

The Final Difference Between the Church and the World

"By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned" (Hebrews 11:29).

In this life it's easy to get confused about the real difference between the church and the world. Jesus even said it would be that way when he told the parable of the wheat and the weeds in Matthew 13:24-30. In the beginning the wheat and the weeds look very similar. It's only later that the real differences become obvious. So it is for the people of God and the people of the world. We may superficially seem very similar, but if you go to the end of the story, the real difference becomes apparent.

Those who know Jesus have one destiny. Those who don't know Jesus have a completely different destiny.

I. In this Life the World Often Seems to Prosper While the Church Suffers.

"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you" (John 15:18-19).

II. But in the End the Church Will Be Saved and the World Will Be Lost.

When we read the story of the Exodus, we tend to focus on the great miracle of the parting of the water and the Jews marching across as if on dry ground. And that truly is an amazing event. But it is only half of the story. Pharaoh and his men evidently thought that if the Jews could do it, they could too. They were wrong. The same God who opened the Red Sea for His people closed the waters around Pharaoh and his army. They all perished. Not one single soldier survived.

We're all in the same boat. No matter who we are or where we come from, we're all sinners desperately in need of God's grace. The Bible says in Romans 3:22b-23, "There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). Out of the worst evil God brought forth the greatest good. And only God could have done it. "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Christ died so that sinners like you and me could be saved. Here is God's call to you and me: **"Come now, let us reason together," says the Lord. 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow'"** (Isaiah 1:18). And here is God's promise to those who come by faith. **"The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin"** (I John 1:7b).