

End of Time Study

God's call to urgency

I believe we are living in the most exciting times, the time - just before the end of earth as we know it and the transition to the beginning of the millennial reign of Christ. In this class we will study the End Time prophecies in the Bible and look at current events and the technological advances that cause us to believe that the beginning of the end has already begun. I want us to see where we are and where, based on the indications, we are going. If our interpretation of the Bible and current events is anywhere close to accurate, the young generation is in for a wild ride through life.

Please understand. This is not going to be a "fun" study. If we believe the Bible to be true and accurate and if we believe the observation of the various scientists today, then, the **future is very bleak and dangerous**. The future of the world, even for Christians, will have many challenges, pains and sufferings. Knowledge of what may be coming will be unsettling for those who are not in a close relationship with God through Christ. **The purpose of this study is to light us up to a sense of urgency...**to reach out to those who do not know Jesus as their personal savior. In the coming years, we will have to hold on to Him with all our might, in the face of strong opposition and natural disasters.

Of course, I am aware that many have come in the past and predicted that the end of the world was at hand. In the nineteenth century there was a movement started by William Miller, "I believe that the second coming of Jesus Christ is near, even at the door, even within twenty-one years,—on or before 1843." The followers, known as "Millerites," sold their goods and awaited the sure return of Christ. When the first date passed, new calculations predicted another. When it passed, another calculation was done. Eventually they gave up and came together to form the Seventh Day Adventist denomination.

I will no give dates. That would be foolish. However, don't be too surprised if the end comes just a few years. This has nothing to do with the calendar, but plenty to do with developments in world politics, and especially with developments in world banking, technology, global warming and the lack of security from those that will harm us, either with or without cause.

The scope of this study will not allow us to cover all of the details, but, we will look at the big picture of what has happened and what is about to come to pass in the world in the next several years. There is room for disagreement on some of the details, based on interpretations of Bible. We are speaking of the recent (historically speaking) past and the unseen future.

First, the very basic information and ground rules:

1. This will be a very boring class if all you do is listen to me lecture. I encourage you to interrupt with observations, questions and discussion. Many of you have been in my classes before and know that I will try to keep us on track. But, I really do feel that participation is the key.
2. Also, it is not my habit to embarrass anyone. Have no fear that I will somehow call you out or somehow put you on the spot. Relax. As the TV commercial says, "When you are here, you are family."
3. Bring your Bible. We will share many scriptures. You may wish to bring a pad or notebook to make notes. That's up to you. Again, relax.
4. I will not be giving out my notes every time we come together, as I did when we studied the Old Testament. I may have handouts from time to time. We will have a link on the church web site where you can see all of the lesson material. Feel free to download it or print it, if you like. Also, if you will contact the church office, Dianne will make you a copy.
5. In this study, I have not set date to end. I don't know how many weeks we will be together. I have been asked to try to give an "in depth" study. My guess is that it will take most, if not all, of the summer. If you think we should go faster, because I am boring, tell me!

Introduction

OK, let's get started.

Why are you so interested in Bible prophecy that you are here?

Obviously, we find security in the knowledge of the future. We may also find that we feel closer to our Lord and our church. While these are valid, let me give you a better reason: **To gain the sense of urgency that the Return of Christ is immanent and that we need to share the Gospel and to get our own house in order.**

If you knew that a great holocaust would kill many of your friends and family on, say, September 1, 2009, how would you behave differently?

What if you went by a house and saw it was on fire and there were people inside that did not realize that their lives are in jeopardy?

What if you saw a bridge on the highway shake dangerously, Would you try to alert those headed toward it?

Have you noticed that there is something going on in our world? Something that seems bothersome, sinister and unsettling. Things just don't seem to be like they once did.

- There seems to be an increase in violence, even savagery, around the world and here in our schools and cities and even out homes.
- Diseases and threats of pandemics are sweeping the world.
- There are more natural disasters than anyone can remember and they are increasing in number and intensity.
- The economies of the world and here at home are shakier than ever.
- There is a serious moral decline all around us. It seems that people don't know or don't care what Christian values are anymore.

In this session I want to give you a **rough outline** of some of the things that we expect. Many of them have already begun.

Here is the picture as we see it.

1. At Pentecost, the Lord gave the General Dispensation of the Holy Spirit and the Church Age began.

Acts 2:1-4 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 2:15-18 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is [but] the third hour of the day. 16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

The Holy Spirit has restrained Satan and his evil from taking the Christian world. Now, I believe that the Holy Spirit is slowly being withdrawn, just as Paul prophesied in 2nd Thessalonians.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and [by] our gathering together unto him, 2 That ye be not

soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for [that day shall not come], except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

2. There will be more earthquakes, more epidemics, and more famines. An increase in wars, terrorism and crime.

Matt. 24:1-14 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to [him] for to shew him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. 3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? 4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all [these things] must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. 8 All these [are] the beginning of sorrows. 9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

3. The body of Christ, the church, will be removed in an event, we call, The Rapture."

1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

4. And there will be more problems with the world economy and personal security, which will lead to drastic changes in both government and banking. The world's banking system will be totally transformed, with computer scans eventually controlling all business transactions. People will do all of their buying and selling through a microchip implant on the back of their hands or in the forehead.

Revelation 13:16-17 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

This implant will greatly improve security and virtually eliminate the need for paper money. We will discuss this at length when we get there.

5. The changes, both in government and in economics, will bring great benefits to most of the earth's population. This will further increase the power and popularity of a world leader.

6. The Jews will rebuild their Temple in Jerusalem, and resume animal sacrifices. There will be, for a while, greater religious tolerance than ever before. Only the most rabid fanatics will oppose the changes. Amongst opponents will be a small group of Christians who will argue that it is all a mask for something unbelievably evil.

7. This group of Christians will try to tell the world that the popular leader is actually the Son of Satan in much the same way that Jesus is the Son of God. They will also warn that a global disaster is about to strike the earth, poisoning much of the earth's water supplies, killing life in the oceans, and destroying much of the world's vegetation. Millions will be killed as a result of this disaster.

About the time that the disaster takes place, the world leader will begin a campaign against the Christians, possibly accusing them of playing some part in causing the disaster that has struck the earth. The leader will order that all forms of worship be abolished and that he alone be worshipped as god. Anyone who refuses to worship him will be arrested and executed. This program of systematic persecution against all who believe in God will result in the deaths of more people than have ever been slain by any world leader in history, including Hitler and Stalin.

Revelation 13:15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

8. Two spokespersons for God will repeatedly elude capture at the same time that they succeed in getting the world to hear their message of warning. A worldwide manhunt will eventually track them down, and their execution will be televised around the world. Their bodies will be displayed in public for three days. They will all be given new bodies that are not subject to gravity as people are now. This amazing escape will be documented with television coverage around the world. At the same time, new problems will confront those left on earth.

Revelation 11:3-12 And I will give [power] unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. 4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. 5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. 6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. 7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. 8 And their dead bodies [shall lie] in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. 9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. 10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. 11 And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. 12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

9. More disasters will strike the earth, causing suffering for billions of people. Those left on the earth will continue to put the blame on the departed fanatics, and will become convinced that they are dangerous aliens from another world. All the armies of the earth will be drawn together, as a show-down looms over Israel.

10. When those who disappeared have finished the marriage supper of the Lamb, they will swoop down on earth behind their leader, Jesus. The weapons amassed in the valley of Megiddo, in Israel, will be no match for them. This is the famous Battle of Armageddon, and it will be totally one sided. Those mortals who mistakenly thought they could fight God, will be wiped out. The victorious army will be fully occupied for months just burying all of the bodies and disposing of the ruined weapons.

11. Then Jesus and his followers will set about rebuilding the earth with the few survivors that remain. The Devil will be bound by God, so that evil will no longer triumph on earth. Whereas all past governments had been corrupt and cruel, and had appealed to people's greed, the forces for good will triumph in this new world.

Jesus will begin a reign of a thousand years on earth, in which he and his followers will seek to educate the inhabitants of this planet in the ways of God. The earth's mortal population will increase during that period of time.

12. At the end of the thousand years, the devil will be loosed once again, to see if the people of the repopulated earth have learned how to resist his lies and deceptions.

Obviously all of this must sound a bit far-fetched for most folks. There are probably details which we haven't gotten exactly right. But anyone who has studied Bible prophecy at all would have to agree that the overall picture is pretty accurate. In the sessions that follow we will attempt to lead you through how we arrived at our conclusions, including a timetable that you can use to actually count down the final years.