

The End Times – In the Last Days

Signs of the Times – Part One

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Objectives of The Sermon Series

- 1) To prepare you for the future things to come
- 2) To preach and proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom
- 3) To reveal Christ and deepen your relationship with Him
- 4) To study the Bible afresh and apply its truth about the end times.

“What changes would you make in your life if you knew for certain that Jesus would return by the end of the year?”

Introduction

Jesus communicated that certain signs would usher in the end of the age. He predicted the things that were to come and the events that would mark the last days. This incredible revelation was not only for His disciples but also for the people who would be alive when they occurred.

The modern-day Christian would be foolish not to hear the words of the Lord as they pertain to us more than the people they were spoken to at the time.

Jesus provided signs that would alert the believer of the upcoming events that will take place upon the earth and in the middle of it all He gives a solemn warning to those that are alive at that time: “The love of many would wax cold because sin is rampant.”

Text Passage (Matthew 24: 1-11)

¹ Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.

² And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.

⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.

⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

⁸ All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

⁹ "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.

¹⁰ And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

- Some will **depart** from the faith
- Some will **corrupt** the faith
- Some will become **disenfranchised** with the faith.

¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

False Prophets

These are internal forces that will arise within the church and deceive many. They feed on three types of people who:

1. Do not possess a strong knowledge of Biblical truth
2. Are slack concerning their relationship with Christ
3. Have their own agenda and only want to hear what makes them feel good – Paul called this “itching ears”

2 Timothy 4:3-4

³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴ and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. (NKJV)

These forces work to make people offended and they turn on one another and betray one another.

Matthew 24:24

For false Christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

Daniel 8:25

"Through his cunning He shall **cause deceit to prosper** under his rule; And he shall exalt *himself* in his heart. He shall destroy many in *their* prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; But he shall be broken without *human* means.

The Love of Many Will Grow Cold - Matthew 24:12

¹²And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

What causes our love to grow cold? Jesus said the love of “many” would grow cold but not “all”.

- This state of frigid relationship is subtle, cunning and even undetectable. Like the common cold that can sneak up on us while we sleep and without warning can knock the body out.
- Jesus did not say that the “love” would be eradicated or lost but rather decay. This too; however, is unacceptable with God.

The Man of Lawlessness – 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4

¹Now, dear brothers and sisters, let us clarify some things about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and how we will be gathered to meet him.

²Don't be so easily shaken or alarmed by those who say that the day of the Lord has already begun. Don't believe them, even if they claim to have had a spiritual vision, a revelation, or a letter supposedly from us.

³Don't be fooled by what they say. For that day will not come until there is a great rebellion against God (*falling away*) and the man of lawlessness is revealed—the one who brings destruction.

⁴He will exalt himself and defy everything that people call god and every object of worship. He will even sit in the temple of God, claiming that he himself is God. (NLT)

1 Timothy 4:1

¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, (NKJV)

“WAX” - The word “wax” means “to become” -The result is that love towards God and each other becomes or waxes cold as the Kings James version notes.

- The flames of the Holy Spirit no longer make the wax warm and pliable but rather it is cold and set in its way.

The External Forces

The outbreak of unprecedented sin – both the “type” and “quantity” has the ability to cool off our love for Christ and one another.

- People become disillusioned with their faith
- The tide and onslaught of sin brings with it a spirit of discouragement and in this state people become offended. What causes these offenses?
- The delay of God in dealing with the wicked
- The silence of God
- Personal undealt-with sin
- Cares of this life – pre-occupation with the world system.

Commentaries

Matthew 24:12

[The love of many shall wax cold.] – QUOTES

- *By reason of these trials and persecutions from without, and those apostasies and false prophets from within, the love of many to Christ and his doctrine, and to one another, shall grow cold. Some openly deserting the faith, as Matthew 24:10; others corrupting it, as Matthew 24:11; and others growing indifferent about it, as Matthew 24:12. (from Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996, 2003, 2005 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)*
- *“...it is too common for professors of religion to grow cool in their profession, when the wicked are hot in their wickedness; as the church of Ephesus in bad times left her first love, Revelation 2:2-4. Or, it may be understood more particularly of brotherly love. When iniquity abounds, seducing iniquity, persecuting iniquity, this grace commonly waxes cold. Christians begin to be shy and suspicious one of another, affections are alienated, distances created, parties made, and so love comes to nothing. The devil is the accuser of the brethren, not only to their enemies, which makes persecuting iniquity abound, but one to another, which makes the love of many to wax cold. (from Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.)*

Christ's prescription for the Spiritual Cold Revelation 2:4-6 – The Words of Christ to the Church at Ephesus

⁴ Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place — unless you repent. (NKJV)

- **Remember:** consider the days, recount, review the times when the fires of God burned brightly and strong. What were the keys to those days?
- **Repent:** change your mind, change your ways – allow God to transform you
- **Do the first works:** return to the core and basis of Christianity – love for God and your neighbour.

Matthew 24:13-14

¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

¹⁴ **And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.**

There will be believers who will finish strong, hold on to their faith and actually abound in their love for God and people. In other words, fight the good fight and finish the race as Paul indicated.

The Abomination of Desolation

Matthew 24:15, 21-22

¹⁵ "Therefore when you see the 'ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), (2 Thessalonians 2:1)

²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the **elect's sake** those days will be shortened.

Who are the Elect?

- **Romans 8:33** - Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.
- **Romans 11:7** - What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.
- **Colossians 3:12** - Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering
- **1 Timothy 5:21** - I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.
- **2 Timothy 2:10** - Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.
- **Titus 1:1** - Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness,
- **1 Peter 1:2** - according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.
- **1 Peter 2:6** - Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on him will by no means be put to shame."
- **2 John 1:1** - The Elder, to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth
- **2 John 1:13** - The children of your elect sister greet you. Amen.

Matthew 24:23-27

²³"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here *is* the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe *it*.

²⁴For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

²⁵See, I have told you beforehand.

²⁶"Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; *or* 'Look, *He is* in the inner rooms!' do not believe *it*.

²⁷For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

The Coming of the Son of Man

Matthew 24:29-31

²⁹"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

³⁰Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

³¹And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together **His elect** from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

No One Knows That Day and Hour

Matthew 24:36-44

³⁶"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

³⁷**But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.**

Luke 17:28-30

²⁸Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built;

²⁹but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

³⁰Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

Matthew 24:38-44

³⁸For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

³⁹and did not know until the flood came and **took them all away**, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

⁴⁰Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.

⁴¹Two *women will be* grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.

⁴²Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

⁴⁴Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

END TIMES - PROPHECY

26 Signs of The Lord's Soon Return

- 1) False Bible teachers would be money hungry. They would be smooth talkers, have many followers, and slur the Christian faith (2 Peter 2:1-3)
- 2) Homosexuality would be increasingly evident at the end of the age (2 Timothy 3:3)
- 3) Earthquakes would be in diverse places (Matthew 24:7)
- 4) Stress would be part of living (2 Timothy 3:1)
- 5) Many wars would erupt (Matthew 24:6)
- 6) People would forsake the Ten Commandments as a moral code, committing adultery, stealing, lying, and killing (Matthew 24:12)
- 7) There would be a cold and robotic religious system, in denying God's power (2 Timothy 3:5)
- 8) Truth would be substituted by false teaching (2 Timothy 4:4)
- 9) Deadly diseases would be prevalent (Matthew 24:7)
- 10) The fact that God once flooded the earth (the Noahic flood) would be denied (2 Peter 3:5-6). There is a mass of fossil evidence to prove this fact, yet it is flatly ignored by the scientific world because of its uncanny implication.
- 11) The institution of marriage would be forsaken by many (1 Timothy 4:3)
- 12) There would be an increase in famines (Matthew 24:7)
- 13) Increase in vegetarianism (1 Timothy 4:3-4)
- 14) There would be a cry for peace (1 Thessalonians 5:3)
- 15) The possession of Jerusalem would be at the center of international turmoil (Zechariah 12:3)
- 16) Knowledge would increase (Daniel 12:4)
- 17) There would be hypocrites within the Church (Matthew 13:25-30)
- 18) There would be an increase of religious cults/false teachers and prophets (Matthew 24:11 & 24)
- 19) The future would seem fearful to many (Luke 21:26)
- 20) Humanity would become materialistic (2 Timothy 3:4)
- 21) There would be many involved in travel (Daniel 12:4)
- 22) The Christian Gospel would be preached as a warning to all nations and people (Matthew 24:14)
- 23) Jesus said Christians would be hated "for His name's sake" (Matthew 24:9)

24) Nature and creation will manifest - *And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. (Luke 21:25-26).*

25) Rebellion will increase - For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy (2 Timothy 3:2)

26) People would mock the warning signs of the end of the age saying, "for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Peter 3:4).

THE NUMBERS TELL A STORY **The Rapid Decline of Religion in Canada**

These are all Canadian statistics

Attend Church Services

- 89% no longer attend
- 18% attend

- Half the population identify as agnostic, atheist or no specific religion

- 11% attend "any" religious services on a weekly basis (includes Christian, mosques, synagogues, etc.)

Evangelical Churches - Church Attendance (of the population):

- Dropped from 12% in 1996
 - 9% in 2015
 - 6% in 2019

For People Who Attended Church Services as Children

75 years of age or older:

- Only 62% attend church today

Boomer generation (between 55 & 74 years of age):

- Attendance dropped to 53%

Generation-Xers (ages 39 – 54):

- Dropped to 33%

Generation Y (24 to 38):

- Dropped to 26%

Generation Z (ages 18 to 23):

- Dropped to 22%

According to this analysis, this means that for young men and women who attended church when they were twelve years old, the falling-away rate is a full 78%. For those who went to church as 12-year olds – half have moved to the "never attend" category.

Read the Bible - 2013 Survey of 1,100 Canadians churchgoers:

- 34% say they “rarely” or “never” read the Bible outside of church
- 11% read the Bible daily
- 27% read it a few times/week or once/month
- 3% engage in Bible study on a daily basis
- 53% “rarely or never” study the Bible

When asked this question, "If I go several days without reading the Bible, I find myself unfulfilled."

- 62% did not agree

Reason for the decline:

- People reported that they had no religion, were either agnostic, atheist or humanist.

What percentage of people believe that Jesus will return again?

<https://www.pewforum.org/2009/04/09/christians-views-on-the-return-of-christ/>

- 79% of Christians in the U.S. say they believe that Jesus Christ will return to Earth someday
- 17% of Christians do not believe Jesus is returning

What percentage of people either believe or desire a one-world government and one world religion?

<https://www.businessinsider.com/ppp-conspiracy-theory-poll-2013-4>

One world government:

- 28% believe there is a globalist agenda by the elite for a New World Order
- 38% believe in the New World Order theory
- 35% don't

GROUP QUESTIONS

- 1) Describe the remedy that Jesus provides for spiritual fragility.
- 2) What are the top five reasons why people begin to fall away from their faith?
- 3) Why do you think people are attending church less and reading their Bible less? Give the top three reasons.
- 4) Explain what Jesus meant in Matthew 24:10-12 - some will depart from the faith, some will corrupt the faith, some will grow cold in the faith.
- 5) Of the 26 signs of the coming of the Lord, how many do you see happening right now and how many are prevalent in our daily lives?
- 6) Describe what is meant by a false prophet and a false teacher.
- 7) What was happening in the days of Noah and Lot? How will history repeat itself?