

Question

What is the belief held by Faith Lutheran regarding the saints being taken up to be with the Lord prior to the tribulation?

Answer

At our church we confess that every person who believes that Jesus is their Savior from sin is a saint. And we also teach that at the moment of a believer's (saint's) death, their soul is immediately taken up to be with the Lord in heaven, where the souls of the saints await the resurrection of their bodies on the Last Day.

We do not believe that this occurs before Christians suffer trials and tribulations. Because of the presence of sin in the world, the life of a believer on earth is going to include trouble and heartache. During this life Christ's saints take heart during their sufferings in the fact that Jesus has overcome the world by his own suffering and death and resurrection, and has also called us conquerors, yes, more than conquerors, over the many difficulties of life.

Jesus has promised that the tribulations that his saints experience will grow more intense as his return gets closer. Since no one knows the day of his return, it is difficult for Christians to determine when that period of greater suffering is occurring. It could be happening right now, or it may happen at some point in the future. When it does occur, believers in Jesus who are still alive will need to fix their focus even more on what Jesus has accomplished for them through his innocent suffering and death. When it does occur, Christians need to remember that Jesus is protecting them during their persecution, and that no one will be able to snatch them out of his hand.

We reject millennial ideas as a threat to Christian faith and as a distortion of many passages of Scripture. We plead with people to focus back in history to Jesus' perfect life on earth and to his sacrifice on the cross, rather than focusing forward to a future millenium, and to find comfort in all their tribulations in the fact that Jesus has promised eternal life in heaven to all who believe in him.