

How Then Shall We Live in these End Times?

FBCG – March 7, 2021

Consider (in review from sermon on 2/21/2021), the Signs of the Times:

- **A Time of deception** – Matthew 24:4, 5 - ⁴ Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. See 1 Timothy 4:1-3.
- **A Time of dissension** - Matthew 24:6, 7 - ⁶ You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. ⁷ Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.
- **A Time of increased natural disasters, devastation and disease** - Matthew 24: 8, There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these are the beginning of birth pains.
- **A Time of persecution and betrayal** - Matthew 24:9 - ⁹ "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. ¹⁰ At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other. . .
- **A Time of increased wickedness and diminishing love** – Matthew 24:12,13 ¹² Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, ¹³ but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.
- **Time of increased immorality and depravity** - 2 Timothy 3:1-9 - There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God
- **A Time of proclamation and kingdom expansion** – Matthew 24:14 -¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
- **A Time when Israel returns** – Jeremiah 16:14-15, 32:37-38, Ezekiel 36:24-28, 39:28, Isaiah 11:10-12-¹¹ In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the islands of the sea. ¹² He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.
 - Many believe that this was put into motion when Israel became a state on May 14, 1948.
 - Israel regains control of the city (Six Day War) June 10, 1967.
 - US recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital on Dec. 6, 2017 (under President Donald Trump), which officially opened on May 17, 2018 – making it's 70 year anniversary as a nation.
 - Current renewed work to rebuild the temple.

Consider that Jesus said these “Signs” are just the beginning of birth pains (Matthew 24:8) and they will intensify into the season of great tribulation (Matthew 24:15 – 28, Revelation 6-19, Daniel 9, Joel 2:31, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4) This tribulation will be more terrible than anything we have ever experienced on earth.

Matthew 24:19,21-22 (NIV) ¹⁹ How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers!
²¹ For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now--and never to be equaled again. ²² If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

Consider Christ's return. He will take his followers to be with Him (the Rapture)

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 (NIV). ¹⁵ According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming (parousian) of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.
¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel

and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage each other with these words.

Acts 1:9,10 (NIV)- ⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? **This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.**"

John 14:1-4 (NIV) ¹ "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going."

Rapture Before the Great Tribulation

Romans 5:9 (NIV)⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 (NIV) ⁹ for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead--Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Revelation 3:10 (NIV) ¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

In Rev 4, John Is taken up in to the heavens much like and seemingly identical to the rapture...

Revelation 4:1-4 (NIV) ¹ After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

Be expectant, encouraged and ready for Christ's return:

Hebrews 10:23-25 (NIV) ²³ Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

1 Peter 4:7-11 (NIV) ⁷ The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.

⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.