

Remnant Life Church
September 4, 2016
The Parables of Jesus:
Not Just Waiting But Watching
Part 1
Matthew 24:1-44

- Is it possible that Jesus will return in our lifetime?
 - Not only possible but probable
 - The church has been saying this for centuries however
 - The hypochondriac was constantly complaining about the deathly illness he was always dealing with but it always proved to be imagined. When he one day grew old and was about to actually die he arranged to have engraved on his tombstone, "I TOLD you I was sick!"
 - If I die before Jesus returns I may have put on mine, "He died surprised"
- **READ Matthew 24:32-44**
 - This is not about setting a date (**Matt 24:36** - "*But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*")
 - So how can I say this since Christians have been anticipating Jesus' return since the time of the Disciples?
- We need to recognize the signs of the times pointing to the return of Jesus and see the evidence that is being literally played out right before our eyes today
 - It has been said that every generation has expected Jesus to return
 - That statement is actually not true – man has hoped but not necessarily expected
 - In the 17th century Sir Isaac Newton was not only a great scientist, but also a theologian, especially late in his life. He concluded that his generation would not see the return of Christ. He did not, according to his studies of the Bible, see the signs of the end times coming just yet. He said, "About the time of the end, a body of men will be raised up who will turn their attention to the prophecies and insist upon their literal interpretation in the midst of much clamor and opposition."
 - Charles Spurgeon, one of the greatest preachers of the mid-19th Century, asked, "Will Jesus appear in 1866 or 1867? I am inclined to think that He will not come at any such time. It seems to me that there are a great many prophecies which must yet be fulfilled before the coming of Christ. We shall go on many a day yet. We may have to wait for another century."
 - Well another century has come and gone but we are seeing now many of these requirements of the end times coming to pass
- Consider a few prophecies that are not as often read and discussed but nevertheless are being fulfilled in our time
 - **Dan 12:4** - *But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge.*"

- Some scholars have interpreted “go here and there” as referring to physical transportation – from man’s beginning until just the last 100 years man has walked, sailed, or used a horse
 - + 20th century alone automobiles, planes, supersonic jets, space crafts
 - + **KJV** – *to and fro* – interpreted by some Bible scholars as increase in travel and speed
 - + 17th century Isaac Newton - “A new mode of travel shall be invented in the last days. Knowledge will be so increased that man will be able to travel at a rate of [and then he went out on a limb] 50 miles an hour.” He was highly criticized for making such a statement. The atheist Voltaire, a contemporary of the scientist said, “Newton thinks that someday men will travel 50 miles in one hour, the poor dotard.”
 - + Today’s space shuttle – 20,000 mph
- Information travels through the internet almost at the speed of thought; hours and days of research are today available to anyone today in seconds
 - Knowledge and the increase in what man can accomplish is staggering when seen in the scope of history
 - + From concept to completion it took 160 years to produce a working functional steam engine
 - + By comparison the incredibly complex nuclear bomb took just 6 years to complete in the 1940’s
 - + Today’s inventions move from conception to prototype to production in a matter of weeks
- Other scholars take the meaning of this verse to say man will be in frantic search of knowledge...but why?
 - In context with what Daniel is writing it would be because of what they are witnessing
 - Cataclysmic events that will occur in the years leading up to and culminating in the time of distress. Also note that this same time period immediately preceding Christ’s Second Coming is described in much greater detail in **Revelation 6 through 19**.
- However this is interpreted we must know that what was written by Daniel over 2500 years ago is happening right now
- Look at what the prophet Zechariah wrote
 - **Zech 14:12** - *This is the plague with which the LORD will strike all the nations that fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths.*
 - The literal understanding of the day is famine and its effects on the human body
 - The prophetic is about something that could have only been realized in the last 75 years – our ability to kill on a global scale
 - + For centuries scholars have questioned what type of plague (war) could destroy the body so quickly that they are still on their feet – today we know
 - **Rev 16:19; 18:10** - *The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the*

wine of the fury of his wrath....Woe! Woe to you, great city, you mighty city of Babylon! In one hour your doom has come

- Scholars again wondering how cities could collapse in 1 hour – today we know
- Aug 6 and 9, 1945 - Nagasaki and Hiroshima

- One of the greatest events that I believe ushered in the beginning of the “last days” was the restoration of the nation of Israel in 1948
 - **Jer 23:3** - *I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number.*
 - Back to **Matt 24:32-33** – the fig tree is the time in preparation for Jesus’ return and the leaves are those events that foretell its coming
 - **V 34** – this generation may refer to those alive to see the restoration of Israel – 40; 60; 80; 100 years?
- Add to these the following:
 - The cashless society is nearly complete in its structuring
 - More earthquakes in our lifetime than in the previous 500 years combined
 - 70% of all medicines have been created in our lifetime
 - 90% of all the scientists who have ever lived are alive right now
- **Revelation 11** tells us that the 2 heavenly witnesses will be killed by the antichrist and seen by the whole world rising from the dead
 - How would have that been possible prior to the internet and the information age we live in now?
 - We all watched live the invasion of Iraq in March of 2003
 - We will all witness the end of the world not in entertainment but in wonder and, for some, in horror
- The message of the coming of Jesus in this time is “be ready”
- Next week I want to talk with you about the difference in waiting for Jesus to return and watching for His return
- Prepare for the communion table