required (Luke 12:48). The end requires that we be God's prepositional us, that we are *in* Him and *with* Him and *for* Him and *about* His business. That's what we will look at in the continuation of this topic. Until then, I'm providing additional verses below that depict our pre-positional God in relation to us as believers. Take comfort that, in

addition to Him being *with* and *for* us, He goes *ahead of* us and is *around* us. Not one headline surprises Him, nor will any national crisis take Him off guard. Just be *in* Jesus. That will give you courage enough to stand and withstand, to grow up and to grow out.

Growing with you,  
Lisa

Sign up to receive the continuation of this article on my [Updates](#) page.

Would you like to go a little deeper or discuss this topic with a friend? Feel free to use the questions we used in our Gathering Zoom group. [Questions link](#)

### **Our Prepositional God**

“The Lord is the one who goes *ahead of* you; He will be *with* you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.” (Deuteronomy 31:8)

“The angel of the Lord encamps *around* those who fear Him, and rescues them.” (Psalm 34:7)

“Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call; This I know, that God is *for* me.” (Psalms 56:9)

The Lord is *for* me; I will not fear; what can man do to me? (Psalm 118:6)

“You have enclosed me behind and before, and laid Your hand *upon* me.” (Psalm 139:5)

“Fear not, for I am *with* you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10)

“And lo, I am *with* you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20)

“In that day you will know that I am *in* My Father, and you *in* Me, and I *in* you.” (John 14:20)

“And I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be *in* them, and I *in* them.” (John 17:26)