

BISHOP RYLE'S MILLENNIAL CREED.

"FIRST. I believe that the world will never be completely converted to Christianity, by any existing agency, before the end of this dispensation. In spite of all that can be done by ministers, members and churches, the wheat and the tares will grow together until the harvest; and when the end comes, it will find the earth in much the same state that it was when the flood came in the days of Noah. – Matt. 13:24-30; Luke 17:20-36; Matt. 24:37-47.

"Second. I believe that the wide-spread unbelief, indifference, formalism and wickedness which are to be seen throughout Christendom, are only what we are taught to expect in God's Word. Troublous times, departures from the faith, evil men waxing worse and worse, love waxing cold, are things distinctly predicted. So far from making me doubt the truth of Christianity, they help to confirm my faith. Melancholy and sorrowful as the sight is, if I did not see it I should think the Bible was not true. – Matt. 24:12; 2 Tim. 3:1-6,13.

"Third. I believe that the grand purpose of the present dispensation is to gather out of the world an elect people, and not to convert all mankind. It does not surprise me at all to hear that the heathen are not all converted when missionaries preach, and that believers are but a little flock in any congregation in my own land. It is precisely the state of things I expected to find. The Gospel is to be preached 'for a witness,' and then shall the end come. This is the dispensation of election, and not of universal conversion. – Acts 15:14-19; Matt. 24:14; Romans 8:20-24,28,29.

"Fourth. I believe that the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is the great event which will wind up the present

dispensation, and for which we ought daily to long and pray. 'Thy Kingdom come,' 'Come, Lord Jesus,' should be our daily prayer. We look backward, if we have faith, to Christ dying on the cross, and we ought to look forward, no less, if we have hope, to Christ coming again. – John 14:3; 2 Tim. 4:8; 2 Peter 3:12; Titus 2:13; 1 Cor. 11:26.

"Fifth. I believe that the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is to be a literal, personal coming: that as he went away in the clouds of heaven, before the eyes of his disciples, so, in like manner, will he return. – Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:14-18.

[As his going was known only to his faithful followers, so only such will have the eye of faith and that enlightenment which will permit them to discern the second *presence* of the Lord, while all others will continue about the ordinary vocations of life, ignorant of the fact that they are living "*in the days* of the Son of Man," – eating, drinking, planting, building, and *knowing not* of his *parousia*, his *presence*. Then, too, he went away quietly, unostentatiously, as well as unknown to the world, and the *manner* of his coming will be similar – he shall come in like manner. "Now the Lord is that *spirit*," and tho we, the Church, shall see him, it will be "*as he is*," and not as he was. At first we will see him with the eye of faith through the prophetic word of promise only, but the promise is that we also in due time shall be "changed" – to spirit beings. *Then* "we shall see him as he is; *for* we shall be like him." (1 John 3:2.) – EDITOR.]

"Sixth. I believe that, after our Lord Jesus Christ comes again, the earth will be renewed and the curse removed; the devil shall be bound, the godly shall be rewarded, the wicked shall be punished; and that before he comes there shall be neither resurrection, judgment or millennium; and that not till after he comes shall the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory

of the Lord. – Acts 3:20-26; Isa. 25:6-9; Rev. 1:5-8; 20:1-6; Isa. 65:17 to end.

"Seventh. I believe that the Jews shall ultimately be regathered, as a separate nation, restored to their own land, and converted to the faith of Christ. – Jer. 3:10,11; 13:10; Rom. 11:25,26; 2 Cor. 3:15,16.

"Eighth. I believe that the literal sense of the Old Testament prophecies has been far too much neglected in the present day, and far too much neglected by the churches; and that, under the mistaken system of spiritualizing and accommodating Bible language, Christians have too often completely missed the meaning. – Luke 24:25,26.

"I believe, finally, that it is for the safety, happiness and comfort of all true Christians to expect as little as possible from churches or governments under **[R2799 : page 128]** the present dispensation; to hold themselves ready for tremendous convulsions, and changes of all things established, and to expect their good things only from Christ's second advent."
