

CAN YOU READ THE SIGNS?

Luke 21:25-36

I. IS THE WORLD GOING TO END?

- A. *“And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars ... And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”*
- B. The Scriptural Source.
 - 1. Revelation 20 is the mother lode of such ideas, describing a thousand year period which leads to Christ’s reign on earth.
 - 2. Daniel 7-9 describes complex movements of nations that will precede the final judgment.
 - 3. Ezekiel 38-39 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and Luke 21:25-36.
- C. The Great Debate.
 - 1. Pre-millennialists: They believe that Christ will come back at any moment and will gather all Christians back to himself in heaven. This is the “rapture”.
 - 2. Post-millennialists: We will experience a thousand year period of peace and then Christ will return.
 - 3. A-millennialists: They do not believe in a literal thousand year earthly reign of Christ. The second coming will be a single event.

II. IS YOUR WORLD GOING TO END?

- A. *“So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near ... But take heed to yourselves ...” (21:31&34)*
- B. There Is No Doubt.
 - 1. The world ended for approximately 270,000 people yesterday, and it will end today for another 270,000 people.
 - 2. All us are finite, with a beginning and an ending.
- C. Two Responses.
 - 1. “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow I may die.”
 - 2. *“If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord, so that whether we live or die, we are the Lords.” (Romans 14:8)*

III. DO YOU WANT YOUR WORLD TO END?

- A. *“But watch at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of man.”*
- B. Being Honest with God.
 - 1. I need deliverance from _____?
 - 2. I need help with _____?
 - 3. I feel guilty over _____?
- C. God Being Honest with You.
 - 1. “All the water in an ocean cannot sink a ship unless it gets inside.”
 - 2. There is no wrong God cannot right, no pain God cannot ease, no evil God cannot overcome!
 - 3. *“Now when these things begin to take place, **look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.**”*

Prayer Concerns: Members – Burney Biesel, Brice Carter, Sarah Clark, Mac Kerr, Laura Hart, Anne Miller ... **Friends** – Bobby Atkins, Lane Brasfield, **Dylan Gray**, Kathy Greer, Charles Hamilton, Jean Hansford, Jim Hixon, Benette Hobday, Linda Lindner, Judy Malaquias, **Sarah Moore**, Dustin Salter, Jennie Stafford, **Rob Turnage**, Peyton Vickery ...

PASTORAL PRAYER

Eternal God, as Advent begins and we prepare for your coming into our world, we acknowledge that you have been with us since our journey started, and you stand at the end of all our roads ready to receive us again. As we give thanks for that, let us not forget that you are with us every step of the way, in joy as well as sorrow. You are with us now, and here before you, we offer our own quiet prayers.

Be with us as in this moment of silence, we look far down the road we are now traveling; give us vision to see where we are going, and whether that's where we really want to be ... *(Pray silently)*

Father, are there turns we need to make right now, change we need to reach for in our lives? Give us honesty as we share this moment of confession with you ... *(Pray Silently)*

O God, some we know are finding the going so hard in their own journey of life. Hear now our prayers for them, and show us ways to make their burden lighter ... *(Pray silently)*

Now take these prayers, and those we haven't the courage to utter, and answer them through worship, we pray in the name of Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray ...

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

LUKE 21:25-36

“And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

And he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees; as soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all has taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But take heed to yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a snare; for it will come upon all who dwell upon the face of the whole earth. But watch at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of man.”

SERMON SCHEDULE

In the Sanctuary:

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| December 10 | <i>Who Can Endure His Coming?</i> | Malachi 3:1-4 |
| December 17 | <i>The Search for Meaning</i> | Philippians 4:1-9 |
| December 24 | <i>Don't Forget to Remember Me?</i> | Luke 2:1-20 |
| December 31 | <i>Jesus/Left Behind</i> | Luke 2:41-52 |

On the Radio (1450 AM):

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| December 10 | <i>Joy in the Midst of the Mess</i> | Matthew 1:18-25 |
| December 17 | <i>A Child Called Laughter</i> | Genesis 21:1-6 |
| December 24 | <i>A Child of Mystery</i> | Luke 2:8-20 |
| December 31 | <i>New Year Under Construction</i> | Matthew 7:24-27 |