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The Priority of Prophetic Truth in the Last Days Why Bible Prophecy Matters Now More Than Ever

There is a pandemic of biblical illiteracy in the church today.
Barna stats – 19% read Bible 1x a week. 18% never. 14% daily-----9%
Biblical Illiteracy→Theological Bankruptcy→Spiritual Anemia/Starvation.

While the world is testing positive for spiritual depravity and moral insanity, the church is showing sever signs of doctrinal apathy and apostasy.

So why is what we are doing here this week so critical? Why is it not just “one more conference”?

Allow me to suggest **5 Reasons:**

1. Because Doctrine/Truth Matters

Borrowing concepts from the fascist cultures of his day, Orwell coined terms such as *Newspeak*, the government’s language propaganda machine. Newspeak essentially curtails free thought and expression while replacing them with the party’s own words, doctrines, and dictates. Another Orwellian concept is *doublethink*, or holding to two contradictory beliefs while sincerely believing they are both true.

Big Brother’s propaganda strategy is designed to brainwash the public’s thinking, gradually convincing the masses that “War Is Peace,” “Freedom Is Slavery,” and “Ignorance Is Strength.” And the bigger the lie, the greater the success in persuading people of that lie. Doublespeak is also employed to deliberately obscure, distort, disguise, or redefine words in order to make them more easily acceptable to the general public. Basically, doublespeak makes lies sound truer and murder seem more “respectable.”¹

Truth and reality itself are under assault
What is a woman? No one seems to know?
Men can become women simply by “identifying”
“Men” can have babies
Love is love (no matter how you define it) but “Life” (in the womb) isn’t life

Murder is “healthcare” and “reproductive freedom”

Reality is based on perception and feelings, not facts, science, or God’s declarations in His Word.

John 14:6; 17:17 – “I am the ... truth.” “Your Word is truth.”

1 Timothy 2:7 - Paul was appointed as a teacher of the gentiles in faith and in truth

1 Timothy 3:2 - an elder must be “able to teach”

1 Timothy 3:8 - deacons must hold to the “mystery of the faith”

1 Timothy 4:6 - constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine

1 Timothy 4:11 - prescribe and teach these things

1 Timothy 4:13 - give attention to public reading of scripture, to exhortation and teaching

1 Timothy 4:14-16 do not neglect your spiritual gift, take pains with these things. Be absorbed in them, pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching, persevere in these things

1 Timothy 5:17-18 - double honor to teaching elders who work hard

1 Timothy 6:3-5 - reject those who do not agree with sound doctrine or who hold different doctrine, who have a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise strife

Illus - emails I receive about KJV only, or that “burial” wasn’t in my doctrinal statement, therefore preaching false gospel

1 Timothy 6:12 - fight the good fight of faith

1 Timothy 6:20-21 - guard what has been entrusted to you

2 Timothy 1:13 - retain the standard of sound words... guard the treasure which has been entrusted to you

2 Timothy 2:2 - doctrine and truth are the very essence of discipleship. we are soldiers (4), athletes (5), and farmers (6) in the stewardship of God's truth

2 Timothy 2:15 - handling accurately the word of truth (cutting it straight)

there are too many gospel gunslingers in the Christian in world today. too many ego fueled personalities with a microphone, skinny jeans, and a hip haircut, and not enough God called, God equipped preachers and teachers

2. **Because of Encroaching Apostasy** (1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Thess 2:3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 2 Timothy 4:1-5)

The majority of Paul's epistles were written to combat false teachers, false teaching, and blatant heresy.

The Corinthian Church

Most of the false teachers Paul encountered were Judaizers – Jews previously introduced to the Christian faith, but who also promoted salvation as a partnership of faith plus obedience to Old Testament Law. They saw Christianity as a threat to their old way of relating to God, and were not willing to accept the simplicity of the New Covenant. Thus they clung tightly to their Jewish laws and traditions.²

These Corinthian false teachers sought to discredit Paul.³ They attacked his ministry, message, character, and his motivations.⁴ Character assassination is still a favorite tool of the ungodly today.

His patience having run out, Paul exposes these men as “false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ” (11:13). Then he drops the hammer by insinuating that they servants of Satan! For just as “Satan disguises himself as an angel of light . . . *his servants* also disguised themselves as servants of righteousness” (11:14-15).⁵ Paul was passionate about preserving the integrity of the gospel. He didn't care whose feelings he hurt as long as the purity of the faith was maintained.

The Church at Galatia

Paul reserved his most scorching condemnation for the Galatian Judaizers, and deals directly with these men. Specifically, he declares that adding anything to Christ's finished work on the cross is nothing less than a different gospel, and a distortion of God's truth (Galatians 1:6-7). Anyone who propagates such a gospel is to be accursed, i.e. damned eternally (1:8).⁶ And this holds true even if such teaching were to come from an angel.⁷ Paul does not mince words when describing those who oppose sound doctrine, plainly calling them “false brethren.”⁸

The Church at Ephesus

Paul addressed the subject of false teachers in his letters to young Timothy, who pastored the Ephesian church. First and second Timothy are filled with a fervency for scriptural teaching and sound doctrine.⁹ The false teachers at Ephesus were promoting strange doctrines – myths, genealogies and speculating about the truth.¹⁰ Though they thought of themselves as “teachers,” they did not understand what they were talking about. And yet, they spoke with confidence (1 Timothy 1:6-7). Paul labeled their actions as blasphemous (1 Timothy 1:2). Their consciences were seared, and they promoted legalism, which Paul calls a “doctrine of demons” (4:1-3). Theirs was not a doctrine conforming to godliness or to Jesus's words (6:3). Like many bogus Bible teachers today, Paul says these men were full of hot air, blowing smoke, and enamored with themselves. They had a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words (6:4). Their hearts are depraved and their minds are deprived of the truth. They think ministry is merely a means of financial gain (6:5). And they love to argue (2 Timothy 2:14).

He compares their toxic talk to “gangrene” - empty, ungodly chatter only leading to further ungodliness (2 Timothy 2:16-18). Their unfounded speculations are foolish and ignorant, and only produce quarreling and anger (2 Timothy 2:23). In reality, they love only themselves and the sounds of their own voices, publicly portraying themselves as godly (2 Timothy 3:1, 5). They prey on the weak and are masters at manipulation (2 Timothy 3:6). And they have still not come to the knowledge of God’s truth (2 Timothy 3:7).

Paul states that this false teacher phenomenon will get worse in the last days (2 Timothy 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 11). He prophesies that these spurious teachers will enjoy immense popularity among religious crowds. Instead of preaching the Word and sound doctrine, they will teach self-pleasing myths in order to make their audiences feel good (2 Timothy 4:3-4). The itch for entertaining messages will be scratched by the deceptive claws of these wool-clad wolves.

The Church at Philippi

Paul was inspired to warn these believers to be aware of anyone promoting human works as a necessary component of salvation. He labeled them as the “false circumcision, evil workers,” and even referred to them as “dogs” (Philippians 3:1-3).¹¹ They trusted in their own works more than Jesus’s provision on the cross. Their deceptive influence deeply saddened Paul’s heart (Philippians 3:18-19).

The Church at Colossae

One of Paul’s battles in the church at Colossae was with what would later be formally known as Gnosticism. This belief views matter as evil, but God (spirit) as good. Therefore, anything done in the body, they assert, is not inherently evil, but only what is in the spirit. Gnosticism comes from the Greek word *gnosis*, which means “knowledge.” The Gnostics claimed to possess a higher plane of knowledge that must be attained to in order for salvation to be genuine. They believed that Jesus, having come in the flesh, was merely an *emanation* from God, and therefore not fully divine. This clearly contradicts the rest of Scripture.¹² Paul counteracted this religious philosophy by emphatically declaring that Jesus was the “image of the invisible God” (1:15). As God, Christ had “created all things” and that all things “were created *by Him and for Him*” (1:15). He adds that it was through Jesus’s *fleshly body* that our redemption was accomplished (1:22). He proclaims Christ as being eternal and the Sustainer of the universe, and yes, *fully God* (1:17-19).

Other false teachers there promoted the worship of angels, and their own patented brand of legalism, requiring circumcision as necessary for salvation. They also required abstinence from certain foods and strict adherence to Jewish Holy days. And finally, they taught that asceticism (self-denial) was essential to being wise and religious (Colossians 2:11, 16-17-18, 20-23; 3:11).

Paul corrects the Colossians' thinking by exposing the futility of such bad theology. Jesus needs no contribution from us regarding salvation. However, we, on the other hand, desperately need His provision of grace (Ephesians 2:8-10).

The Church at Thessalonica

The church of Thessalonica had received false information about the coming of Lord and the (Tribulation) day of the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3). Paul calmed their spirits and set their minds at ease by straightening out their understanding of eschatology and the end times. God's truth is always the antidote to the poisonous lies of false teachers.

The Church at Crete

You may not have heard much talk about this church. They didn't get their own Pauline letter, but did indirectly through their pastor, Titus.¹³ Like other New Testament churches, the church at Crete came under attack from false teachers and their lies. Ironically, the Cretan people themselves had developed a reputation for lying, so much so that to "play the Cretan" became synonymous with lying.¹⁴ Paul played off of this imagery in his review of the Judaizers, referring to them as "empty talkers and deceivers" (1:10). They were upsetting entire families with their false teaching, just to make money (1:11). They propagated Jewish myths and man-made rules, damning evidence of their departure from the truth (1:14).

Paul tells Titus to exhort the church in sound doctrine and to refute all those who contradict it (1:9). This was so that they might repent and return to a sound faith (1:9, 11, 13). They "profess to know God but by their deeds they deny him, being detestable and disobedient, and worthless for any good deed" (1:16).

Paul's encouraged Titus to speak (to the church) the "things which are fitting for sound doctrine (2:1).

Christians Scattered in Asia Minor

Peter's epistles were written to believers dispersed throughout Asia minor (modern day Turkey.) In his second letter, he reveals the characteristics of false teachers and their counterfeit creeds. These men arose from within the church, secretly introducing destructive heresies, and by doing so deny Christ (2:1). They are full of sensuality and greed, and are masters and exploiting others with their speaking abilities (2:2-3). Even so, Peter adds, a certain judgment is coming for them (2:1,3).

He describes them as indulging the flesh, despising authority, and of being brazen in their teachings. They are strong-willed, and have no reference for the power or authority of Angels (2:10-11). They sin openly with adultery, enticing unstable believers (2:14). Hell is reserved for such people (2:17). Peter concludes by saying it would've been better for them to have never known the truth than having known it, to then turn away from it (2:21). They are imposters and fakes.

I John

The Beloved Disciple makes it clear that we are living in the “last hour,” or the “last days” (the period between Jesus’s first and second comings (1 John 2:18)).¹⁵ And though he affirms that one called “antichrist” will come, he also insists that many other “antichrists” had already arisen during at that time. Today, we are seeing a surge of apostasy in the church, as false teachers have greatly increased within Christendom.¹⁶ These “antichrist teachers,” John says, are proof we are living in the last hour. They not only leave the faithful, but also the faith itself (1 John 2:19, 23). They are liars and deceivers (2:22, 26). And the way to detect these lying spirits, John says, is to “test” them against God’s revelation of truth (4:2-3).

Jude

The entire Book of Jude, with only 25 verses, is completely devoted to defending the faith against false teachers and their teaching.¹⁷ In his little letter to those he describes as the “called, beloved, and kept for Jesus Christ,” he meticulously describes “certain persons” who “crept in unnoticed,” (either a reference to their deceptive skills, her to a lack of discernment in the church. Or both.)¹⁸ Jude characterizes these peddlers in the following way:

They have no restraint with regard to their sexual urges (4, 8, 10).

They are “dreamers,” meaning either living in a mental fantasy world, or appealing to dreams and visions as the source of their authority.¹⁹

They reject authority and accountability (8).

They have no respect for angelic majesties (8).²⁰

They’re very bad at theology and very good at immorality (10-11)

They reject God’s ways, like Cain (11).²¹

They compromise themselves for the sake of money (11).²² They are prophets for profit.

They rebel against God-ordained leadership (11).²³

They are “hidden reefs” in the church, self-planted to shipwreck the faith of others (12).²⁴ They’re like Satan’s Secret Agents.

They’re “clouds without water,” or big talkers that promise much but deliver nothing of real spiritual substance (12). Unlike those grounded in the truth, these clouds are “carried along by winds” of false doctrine.²⁵

They’re “autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted” (12). They have no depth, bear no real fruit, and have no lasting power.

They’re “wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam” (13). Their ministries are more emotion and show than Spirit and power (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:4-5).

They’re “wandering stars” (13). Like a falling star, they are nothing more than meteoric flashes of light, that soon burn out.

Sound like some of today’s false teachers?

The he adds that they will burn in Hell, and that their destiny is damnation (13-15).²⁶

These false teachers as also labelled as “grumblers” who find fault in others (16).

They follow after their own controlling desires, or lusts (16). All they do is motivated by self.

They “speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage” (16). Their presentations are enticing and persuasive, yet deceptive.²⁷ They may be eloquent and spiritual sounding. They tell you things that make you like them, while simultaneously making you feel good about yourself. They are all about self-empowerment, and building up your self-esteem. Jude quotes Paul’s warning in 2 Timothy 3:1, how “in the last days, difficult times will come” and men will mock God and His truth, exhibiting their own ungodly desires.

They cause divisions in the body of Christ (19).

They are worldly-minded (19).

They may speak about Jesus, but they do not possess the Holy Spirit (19). That they are not truly saved is one of the most frightening things about these counterfeit teachers. They call Jesus “Lord,” and even prophesy in His name, yet Christ does not know them or claim them. Instead, He will cast them out of His presence (Matthew 7:21-23). Like their true master, though, they are skilled at disguising themselves as “angels of light.”²⁸

The Seven Churches of Revelation

But it doesn't end there. Like a lingering virus, these pseudo-prophets kept on infecting the church with their heretical teachings and lifestyles on into the end of the first century. In Revelation 2-3, we still see churches being threatened by these errant teachers. Jesus commends the Ephesian church for putting to the test those who falsely claimed to be apostles.²⁹ But following His rebuke of that church’s lost love for Him, He applauds their hatred for the “deeds of the Nicolaitans,” an immoral sect that twisted God’s grace, allowing themselves to engage in sexual immorality.³⁰

The church at Pergamum permitted the “teaching of Balaam” as well as the ways of the Nicolaitans.³¹ The church at Thyatira “tolerated the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess” (Revelation 2:20). She too led the church into sexual sins. And the church at Sardis had also those who “soiled their garments,” a likely reference to apostate teaching and practices.³²

So clearly false prophets were a real first century phenomenon, and through Paul’s letters to the churches we can better know how to identify them, and also be fully prepared for them.

Illus – Ilsa so badly beaten that she was no longer recognizable. Apostasy is the great abuser of the Bride of Christ.

Consider that:

- 75-150 churches close every week in America
- 30,000 churches closed from 2006-2012
- Lowest levels of church attendance in American history
- 1/3 less people attended church during the pandemic lockdown. Majority of those have no plans to return.
- Lutheran church just ordained its first transgender bishop.
- Some Methodist and Episcopalian churches have sanctioned gay lifestyle and performed homosexual marriages.
- 1/3 of Americas Pastors say good people can go to heaven
- Only 37% have a biblical world view
- 1/3 believe the Holy Spirit is not a Person, but a “*symbol* of God’s power”³³

In these last days, there is no shortage of those who dilute, reinterpret, reimagine, rewrite, and outright deny God's word.

From Genesis...

- Creation didn't happen. We simply appeared and evolved from nothing.
- Creation didn't happen the way the Bible claims. That's impossible.
- Adam and Eve weren't literal people, but rather metaphorical representatives of the human race.
- Genesis isn't an account of a literal six day creation, because “science says...”

...to Revelation

- Revelation already happened in the first century.
- Revelation is merely a book of symbols, not literal prophecies.
- Revelation is like the rest of the Bible, irrelevant and only for weak, superstitious, religious people.
- The rapture isn't real.
- Jesus isn't coming back...*period*.

We even see this diluting of the Word in the church, where key doctrines are being reinterpreted for a new generation, and a growing apostasy is being unleashed in many major denominations. We see it with morality being redefined in order to allow certain sexual lifestyles to be welcomed into the body of Christ. We see it with millennial Christians now “deconstructing” their faith and calling themselves “exvangelicals.”³⁴

“Indeed, has God said?” . . . “Is it true?”

Paul not only names names in 2 Timothy 2:16-18 of those who departed from the faith (see also 2 Thess. 2:1-2), but elsewhere he described these men as “always learning but never coming to a knowledge of the truth (2 Timothy 3:6-10).

He warned Timothy that impostors will increase (2 Timothy 3:13), and therefore he should strengthen his knowledge of the truth (14-15) these are the people that don't “do theology.” They just “love Jesus.” But which “Jesus?”

3. Because of the Power of Prophetic Truth

A. The Power of the Word of God

Ephesians 4:11-17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17 – to equip and mature saints
 Romans 12:2; Hebrews 4:12 (“MRI”) – to change us from the inside out
 Psalm 19:7-11 – restoration, wisdom, joy, enlightenment, etc
 Luke 16:27-31 – More powerful and persuasive than miracles
 2 Peter 1:3 – everything we need for life and godliness

B. The Practical Benefits of Prophecy What can prophecy do for me?

Understanding Bible prophecy influences your thinking regarding both the present and the future, which affects our decisions and emotions. As we become more familiar with what God says is going to take place on planet Earth, we are able to move forward with clarity, confidence and hope, realizing our purpose and fulfilling our destiny! So, what does knowing about prophecy do for a believer?

1. Helps you understand the times in which you live (I Chron. 12:32)
2. Calms your fears about the future (Matt. 28:20; John 14:1-3, 27)
3. Gives you confidence, courage, and comfort in the present (I Thess 4:13-18; John 16:33)
4. Increases your faith in God who's in control of earth's story (Isaiah 40:12-26; Psalm 115:3; Daniel 4:35)
5. Helps you see the relevance of your Bible to life, both for now and the future (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)
6. Builds expectancy and anticipation for what is to come (Rev. 22:10; Matt. 6:10)
7. Gives you positive hope in a hopeless world, rescuing you from despair (Titus 2:13-15)

8. Keeps you centered in an age of doctrinal error, heresy and apostasy (1 Tim 4:1; 2 Tim 3:1-17)
9. Blesses you as you listen and obey Scripture's prophetic words (Rev 1:3)
10. Motivates you to be urgent about your mission here on earth, not wasting your time on worthless pursuits (Eph. 5:15-16)
11. Fuels the fire of your desire to see others know Jesus (2 Cor. 5:10-13; 6:2)
12. Gives you perspective on the temporary nature of suffering (John 16:1,4; Rom 8:18)
13. Helps you prioritize spiritual things over physical things, living wisely (Psalm 90:10-12)
14. Purifies your life as you prepare yourself as Christ's Bride (I John 3:2-3)
15. Helps you know what to expect as you live for God in an increasingly hostile world (John 15:18-23)

4. Because of a General Ignorance Regarding Prophecy

In his 1981 book, *What You Should Know about the Rapture*, Charles Ryrie described what he discerned to be a "spirit of eschatological agnosticism" in the Church at that time. And this was before the emergence of the modern seeker-friendly, self-help, attractional church model that has swept through most of American churches, both mega-church and micro-sized. Since that time, there has been in churches

Pastors who ridicule prophecy (book covers)

Some evangelical leaders, such as British theologian N.T. Wright, have vehemently, and even mockingly, denounced the rapture outright as a "pseudo-theological version of 'Home Alone'" that has "frightened many children into some kind of (distorted) faith."³⁵ Wright brazenly asserts that the rapture simply doesn't exist, but is rather the misguided obsession of sensational Americans.

Pastors who see it as a "hobby for old people," of no value for discipleship

Pastors who won't preach it – "Christ and Him crucified."

Top Ten Reasons Why Pastors Don't Preach on Bible Prophecy

From Jeff Kinley, *The End of America?* pp 34-35.

1. The pastor doesn't feel qualified to teach on the subject.
2. Preaching on prophecy requires hard work, and much study. Some pastors may get by more on personality than having diligently studied the Word. Some pastors busy themselves with meetings, leadership duties and church activities, leaving little room to do what God has actually called them to.

3. Prophecy is sometimes viewed as controversial, sensational, and for some, even frightening and offensive. There are enough obstacles pastors face with their congregations without creating more distance between the pulpit and the pew.
4. There are divergent views on eschatology (study of the end times) within the body of Christ. As such, it is often seen as divisive, and therefore avoided.
5. To be too dogmatic or confident regarding prophetic interpretation can come off as prideful, or even cult-like at times.
6. The end times involves God's wrath, and some pastors don't want to be viewed as a "prophet of doom." Negativity tends to *empty* seats, not fills them.
7. No one *really* knows the future, so why dwell on it?
8. Many pastors and denominations do not believe in a literal, prophetic fulfillment of Scripture. Rather, they take a "spiritual," or symbolic approach when interpreting books like Revelation or Daniel.
9. There are so many more *relevant* things to preach on (marriage, handling stress, family issues, personal problems, etc.).
10. Perhaps for some, they fear people will stop giving financially if they think the world is ending soon.

So why should Pastors preach on Prophecy (Daniel, Revelation, Eschatology)

- It's in the Bible.
- Prominent in Scripture.
- Last book of the Bible.

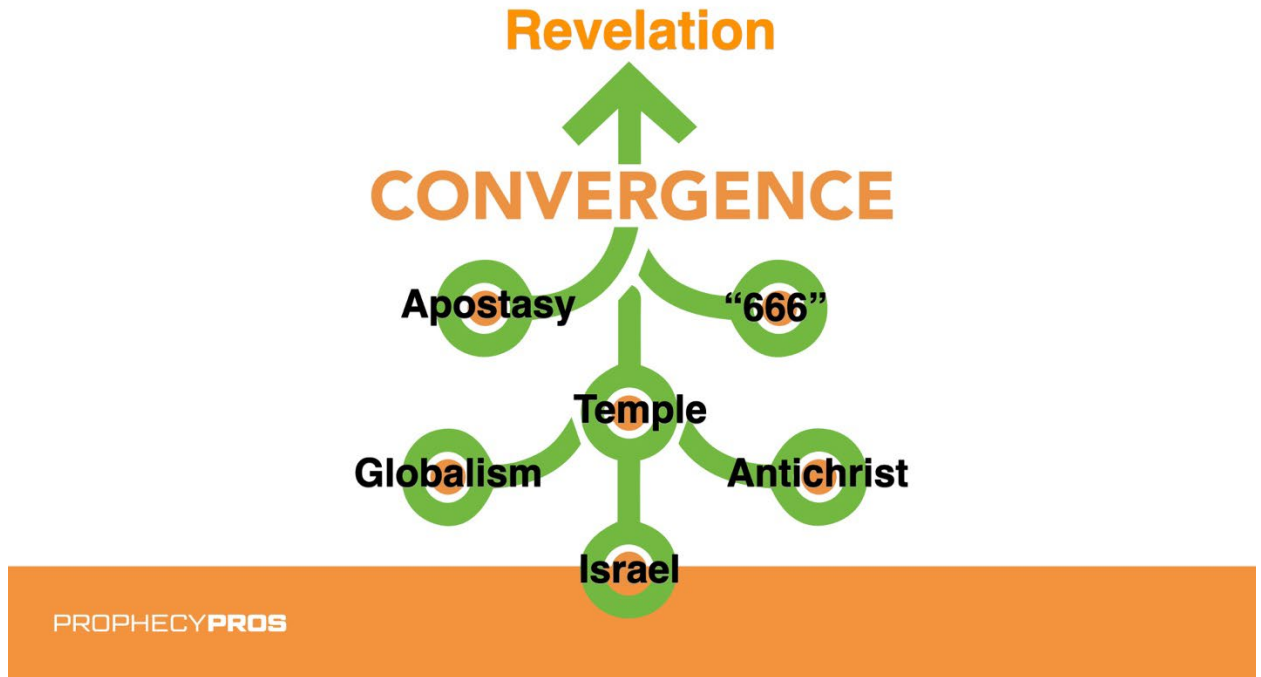
5. Because We Are Living in the Last Days/Nearing the Lord's Return (1 John 2:18)

Today we have 2 extremes; some deny the realities of Bible prophecy and claim that nothing is a sign. these are the mockers that Peter and Jude warned us about (2 Peter 3:3-9; Jude 17-19 (worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit))

On the other end of the spectrum are those who see every headline as a sign or some sort of fulfillment of Bible prophecy. but this is where biblical knowledge and discernment are critical. We cannot afford to be either Rip Van Winkle nor chicken little.

we believe the rapture is a signless event, unlike the second coming, and also that it is imminent.

but by all indications we as a planet are rapidly ramping up to revelation. considering the era and emerging stages of prophetic fulfillment in which we find ourselves, it would be irresponsible to come to any other conclusion other than the clock is about to strike midnight.



Though we are not seeing the actual fulfillment of Matthew 24 or revelation 6 through 19, I believe we can confidently say that we are definitely in the pregame warm up.

Because of this, the Rapture return Of Jesus Christ may be very near. and that means all of us are living on borrowed time. we are living in the parenthesis of a great and glorious stewardship.

Bible prophecy matters now more than ever because of its obvious relevance to the times in which we are living.

therefore, Preach the word. Herald the truth. Proclaim the good news. blast the beacon of light into a Dark World and into a deceived, drowsy, defeated church.

yes, the hour is late. But it is not too late yet. God and his prophetic truth are worth our time, sacrifice, pain, and suffering.

On New Year's Day, 1929, Georgia Tech played ~~UCLA~~^{Calif Golden Bears, Berkeley} in the Rose Bowl. In that game a young player named Roy Riegals recovered a fumble for UCLA. But in picking up the loose ball, he lost his direction and ran at full speed 65 yards in the wrong direction! One of his teammates, Benny Lom, was able to run him down and tackle him just before Roy scored for Georgia Tech. A few plays later, Georgia Tech blocked a UCLA punt and scored on a safety.

At halftime in the locker room, Riegals covered himself in a blanket and sat dejected in a corner alone. Usually the coach had a big speech prepared for halftime, but he was silent that day. When the timekeeper reported that they had three minutes left before playing time, Coach Price looked at his team and said, "Men, the same team that started the first half will start the second half." The players all got up and left—all but Riegals. Coach Price went over to where Riegals was and said, "Roy, didn't you hear me? I want you to start the second half."

Roy Riegals looked up at his coach, his cheeks wet with tears, and said, "Coach, I can't do it. I've ruined you. I've ruined the school's reputation. I've ruined myself. I can't face that crowd out there." Coach Price reached out, put his hand on Roy's shoulder, and said, "Roy, get up and go on back. The game is only half over." Riegals did get up and returned to play an outstanding game.

Though we no longer possess the home field advantage here in America, we do possess the authority, approval, and the mandate of heaven. It is not about our platform, the number of books we've written, the number of followers we have, whether we have a TV show or pastor a large church. What matters most of all is our commitment to God and his truth, and to faithfully fulfilling the mission He has given to us all. Contend for the faith. Contend 'til the end! (Jude 1:3)

¹ Richard Nordquist, "What Is Doublespeak?," *ThoughtCo.*, April 2, 2018, <https://www.thoughtco.com/doublespeak-language-term-1690475>.

² This issue was at the center of the controversy at the church in Jerusalem early on in Acts 15.

³ 2 Corinthians 1:12-2:4; 11:1-12

⁴ 1 Corinthians 2:1-5; 3:1-9; 4:1-5; 2 Corinthians 11:5-12

⁵ This is why the apostle feared the Corinthians would be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:3). This would occur, he says through a Satanic-like deception of preaching "another Jesus," and the promotion of a different gospel from the one Paul had presented to them (11:4).

⁶ Paul uses the Greek word *anathema*, referring to eternal damnation. See Romans 9:3; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 16:22

⁷ Galatians 1:8

⁸ Galatians 2:4. He even suggests that if these Judaizers loved circumcision so much as proof and part of their salvation, then they should demonstrate their total commitment to God by completely castrating themselves! (Galatians 5:12)

⁹ 1 Timothy 1:1-11, 18-20; 3:3; 4:6-8; 13-16; 6:3-5, 14, 20-21; 2 Timothy 1:13-14; 2:1-2, 14-19, 20-21; 3:1-9, 13-17; 4:1-5, 13

¹⁰ 1 Timothy 1:3-4

¹¹ "Dogs" was a term many Jews used to describe Gentiles, whom they disdained as filthy animals.

¹² John 1:14, 18; 2 John 7

¹³ Just as Paul wrote to the Ephesian church through his letters to Timothy, he similarly addressed issues in the church at Crete through his letter to Titus.

¹⁴ Homer Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Chicago, Moody Press, 1982), 218.

¹⁵ See also 1 Timothy 4:1; James 5:3; 1 Peter 4:7; 2 Peter 3:3; Jude 18

¹⁶ For more on this subject, see Mark Hitchcock and Jeff Kinley, *The Coming Apostasy, Exposing the Sabotage of Christianity from Within* (Tyndale, 2017)

¹⁷ Jude (along with James) were the half-brothers of Jesus. Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3

¹⁸ Jude 3

¹⁹ The participle used by Jude was sometimes used to describe apocalyptic visions experienced both by true and false prophets. NET Bible, footnote, p. 2263

²⁰ Compare 2 Peter 2:10. The idea may be that they flippantly address demons with a false bravado masquerading as spiritual authority. Commanding demons and “binding Satan” is popular among some prosperity Gospel preachers today.

²¹ Genesis 4:45

²² Numbers 22-25; 2 Peter 2:15

²³ Numbers 16:1-35

²⁴ Some translate “hidden reefs” as “stains” as in 2 Peter 2:13

²⁵ Ephesians 4:14

²⁶ This prophesy, inspired by the Holy Spirit to Jude, is also recorded in the non-canonical book of Enoch.

²⁷ 2 Peter 2:18

²⁸ 2 Corinthians 11:13-14

²⁹ Revelation 2:2

³⁰ Revelation 2:6. The Nicolaitans are believed to be followers of Nicolas, a man from Antioch who is chosen as a deacon in the church at Jerusalem in Acts 6. Clement of Alexandria wrote that these immoral church members “abandoned themselves to pleasure like goats, leading a life of self-indulgence.” Philip Schaff, *The Sacred Writings of Clement of Alexandria, Vol. 1* (Jazzybee Verlag, 2017)

³¹ Revelation 2:14-15

³² Compare Jude 23 here.

³³ <https://www.christianpost.com/news/third-of-evangelical-pastors-say-people-can-get-heaven-just-by-being-good.html>

³⁴ DC Talk’s Kevin Max Announces He’s An ‘Exvangelical’ Who Believes In The ‘Universal Christ’ After ‘Deconstructing’, ‘Progressing’ <http://www.christianitydaily.com/articles/11915/20210519/dc-talk-s-kevin-max-announces-he-s-an-exvangelical-who-believes-in-the-universal-christ-after-deconstructing-progressing.htm>

³⁵ Farewell to the Rapture, <https://ntwrightpage.com/2016/07/12/farewell-to-the-rapture/>.